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**CONTEMPORARY CONTEMPLATIONS IN  
LITERATURE, CULTURE AND SOCIETY**

*Special Issue Editors*  
**Dr. K. KALAIARASI | Dr. S. BALAKRISHNAN**



# BODHI

## International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Science

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*Assistant Professor of English*

Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil

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**Dr. N. INDIRA, M.Com., M.Phil., M.Ed., MBA., Ph.D.,**

*Principal*

*Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

## Greetings from Pioneer Kumaraswamy College!

As the Principal of this prestigious institution, I am extremely happy and honoured to write this note of appreciation. First of all, I appreciate the Department of English & Research Centre for organizing this International Conference in collaboration with Bodhi International Journal that served as the catalyst for this special issue on “**Contemporary Contemplations in Literature, Culture and Society**”.

It is with great pleasure and gratitude I extend a warm greeting to **Dr. E. Panneer Selvam**, Convenor, **Dr. K. Kalaiaarasi**, Organizing Secretary and all the Organizing Committee Members of this conference for their dedication, vision and tireless efforts in bringing together the students, scholars and faculty members from diverse backgrounds to explore the interaction of literature, culture and society.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Bodhi International Journal and their unwavering support throughout the process of compiling this volume.



*N. Indira*





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## FOREWORD



**Dr. E. PANNEER SELVAM, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.,**

*Head & Associate Professor*

*Department of English, Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

The Department of English & Research Centre is proud and delighted to be a part of the learning journey in the International Conference on **“Contemporary Contemplations in Literature, Culture and Society”** in collaboration with Bodhi International Journal.

I appreciate the meticulous efforts done by **Dr. S. Balakrishnan**, Publisher & Managing Editor, Bodhi International Journal & **Dr. K. Kalaiarasi**, Organizing Secretary and Editor, which has resulted in an anthology of the peer-reviewed articles that throws light into the universal truth and themes.

It is my hope that this journal will serve as a testament to the power of collaboration, intellectual exchange and inquiry in advancing our understanding of the world around us.

*E. Panneer Selvam*



## **EDITORIAL NOTE**

**“In literature, we find the keys to unlock the mysteries of humanity, the echoes of our past and the visions of our future”- Amit Roy**

**“Contemporary Contemplations in Literature, Culture and Society”** explores the dynamic synthesis between written expression, social norms and cultural evolution in today’s world. Through critical analysis and scholarly discourse, this exploration sheds light on the profound influence of literature on our understanding of contemporary issues and the human experience at large. In this context, this issue of Bodhi International Journal carries articles on various thrust areas, which are the outcome of researches conducted by the contributors.

Our heartfelt gratitude to **Thiru. P. Kumaraswamy**, President & Secretary, Pioneer Kumaraswamy College and **Tmt. Latha Kumaraswamy**, College Committee Member, for their commitment in promoting academic excellence and advancing knowledge.

We are very thankful to **Dr. N. Indira**, Principal and **Dr. E. Panneer Selvam**, Head, Department of English, for their gracious consent to compile these articles into a journal volume.

We duly acknowledge all **the Scholars & Faculty Members**, whose scholarly contribution have made this issue possible.

*Editors*





## ABOUT THE EDITORS



**Dr. K. Kalaiarasi** is an Assistant Professor of English at Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil. She has put in 4 years of teaching experience in school level and 8 years of experience in collegiate level. She has presented many papers in International and National conferences, published many articles in reputed books and journals, authored a book "Effectiveness of Multimedia Approach in Teaching English Poetry", edited a journal volume and a book. She is a speaker in All India Radio, Nagercoil. She is a member of LSS (Literary Scholars Society, Tanjore). The area of her specialization are Post-Colonial Studies, English Language Teaching, Soft Skills & Communication Skills, Asian-American Literature, Diasporic Literature etc.



**Dr. S. Balakrishnan** is the Publisher & Managing Editor of Roots & Bodhi peer-reviewed Journals and published more than ten thousand articles, since 2014. He has 6 years of teaching experience in collegiate level. In addition to the journals, he is also the Publisher & Editor of L Ordines Nuovo Publication that published more than 400 Books, since its inception in 2016. He has the credit of convening and organizing more than 70 Conferences and Seminars in India and abroad.



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## BEYOND HAPPILY EVER AFTER: EXPLORING THE PROFOUND LIFE LESSONS IN FAIRYTALES

**Dr. MEERA KARTHIKEYAN NAIR SATHIKUMARI**

*Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature  
College of Science and Humanities Program in Wadi Al Dawaser  
Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

### Abstract

*The captivating realm of fairy tales has entranced audiences for centuries, transporting them to realms where the impossible becomes possible. Beyond the fanciful individuals and enchanted settings, fairy tales possess a deeper significance, offering profound life lessons that resonate with individuals of all ages. In this study, entitled "Beyond Happily Ever After: Exploring the Profound Life Lessons in Fairytales," we explore the moral, ethical, and psychological teachings concealed within the intricate composition of these timeless stories. Our objective is to bring illumination to the enduring importance of fairy tales and their impact on personal growth through an examination of their themes, character dynamics, and cultural influences. Through this exploration, we hope to unveil the hidden wisdom and transformative power that lies "beyond happily ever after" in the realm of fairy tales.*

**Keywords:** *Children's Literature, Imagination and Creativity, Cultural Preservation, Emotional Development.*

### Introduction

Fairy tales, with their fanciful characters and enchanted settings, transport us to extraordinary realms where anything is possible. From the majestic palaces of Cinderella to the dense forests of Little Red Riding Hood, these stories serve as metaphors for the trials and triumphs of life. They explore themes of love, friendship, bravery, and morality, guiding us through complex emotions and moral dilemmas. Throughout the course of history, celebrated authors of fairy tales such as the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen, and Charles Perrault have bestowed upon us timeless masterpieces that continue to resonate with contemporary readers. Their imaginative narratives, grounded in cultural customs and oral storytelling, have influenced our comprehension of these mystical chronicles. Fairy tales also serve as a source of inspiration for countless adaptations, from beloved Disney animations to contemporary reinterpretations in literature and film. These adaptations have breathed new life into familiar tales, catering to evolving sensibilities and capturing the hearts of new generations.

### Life Lessons of Fairytales

Beyond their entertainment value, fairy tales offer profound insights into the human psyche, exploring universal themes and archetypes. They provide solace and hope, reminding us that even in the face of adversity, goodness can prevail, and dreams can come true. In a world often constrained by reality, fairy tales continue to provide an escape into realms of wonder and possibility. They ignite our imaginations, kindle our sense of wonder, and remind us of the enduring power of storytelling. Zipes says, "Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of folk tales continue to be told and come and go as easily as the wind whisks leaves into the air, lets them flutter, and eventually disperses them on the ground until they settle and die. But the best of our tales do not die"(7).

Fairy tales also teach children lessons about right and wrong, as well as good versus evil. These narratives, originating from various regions across the globe, exhibit a consistent array of themes and motifs. Certain tales were authored by unidentified individuals in ancient times, before people could read or write. Others have been compiled and modified, like the works of the Grimm brothers who bestowed

upon us iconic tales such as Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood, Hansel, and Gretel. Similarly, Charles Perrault of France gifted us with Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella, while Denmark's Hans Christian Andersen authored his own stories, including the Ugly Duckling and The Snow Queen. Irene states that

The tales consist of universal truths and reflect the values of the time periods and societies from which they are derived. Many of these have still have a significant value, even nowadays. The characters, their actions and their reward led to the development of moral issues. The good defeats the evil, justice triumphs, the non-arrogant is lucky in love, intelligence overcomes physical strength, while kindness, diligence and hard work leads to reward.

Fairy tales serve a range of purposes beyond mere entertainment. They ignite our imagination, beckoning us to venture into enchanting realms and suspend our disbelief. Through their captivating narratives, fairy tales convey ethical and moral teachings, imparting knowledge about the repercussions of our actions and the significance of virtues such as courage, compassion, and perseverance. These stories frequently depict characters confronting challenges and hurdles, thereby encouraging readers to engage in critical thinking and cultivate problem-solving abilities. Numerous scholars, including Michele Landsberg, acknowledge the educational role of children's literature, recognizing its moral and emotive aspects.

Moreover, fairy tales play a crucial role in cultural preservation. They serve as repositories of a society's traditions, beliefs, and values, offering insights into the collective identity of a community. By sharing these tales, we pass on our cultural heritage to future generations, fostering a sense of connection and appreciation for our roots. In essence, fairy tales hold a special place in our hearts and minds. They inspire, educate, and entertain us, leaving an indelible mark on our lives. Fairy tales hold significant importance in our lives for several reasons. They have been an integral part of human culture for centuries, passed down from generation to

generation. Here are some reasons why fairy tales are more than mere stories.

### **Imagination and Creativity**

Fairy tales have the capacity to stimulate our imagination and encourage creative thinking. They transport us to magical worlds filled with enchanting characters, places, and events. By engaging with these stories, children and adults alike learn to think beyond the boundaries of reality and develop their creative faculties. Egan posits that the classic fairy tales have an important effect on engaging the imagination of young children in the classroom.

### **Moral and Ethical Lessons**

Fairy tales often convey moral and ethical lessons through their narratives. They teach us about the difference between right and wrong, the consequences of our actions, and the importance of virtues such as kindness, courage, honesty, and perseverance. Fairy tales provide valuable guidance and help shape our understanding of ethics and values. They present characters who face moral dilemmas, make choices, and experience consequences. By engaging with these stories, children learn about the concepts of right and wrong, fairness, honesty, compassion, and other important values.

### **Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking**

Fairy tales frequently present characters who face challenges and obstacles. These stories encourage readers to think critically and explore various solutions to problems. Fairy tales often showcase problem-solving skills and teach us the importance of determination, resourcefulness, and resilience. As children follow the journeys of these characters, they are exposed to problem-solving strategies and critical thinking processes. Fairy tales encourage children to analyze situations, consider multiple perspectives, and find creative solutions to problems. Joan I. Glazer supports that the children's book contributes in the psychological development and education of the child, but also in the formation of aesthetic criteria.

### Emotional Development

Fairy tales evoke a range of emotions, from joy and wonder to fear and sadness. They allow readers to experience and navigate different emotions in a safe and controlled environment. By engaging with these emotions, readers develop empathy, emotional intelligence, and an understanding of the complexities of human experiences. Children encounter characters who experience joy, sadness, fear, anger, and love, allowing children to empathize with different emotional states. This emotional engagement helps children understand and manage their own emotions, as well as develop empathy and compassion for others.

### Cultural Awareness and Appreciation

Fairy tales often reflect the cultural traditions, beliefs, and values of the societies from which they originate. By exposing children to fairy tales from different cultures, they develop an understanding and appreciation for diverse perspectives and traditions. This promotes cultural awareness, empathy, and respect for cultural differences. Fairy tales are often deeply rooted in a culture's traditions, beliefs, and values. They serve as a window into the cultural heritage of different societies, preserving and passing on these narratives from one generation to another. Fairy tales help us understand our own cultural identity and appreciate the diversity of cultures around the world.

### Language and Literacy Skills

Fairy tales contribute to language development and literacy skills. They introduce children to rich vocabulary, narrative structures, and storytelling conventions. Reading and discussing fairy tales can enhance reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and communication skills. Fairy tales contribute to language development and literacy skills. The rich vocabulary, descriptive language, and storytelling conventions used in fairy tales enhance children's language acquisition, expand their vocabulary, and improve their reading and listening comprehension. Fairy tales also introduce children to narrative structures and storytelling techniques,

laying the foundation for their own storytelling abilities.

### Entertainment and Enjoyment

Fairy tales are entertaining and enjoyable to read. They captivate readers with their magical elements, fascinating characters, and captivating plots. Above all, fairy tales provide children with enjoyment and entertainment. They captivate young minds with their enchanting narratives, magical elements, and memorable characters. Sharing fairy tales with children creates bonding experiences and fosters a love for reading and storytelling. F. J. Harvey Darton opines that children's literature was created in order to offer children a source of pleasure and not necessarily to teach and nourish them.

### Conclusion

While fairy tales have endured the test of time, it is important to note that they should be approached critically and adapted to suit the values and needs of contemporary society. By engaging with fairy tales thoughtfully, we can appreciate their enduring importance and the valuable lessons they impart. It is important to note that while fairy tales offer numerous benefits, it is crucial for parents, caregivers, and educators to select age-appropriate tales and engage in discussions to help children navigate potential themes of violence, fear, and gender stereotypes. By providing guidance and context, adults can maximize the positive impact of fairy tales on children's development.

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## QUEST FOR IDENTITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ADRIENNE RICH'S "AUNT JENNIFER'S TIGERS" AND KAMALA DAS' "THE OLD PLAYHOUSE"

SHIVANI KARN

Research Scholar, University Department of English  
Vinoba Bhave University, Hazaribag, Jharkhand

### Abstract

*The quest for identity refers to the profound existential struggle of an individual to attain meaning and value in one's life. It is an introspective odyssey, a deliberate search for roots, and an ardent endeavour for self-expression. This paper focuses on two poems: "Aunt Jennifer's Tiger" by Adrienne Rich, the most influential American poet, and "The Old Playhouse" by Kamala Das, one of the most recognized Indian poets. Both of the poems touch upon the theme of marriage and the dissatisfaction of a woman constrained by the expectations of conventional marriage. The research begins by delving into the origin and history of humans' quest for identity and attempts to explore its various dimensions in these selected poems. Employing a feminist lens, the research analyzes how the oppression of women within a marriage leads to her search for identity and amplifies her desire for freedom.*

**Keywords:** Feminism, Poetry, Adrienne Rich, Kamala Das, Aunt Jennifer, Identity, Marriage.

### Introduction

Since the advent of humanity on the earth, individuals have been endeavouring to discover the purpose of their existence. The biblical tale of Adam and Eve's act of consuming the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge offers a metaphorical reinterpretation of their quest for identity. As the subsequent generations of Adam and Eve, we inherit the legacy of this quest for self-discovery. From the mythical origin of Adam and Eve to the present, every age and period reflects the human's pursuit of identity. "Know Thyself", a philosophical maxim inscribed on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in Ancient Greece <sup>[1]</sup> is a powerful and symbolic representation of humans' enduring nature of self-discovery, and introspection. The most prominent Greek philosopher, Plato also addressed the theme of the quest for identity in his dialogues. The Allegory of Cave in Book VII of *Republic* <sup>[2]</sup> narrates the story of prisoners who were chained inside a dark cave and could only see the shadows cast by objects behind them. When a prisoner was released and exposed to the outside world, he underwent a transformative journey of self-discovery, realizing the limitations of his previous perceptions. This narrative serves as an

illustration of the individual's quest for a deeper understanding of reality and one's own identity.

The emergence of the feminist movement in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century catalysed a profound transformation in societal attitudes towards women's roles in society. The women struggled to seek opportunities beyond the domestic sphere, striving to redefine their identity beyond the constraints of traditional roles. Historically, women's identities were often closely tied to familial and marital roles, emphasizing their foremost duties as spouses, mothers, and nurtures within the confines of the domestic realm.

Adrienne Rich and Kamala Das, "separated by geographical boundaries," yet their "experiences, perspectives, ideas, and visions bear similarity" <sup>[3]</sup> and indeed, their works share a common thread in their exploration of identity. Born in Baltimore, United States, Adrienne Rich is "an influential figure in the arena of feminist movement" <sup>[4]</sup> who enriched the literature with "poetry of great beauty and power." <sup>[5]</sup> One of her most celebrated poems, "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" <sup>[6]</sup> (1951) reflects the struggles and desires of women within the stifling constraints of a patriarchal society. Kamala Das, a prominent voice

in the feminist discourse, hails from Kerala, India. An unapologetic portrayal of female sexuality in her poetry positioned her as an iconoclast in her generation. In her poems, Das “reveals her feminine sensibility” that “acquires universal significance for they reveal the predicament of contemporary women beset by her encounter with difficulties of love and sex.”<sup>[7]</sup> “The Old Playhouse”<sup>[8]</sup> (1973) by Kamala Das is a stark portrayal of the emotional wreckage of a woman that results from the societal expectations imposed on her within marriage.

### Methodology

The researcher has incorporated analytical and descriptive methodologies to explore and understand the identity theory, feminist perspectives, and socio-cultural contexts relevant to these poems. The application of explanatory and interpretative approaches in this research contributes to carrying out the comparative analysis of the selected poems and unfolding the similarity of themes between them.

### Literature Review

Adrienne Rich and Kamala Das are the two most celebrated figures in feminist literature. These two literary luminaries have attracted a lot of attention from researchers, literary lovers, critics, and feminists around the world. Consequently, a number of critical studies have been conducted on them.

In *The Politics of Gender in Poetry of Adrienne Rich and Kamala Das* (1999), Remy Titus addresses Rich as a “radical feminist” who writes “in a vein of candour and frankness, transmuting her personal experiences and giving expression to the entire women community” whereas Kamala Das tries to articulate the “female sensibility of modern India” as she is keenly aware of the “unenviable predicament” of a woman in a patriarchal society. Both poets shared a common heritage as a woman, and their mutual life experiences moulded their “poetic perspective contributing to the assertion of surprisingly identical values in life and literature”, surpassing the boundaries of their socio-cultural backgrounds.<sup>[9]</sup>

In “Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers - A Subdued Spirit of Freedom”, Mandeep Kaur discusses the poet’s attempt to portray the lives of women, where women regarded as “submissive and inferior” and their husbands play the role of “harsh taskmasters”. Rich, in her poems, examines “women’s allotted positions in American society and “tried to re-construct the identity of women as it was before being distorted by phallogocentric ideology.”<sup>[10]</sup>

“Quest for Female Identity in Kamala Das’ Poetry”, Dr. Rachna Prasad highlights how Das’ poetry often explores the “quest for identity” which emphasizes the “need for discovering the true self”. Through “The Old Playhouse”, Das has expressed her personal predicament. The poet desires to discover meaning in her life, but she too is a victim of established social norms that restrict her freedom and “she lost her own identity.”<sup>[11]</sup>

### Discussion

Adrienne Rich’s “Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers” and Kamala Das’ “The Old Playhouse” both reflect the complexities of married women ensnared within societal expectations imposed upon them within patriarchy. Marriage often turns into trap for women; “the classic 1960s feminist critique of marriage was that it suffocated women by tying them to the home and stifling their identity”<sup>[12]</sup> and even the present-day situation is not much different, as the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) “reveals that we live in a society where violence against women persists to such an extent that 32% of ever-married women aged 18-49 year have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their husband.”<sup>[13]</sup>

In “Aunt Jennifer Tigers”, Rich has projected Aunt Jennifer as a universal character, aiming to convey the experiences of women around the world who are burdened by the predetermined role of submissive wives in a society where they are expected “nor to usurp over the man, but to be in silence.”<sup>[14]</sup> Aunt Jennifer, a weak terrified woman who is trapped in a difficult marriage as the “massive

weight of Uncle's wedding band" upon her hand becomes the metaphor for the obligations of marriage, and even her death cannot bring her liberation from the identity imposed upon her.

"When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie  
Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by."

"The Old Playhouse" presents a poignant picture of a woman who gets caged in an oppressive marriage. The playhouse itself symbolizes the marriage where a woman plays the predefined roles imposed upon her by societal expectations. The poem unravels in a conversational tone; Kamala Das makes a direct confrontation from the very opening lines of the poem as she writes, 'You', the poet's husband attempts to "tame a swallow". Das identifies herself as a free bird who is now subjected to play the role of a dutiful "wife". The poet brings forth the picture of an ideal Indian house setting where a man controls a woman according to his desires in the name of love, and the obedient wife is taught to attend all the domestic needs of her husband in order to please him.

"You called me wife,

I was taught to break saccharine into your tea and  
To offer at the right moment the vitamins."

Both poets have expressed profound dissatisfaction with the marriages in their respective poems. In "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers", the "massive weight of Uncle's wedding band alludes to the burdensome marriage. The poem illustrates a picture of a physically and emotionally weak woman who is perpetually living under the fear and terror of her husband. The images of Aunt's 'fluttering fingers through wool' and being unable to pull "ivory needle" provide an insight into the obstacle she faces carrying out simple household chores. Unlike Rich, Kamala Das is more verbal, as she exhibits her discontentment with her marriage using bold and explicit images. She feels like her identity has been reduced to an object of sexual gratification for her husband. The romance of her marriage has turned into physical torture, her lustful husband dribbles "spittle into my (her) mouth." She is mentally distressed too; her response and behaviour is

"incoherent". The playhouse of her marital relationship has become dull and devoid of passion.

"There is No more singing, no more dance, my  
mind is an old Playhouse with all its lights put out."

Revolt against social norms, expectations and injustice is one of the intrinsic aspects of the quest for identity. The theme of rebellion runs through both Adrienne Rich in "Aunt Jennifer Tiger" and Kamala Das in "The Old Playhouse", although their perspectives and approaches are different. Rich portrays Aunt's silent revolt through images and symbols, while Das employs a more confrontational approach. Her 'needle work' even after the "massive weight of Uncle's wedding band" reflects the movement against the burdens and expectations of marriage in a patriarchal society. The tapestry Aunt Jennifer is creating, embroidered with 'prancing fearless tigers' serves as a metaphor for her silent rebellion. The tigers will continue to move freely and fearlessly provides an interpretation that the silent movement, Aunt ignites against the oppression of women will never extinguish even after her death.

"The tigers in the panel that she made Will go on  
prancing, proud and unafraid."

Das uses bold and direct language to express her frustration. There is a strong repulsion in her voice against the cultural expectations within the patriarchal tradition. She tries to adjust to the socially approved role of an ideal wife, but she loses her individual identity under the ego of her husband. She writes:

"Cowering

Beneath your monstrous ego I ate the magic loaf  
and Became a dwarf."

The quest for identity is an effort to achieve existential freedom from the confinement of predefined, one-dimensional role. It involves understanding the significance of existence and seeking a sense of purpose in life. The exploration of identity and the desire for freedom is a common theme in both of the poems. Aunt Jennifer's artistic creation of 'sleek chivalric' tigers prancing in green forest provides a contrast to her subdued nature and character. The tiger is a symbol of liberty, strength,

power, dominance, and confidence, whereas Aunt Jennifer exhibits the character of a timid and weak woman who is the victim of male-dominated patriarchal social system; it highlights the difference between her artistic creation and her present circumstances. Although it is apparent that the portrayal of tigers in the poem is a reflection of suppressed inner voice of Aunt Jennifer.

Kamala Das' "The Old Playhouse" explores the theme of freedom and identity through a personal and introspective lens. Das accuses her husband of domesticating her like a swallow and expresses her profound yearning for freedom. For her, the purpose of marriage is to quench her thirst" for self-knowledge, but she ends up learning the wants and needs of her husband. She is disgusted with the present circumstances of her life and wants to break free of the limitations of her married life. She compares the love between her and her husband to Narcissus, a young boy who falls in love with his own reflection and suffers a fall. Further, the poet talks about freedom and writes:

"An end, a pure, total freedom, it must will the mirrors

To shatter and the kind night to erase the water"

## Conclusion

While both poems address the theme of female identity, the nature of the quest differs. "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" focuses on a Western feminist discourse, portraying Aunt Jennifer's subtle rebellion within the confines of marriage. Aunt Jennifer becomes Rich's mouthpiece to convey the emotional and psychological toll of her marriage. In contrast, "The Old Playhouse" is rooted in Indian feminism, where the poet rejects societal roles imposed by society. Das boldly expresses the issues of love, sexuality and freedom through her personal experience.

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## EXPLORING THE DIASPORIC LIFESTYLE IN CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *THE MISTRESS OF SPICES*

I. INIYA PRIYADHARSHINI

II M.A. English

Ayya Nadar Janaki Ammal College, Sivakasi

### Abstract

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of the most popular contemporary writer in Diasporic Literature. She is an Indian born American author, poet whose most famous works were *The Palace of Illusions*, *The Forest of Enchantments*, *Arranged Marriage*, *One Amazing Thing*, *Sister of My Heart* and *The Mistress of Spices* etc. She received two notable awards namely Crawford Award, American Book Award. Her writing Style reflects the social critiques, personal accounts and cultural observations etc. The general themes observed in Divakaruni's works were Indian Experience, Contemporary America, women Immigration, History, myth and family etc. Her most famous work *The Mistress of Spices* was written and published in 6<sup>th</sup> February 1997. This Novel belongs to the genre of Fantasy Fiction with Romantic Plot Arrangement. This Novel narrates the story of Tilo, a young woman born in another time in a faraway place who is trained to be well versed in ancient art of spices and assigned as a Mistress charged with certain magical powers. This mysterious woman named Tilo, with certain magical powers owns and runs a grocery store in the inner city of Oakland. She uses her knowledge of Spices not just for cooking but also to help regarding the challenges that the Indian immigrants faced in the alien land. This Paper focussed on exploring the diasporic lifestyle in, '*The Mistress of Spices*' by investigating the life of Tilo in Oakland.

**Keywords:** Life as Mistress, Memories of Hometown, Training in Island, Culinary Fantasy, Profession etc.

### Introduction

Diasporic Literature is one of the unique genre in literature. The term diaspora historically refers to the dispersal or dissolution of Jews beyond Israel. It pragmatically refers the spread of any people from their Native land or Original Homeland. In simple words, Diasporic writings in Literature were literally narrated by the writers who lives outside of their homeland. It is associated with geographic origins distinctively. The themes elucidated in Diasporic Literature were nostalgic memories of native land, pursuit of own identity, moaning sense of guilt, uprooting & re-rooting, trauma in alienation & isolation etc. This genre reveals the life of immigrant experience through literature. Robin Cohen categorized Diasporic writings in literature in terms of Labour, Victim, Trade, Cultural, Imperial and Homeland Diasporas. In the novel of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's, *The Mistress of Spices*, the impact of Diasporic Lifestyle plays an indispensable role. Though this novel is associated with numerous themes like Food Fantasy, Quest for Self-Identity,

feminism. All these themes swirls around the Diasporic Life of the immigrant Tilo. This Research Paper focussed on the technical factors of Diasporic Culture portrayed in, *The Mistress Spices*, which unveils about the battle, quarrel & struggles faced by individuals living in a Foreign Land It additionally depicts cultural misplacement and conquest of own identity in the plot arrangement of Diasporic setting.

### Materials and Methods

For specific scrutinization of Divakaruni's description of Diasporic Lifestyle in, *The Mistress of Spices*, a subtle reading and effective analysis were proceeded on the aspects of themes, character alienation from native land to foreign country; The specific quotes that was associated with diasporic identity, the life of other immigrants living in Oakland was also analysed and used in the Methods. But before further proceedings, the life of the novelist, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni were taken into consideration to explore and relate the diasporic identity in this novel. The Secondary Sources of this

novel were also used as a material to put forth the themes that focusses on food romanticism, self-identity. These were used in elucidating diasporic culture. The next method is referring the general aspects and meaning of Diasporic identity and relating the general diasporic theme with the elements and factors of Diaspora present in the novel of '*The Mistress of Spices*'. These were the materials and Methods used in the writing of this research paper in exploring the diasporic lifestyle in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's, *The Mistress of Spices*.

### Findings and Results

In the beginning of this novel, Divakaruni vividly explains about the protagonist. She is Tilottama, who works as a Mistress of Spices in the city of Oakland. She is an immigrant from India who settled in America for her Professional Duty. It is the primary finding of this research Paper. She still tries to maintain her cultural roots in a foreign country but she adapts herself to the new environment. The next important findings in this novel, was the reason for Tilo (Short name for Tilottama) to live her life in Diasporic Lifestyle as the Spices' Mistress. She remembers her childhood memories with her previous name, Nayan Tara which means Star of the eye. But her parents didn't have hope over the girl child. The Tragedy happened in her childhood made her to talk so fast; This factor is related with the moaning & crying of Nayan Tara as an Infant. In terms of Fantasy, she posses some new mysterious powers like informing the zamindar, to find his missed ring, the reason for weaver's daughter who quits talking since the last full moon, alerting earlier about the flood to the headman of village before they ruin the whole village spreads her name to became popular among cities and neighbouring towns. This gained numerous laurels and gifts from many persons. Soon her mysterious tales of power were travelled across the oceans by merchants and sailors. This paved the way of Pirates to know about Tilo.

'Meanwhile the travelling *bauls* sang my praises, gold-smiths impressed my likeness on medallions that were worn by thousands for

luck, and merchant sailors carried tales of my powers across the harnessed seas to every land.' That is how the pirates learned of me.' (*The Mistress of Spices*, 9).

This passage reveals how her power of tales spread across the sea and so, the sea pirates learn about Nayan Tara. The Pirates came while the family of Nayan Tara were eating; they came through the bamboo walls of her father's house. They came blindly towards her, pulled her forcibly by the gold hook that was previously send by her across the ocean. The gold hook is her Mysterious Power. One of the Pirate's foot kicked the bowls forcibly. The rice and fish were scattering everywhere. A sword was stabbed at her father's chest, while some other pirates robbed the jewels, necklaces of her family. Nayan Tara tries to attack the chief Pirate with her own strength. But he flicked it away with his finger and insisted one of his fellow pirates to bind her. They tragically carried her through the burning village, the pirate's chief called Nayan Tara as Bhagyavathi which means bringer of luck.

The following lines from the original text elucidates how Nayan Tara was separated from her home land.

'Father, sisters, forgive me, I who had been Nayan Tara, who had wanted your love but only won your fear. Forgive me, my village, I who in Boredom and disappointment did this to you.' 'The pain strung like live coals in my chest as the pirates flung me onto the deck of their ship, as we took sail, as the flaming line of my homeland disappeared over the horizon.' (*The Mistress of Spices*, 19).

It unveils the isolation of Nayan Tara from her homeland, the village in India. She later brought fame and glory to the pirates for some years. The next finding is the fantasy of sea serpents whom helped Nayan Tara to escape from the Pirates. They later advised Nayan Tara about the island of spices while some sea serpents insisted her to be snake maiden. But she is interested in exploring 'The Island of Spices'. So, next from the Pirates she moved towards her destiny and passion. The result of

this finding is that, First time she has been forcibly alienated from her homeland. Second time she was rescued by the sea serpents and moved towards the spices island in pursuit of her desires and dreams. The second journey was completely with full of hope and prayers. She drove with the help of Pirates, till they were exhausted by the tiresome journey. She with immense struggle dragged herself into the island's sand with loop of dreams. The voice asked,

“What has the god of the sea belched up on our shore this morning?”

(*The Mistress of Spices*, 32)

The island members were actually talking about the Nayan Tara who was sent by god through the sea by the morning. Later she trained in the island to become a Mistress. After the purification ceremony, the first mother asked everyone whether they are certainly ready to become mistresses. They should give up their bodies, not to fell in love, never to leave up the place of spices where they are allotted to work as Mistress. These were the findings from the work. The first mother while called Nayan Tara, she says that, she already decided her name to be Tilo. This name is associated with the culinary fantasy, the name *Til* is associated with the seed of sesame from beneath the sway of planet Venus it looks golden brown as like flame. When *Til* is grounded into paste together with sandalwood, it helps in curing liver and heart diseases. When *Til* fried in own oil, it helps in restoring lusture who has lost his own interest in life. Thus she is Tilottama who works with the sesame seed *Til* helps in restoring good health and great hope as a giver of new life. Later every woman decided to be mistress were moved to their respective countries like Singapore, Dubai, New Jersey while Tilo moved towards Oakland in America. The next finding is the alienation of Tilo for the third time from the Island of Spices to Oakland. The last finding is the profession where she works as a Mistress of Spices at Oakland Restaurant where she helps numerous immigrants who came from many countries. Tilo helps with her magical powers through her spices. Once she helps Ahuja's wife, Lalita who was immigrant from Kanpur to America because of her marriage. Any

needle used by her for sewing will blossom. She is interested in sewing business as Tailor. Her dreams vanished when a neighbour informed about a man yearning American Dollars. The following passage reveals, the reason for Lalita's immigration from hometown Kanpur.

‘She looked down. In the dejected curve of her neck I saw what she did not say, the dream she had dared to: one day soon, maybe perhaps why not, her own shop, Lalita Tailor Works.’

‘Four years back a well-meaning neighbour came to her mother and said, *Bahenji*, there's a boy, most suitable, living in *phoren*, earning American dollars and her mother said Yes.’  
(*The Mistress of Spices*, 15)

This finding results about that her profession became vanished due to alienation from her homeland.

Thus in Findings and Results, the result is Tilo's alienation from her homeland which is associated with Diasporic Lifestyle. The life of Lalita as an immigrant also refers Diasporic Element.

### Interpretation and Discussion

In Interpreting the Diasporic Element of this novel, the first time she was forcibly expelled from her homeland without her interest by the Pirates. She was obviously treated as a Slave to Pirates to brought glory and fame. She is a young child. This part can be associated with child labour. Thus in Diasporic lifestyle Child Labour can interpreted with the life of Nayan Tara. Child labour is mentally, morally, physically, socially harmful to children. The worst form of child labour being slaved and isolated from families. Thus initially, she suffered as child labour being a slave to the Pirates. Next, Sea Serpents will rescue her. This can be interpreted as only through fantasy and mysterious elements, they can overcome Diasporic Lifestyle. Then she works at Oakland as Mistress of Spices. Here Nayan Tara was asked to change her name related to her profession. The name of her childhood is changed as Tilo. So her own Name and Native Cultural Identity became vanished. Thus Diasporic lifestyle gradually



transformed her not just from her homeland but also from her own family name. The life of Lalita is as an immigrant is forced by her mother. Later, it made her not to begun the Tailoring Business. Her Skills in sewing were restricted by the diasporic lifestyle.

The life of Tilo can be symbolically discussed with the author life of this novel, Divakaruni. She came from India as an immigrant to America. She pursued her education.

‘It struck me that one of the most important changes in my life that came about as a result of immigration to America is that I became a writer.’ (Chitradivakaruni)

Here Divakaruni became Writer as a result of her immigration to America, likewise Nayan Tara became Mistress of Spices at Oakland, as a result of her immigration. Thus it can be discussed as, Tilo the protagonist of this novel is symbolically representing the Author of this novel. The mysterious skills inculcated by Tilo in the island of Spices, can be interpreted as the writing skills of Divakaruni inculcated away from her hometown. Later, Tilo settled in Oakland as like Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni settled in America. To be more precise, Oakland is a city in America. So, the protagonist undeniably resembles the life of Divakaruni. Thus, the theme of Diasporic lifestyle represented through the character Tilo is an inspiration from real-life.

‘All around me I saw other immigrants’. ‘I saw how, even as they underwent a transformation, they too were transforming America.’ ‘I fictionalized it all in stories that ultimately became my very first collection, *Arranged Marriage*, and later novels such as *The Mistress of Spices*, *Queen of Dreams*, and *Oleander Girl*.’ (Chitradivakaruni)

Thus the life of Lalita narrated in this novel is a character inspired by Divakaruni from a real life immigrant. She literally fictionalized the character and unveils the theme of Diasporic lifestyle.

These were the Interpretations and discussions analysed in this Research Paper in exploring the Diasporic Lifestyle in, *The Mistress of Spices*.

## Conclusion

In this research Paper, the life of author is interpreted and discussed in exploring the diasporic lifestyle. The comparison of Author’s life with the protagonist of this novel is indispensable in scrutinizing the Diasporic Identity. The life of other immigrant Lalita also refers to the theme of Diaspora. Tilo was forced to be an immigrant by the Pirates. While, Lalita was forced to be an immigrant by her mother. The only contrast is Tilo became a Mistress of Spices because of her immigration from her homeland, but Lalita dreamt to begin her sewing business was wiped or ruined because of her immigration from homeland. Thus, Diasporic Lifestyle will both positively and negatively impact in the life of immigrants is concluded through Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s Novel, *The Mistress of Spices*!

This is the final conclusion of this Research Paper in exploring the Diasporic Lifestyle.

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# AN ANALYSIS OF NAPOLEON'S POWER TACTICS IN GEORGE ORWELL'S *ANIMAL FARM* THROUGH ROBERT GREENE'S *THE CONCISE 48 LAWS OF POWER*

R. HANNA

II B.A. English

Women's Christian College, Nagercoil

## Abstract

Power dynamics is vital in all relations, but people often ignore the complexities of it. This analysis delves into the power tactic employed by Napoleon in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. It identifies the usage of twelve laws from Robert Greene's *The Concise 48 Laws of Power* by Napoleon. It examines how despotic power and extreme imbalance in power dynamics result in unethical conduct and corrupted morality. The analysis highlights the importance of understanding power strategies employed by those in authority, where absolute power can make the person in power turn to manipulation and corruption to retain the attained power. It offers valuable insights into how easy it is to manipulate people into following extreme judgments that violate their collective and individual interests and beliefs. The common folk need to be informed about the complex dynamics of power to understand its methodical and normalized abuse. This analysis can also enable the readers to navigate complex power dynamics by casting light on strategic methods adopted by people in power to keep those beneath them uninformed and divided against themselves.

**Keywords:** Power, Corruption, Manipulation, Force.

## Introduction

The acquisition and preservation of power is a subject that has fascinated scholars for centuries. *The Concise 48 Laws of Power* provides a great understanding of this subject. One common observation is that people who possess absolute power tend to become corrupt and manipulative, fearing the loss of it. Napoleon from *Animal Farm* abuses his power over the other animals on the farm after he manages to secure himself as their sole leader. To make himself an autocratic leader, Napoleon utilizes three main strategies. He employs force and manipulation to conceal corruption and holds onto power attained through unethical ways. These methods of preserving power disregard ethical codes and morals. Napoleon's desire for power makes him resort to unethical means of keeping it, which is evident from how he manipulates his speeches to suit his agenda.

## Attaining Autocratic Power

Napoleon is a power-hungry leader who will stop at nothing to maintain his position of authority. He does

not merely desire power but undertakes several measures to reach them at the latest. He employs laws 4, 11, 15, and 23 to consolidate his leadership. In Law 4, "Always say less than necessary" (*The Concise* 13), Greene advises people to be strategic in their speech, using fewer words to make an impact. Customized speeches that cater to the listener's interests and needs can earn their respect and leave them with a sense of anticipation; Napoleon accomplishes just that with his speech. In Orwell's words, "Napoleon was a large, rather fierce-looking Berkshire boar, the only Berkshire on the farm, not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his way" (*Animal Farm* 11). Although he is not as well versed in his speech as Snowball or Squealer, he speaks when the situation demands it. Napoleon gains and maintains power over the other animals on the farm. His words allow him to control the narrative and keep people relying on him for all matters concerned with the farm.

According to Law 11, "Learn to keep people dependent on you" (*The Concise* 41), people are drawn by those who make them feel better about

themselves and will depend on those who provide them with emotional support, physical resources, or any other form of assistance. Napoleon carries out this law perfectly by becoming the sole figure of authority on the farm. He controls all access to resources, making the animals obey his every will if they wish to have access to food. He makes the animals unable to question his authority when he eliminates dissenters of the cause by compelling them to depend on him.

Law 15 states that the most effective way to destroy an enemy is by crushing them completely. If the enemy isn't wiped out and let go out of mercy or folly, he will surely recuperate in silence and come back to avenge his previous humiliation. He could become better than his previous state and turn into a threat. Likewise, Napoleon does not provide leeway or leniency to people who go against him. He swiftly exiles Snowball and eliminates all the other dissenters when he is informed of their plan to betray him or view them as a threat to his autocracy. As Orwell writes, "They were all slain on the spot. And so the tale of confessions and executions went on until there was a pile of corpses lying before Napoleon's feet and the air was heavy with the smell of blood" (*Animal Farm* 68-69). This example illustrates his complete disregard for the well-being of his fellow animals and his willingness to use violence and intimidation to maintain his control over them. He is also very particular about the people he trusts to enforce his ideologies so they don't turn on him.

Finally, Law 23 suggests concentrating forces and hoarding strength to maintain power. Greene says, "When looking for sources of power to elevate you, find the one key patron" (*The Concise* 89). Prioritizing multiple power sources can be counterproductive, as it can lead to a diffusion of efforts and a lack of focus. Napoleon's implementation of this law is pre-planned and clear when he takes the nine puppies from their mother under his care on the pretext of teaching them. These puppies later become fierce and powerful dogs that help Napoleon centralize forces and maintain power. Napoleon's unquenchable thirst for power and autocratic rule is

evident, as he employs various manipulative tactics to keep the animals under his control.

### **Maintaining Power Through Manipulation**

Preserving the power attained is as critical as the acquisition of it. Napoleon protects his power by employing laws 3, 7, 13, and 27. He sustains his exclusive and incontestable authority by exploiting the ignorance of people. He manipulates them into thinking of him as their only savior who will save them from their previous master. Law 3 stresses the significance of concealing one's intentions. The law of concealment is important where competition is fierce. When people are vying for power and influence, individuals who can keep their intentions hidden gain an advantage over those more transparent in these situations. One of the strategies for implementing this law is to cultivate an air of mystery and be less likely to be targeted by competitors or doubted by people. Napoleon does just that throughout the novel by keeping his true motives hidden from the other animals, using his rhetoric to manipulate them into doing what he wants. For example, Snowball is very transparent about his plans, "Snowball did not deny that to build it would be a difficult business" (*Animal Farm* 41), so much so that he announces plans for constructing the windmill and warns the animals that it would be an arduous task before making sure to proceed with the plan. On the other hand, when he wants to go through with the plan of building a windmill, he tells the other animals it will make their lives easier, but in reality, it will only benefit him and the pigs.

Greene's Law 7 advises one to "get others to do the work for you, but always take the credit" (*The Concise* 25). People have the desire to be recognized. By taking credit for the work of others, a person can satisfy this desire without having to expend the effort required to complete the task themselves. Additionally, delegating tasks to others can give a person more time to focus on other tasks. This style is evident in Napoleon's leadership. He delegates tasks to the other animals but takes credit for their accomplishments. Orwell notes, "Napoleon himself,

attended by his dogs and his cockerel, came down to inspect the completed work; he congratulated the animals on their achievement and announced that the mill would be named Napoleon Mill" (*Animal Farm* 39). Employing this law on its own could cause implications, but it works for Napoleon, as he manipulates people into thinking of him as a good person, accompanied by the undeniable force he commands with the help of the nine dogs. He makes them believe that he and his leadership are the cause of their success.

Law 13 states, "When asking for help, appeal to people's self-interest, never to their mercy or gratitude" (*The Concise* 49). People consider their needs before paying homage to their previous beneficiaries. Napoleon exhibits this by telling the animals that they are working for themselves, but in reality, they are working for him. Orwell writes, "Napoleon announced that there would be work on Sunday afternoons as well. This work was strictly voluntary, but any animal who absented himself from it would have his rations reduced by half" (*Animal Farm* 40). This condition of Napoleon forces the animals to work for the sake of food. He makes people think that they are working for themselves while he enjoys the fruits of their work without having to request or repay it.

Law 27 suggests that if a person can tap into the desire of people to believe in something, they can successfully create a faithful following around a product, idea, or person. Napoleon does this by using propaganda to create a cult-like following of him. He gathers supporters and ensures that other animals view him as a hero. He is so consistent with the indoctrination of his ideas that Boxer, a loyal and hardworking horse who works the hardest on the farm, eventually believes that "Napoleon is always right" (*Animal Farm* 51) and even makes it his maxim. Napoleon makes absurd promises of supplying the animals with abundant food, cozy shelter, and a leisurely life. Animals work hard, looking forward to a better tomorrow, yet unaware of the falsity in the proclamations of Napoleon, who easily manipulates them for his gain.

### Coercive Corruption Cover-up

Napoleon is corrupt, but he wants to appear as a virtuous and honorable leader who only thinks of the benefit of his subordinates and puts their welfare above his own. Many animals on the farm get fooled because of their simplistic way of thinking and living, but a select few uncover the vices of Napoleon and attempt to reveal them to the others. Despite their best efforts, the animals fail to make the others see the ugly lies, as Napoleon crushes the queries against him with force. His strategy includes laws 20, 26, 37, and 42 that enable him to enjoy the benefits of abusing his power and presenting a fair facade to the other animals to make them look up to him.

Law 20 states, "Do not commit to anyone" (*The Concise* 77). One should avoid committing to anyone early, as rushing into commitments without comprehending the consequences or understanding the situation can lead to regretful situations. Napoleon demonstrates this law immaculately and wields unbreakable power by it. He does not tie himself down with commitments and is known for breaking his promises and betraying those who trust him. He repeatedly changes the farm's rules to suit his needs, hoarding profits from the animals' labor and using it to buy luxuries for himself. Napoleon's non-commitment to people and ideas aids him in being corrupt. He employs force equally over doubted dissenters, as he has no emotional strings attached to people and abuses power independently for personal gain.

Law 26 advises the readers "Keep your hands clean" (*The Concise* 77). One should detour from involvement in activities that can tarnish their reputation or credibility, as they are crucial aspects of building power and influence. Napoleon avoids getting his hooves dirty by using his loyal followers to do his bidding. While projecting himself as a benevolent leader, he orders his dogs to attack any animal that dares to oppose, remaining in the safety of his quarters. "At this there was a terrible baying sound outside, and nine enormous dogs wearing brass-studded collars came bounding into the barn. They dashed straight for Snowball, who only sprang

from his place just in time to escape their snapping jaws" (*Animal Farm* 43-44). Here, Napoleon commands the dogs to go after Snowball and maintains his image by keeping himself away from the brutalities of his subordinates.

According to Law 37, "Create compelling spectacles" (*The Concise* 147, creating spectacles aligned with one's goals and values can command the attention and respect of those around them. Napoleon uses propaganda and staged events to conceal his greedy and corrupt ways, distracting the other animals from his debased actions. For example, he holds a grand feast in honor of the freedom they have achieved, secretly hoarding the profits for himself. The animals only focus on the rare abundance of food and do not consider where all their harvest reaches, carried away by the moment of joy.

Law 42 provides insights on how to deal with dissenters or people who oppose. "Strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter" (*The Concise* 168). The leader is the one who holds the group together, and without their guidance, the group is likely to fragment and lose its power. The law advises focusing on removing the leader of a group or organization to destabilize and weaken the entire group. Napoleon employs this law when he eliminates Snowball. He does not target others who support him but chooses to destroy the source of his troubles even before it becomes a threat.

## Conclusion

Lord Acton's adage highlights an undeniable reality, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men,

even when they exercise influence and not authority: still more when you superadd the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority". Napoleon's actions serve as a stark warning against the dangers of unchecked power and the need for constant vigilance to safeguard against such abuses. *Animal Farm* is not a fable but an allegory of real-life leaders who were not the last to succumb to the greed for power and corruption. Many leaders who began as hopeful revolutionaries have stained the pages of history with innocent blood after amassing power. Their inspiring goals and ideals also change to personal gain and comfort, having experienced the luxuries of corruption and endless greed. Is it practically possible for people to remain modest with an unchanging but not rigid mind even after being provided with despotic power? It is better to know the rules of the power dynamic game rather than being hopeful pawns supporting naive and transparent leaders who could very well be the villains of the game.

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## PRICKING CONSCIENCE IN “INHERITANCE” BY JOHN AGARD

R. A. DONA ANGEL

III B.A. English Literature

Women's Christian College, Nagercoil

### Abstract

*The advent of twenty-first century witnessed wondrous developments in technology. Though these have made human life simpler and comfortable, are not without detrimental effects. The never-ending human search for comfort has created problems for which solutions cannot be sought for. One such is the drastic climate change and weather pattern which has led to off seasonal floods, droughts and many other natural disasters. Literature being the reflection of life hasn't left climate change untouched in its domain. John Agard is an Afro-Guyanese playwright, poet and children's writer, now living in Britain. His poem titled "Inheritance" deals with climate change in a way that stirs up the conscience of any human being. This work is intended to bring out the pricking conscience that any person would feel on recognising that he/she has retained a planet not safe for existence as inheritance for children.*

**Keywords:** *Inheritance, Conscience, Survival, Pollution, Guilt, Impulsiveness, Global Warming, Deforestation.*

### Introduction

The poem "Inheritance" is a confession of the disturbed and frustrated mind of the poet John Agard. In the poem, he gives voice to the voiceless thoughts of the millions who keep on pondering yet fail to give them a written expression. The poem consisting of only eighteen lines, written in simple language and style, conveys a message of paramount significance and importance for the current generation. Nevertheless, there exists a multitude of governmental and non-governmental organisations which strive hard regarding climate change. One factor that gives the touch of Agard's poem is that it mentions that our earth is already on the verge of death with its lungs failing, water bodies turned into garbage dumps and even the sky shunned behind a mass of smoke and other hazardous vapours. The poem can also be considered as a cry among the present generation on, if the planet we inherited from our ancestors is in such a pathetic condition, then what would be its state when it would be handed down to the next generation, with such drastically high rates of destruction.

Literature is something that appeals to mankind emotionally and connects with the mind of a person. Every work of literature is written to express what the writer feels about the world around him/her.

In this aspect, John Agard is no different from other writers. His poem "Inheritance" is a warning shouting out to the people around to think about the lives of the future generations of mankind on earth, which without measures being taken to protect the planet, would no doubt turn into a place no better than a hovel. But Humans are not like yeast, which continues to metabolise uncontrolledly, until it is poisoned by its own waste products. As human pollution level rises, the political imperative to do something about it increases all well (BCC Science Focus). John Agard's poem is such a call for action before it is too late, as the saying better late than never.

### Questioning Conscience

John Agard, in the exposition of the poem "Inheritance", raises a question about the conscience that humanity has. The poet blames both the preceding and the current generation of humans for polluting the air with hazardous gases and other volatile chemicals that have infected the lungs of the planet, the rainforests, in the name of development. Agard writes, "...inherit an earth/ whose rainforest lungs/ breath a tale of waste-" (Agard, Inheritance, Line 2-4). These lines expose the level of damage humans have done to life sources. The IQ Air List 2020 reveals that India ( $51.90 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) ranked third among the top ten countries with high levels of air

pollution. According to a new study led by researchers from the Global Observatory on Pollution and Health at Boston College, the Indian Council of Medical Research, and the Public Health Foundation of India, air pollution in India resulted in 1.67 million deaths in 2019 – the largest pollution-related death toll in any country. The study also accounted for \$36.8 billion in economic losses (Boston college News).

Agard then depicts how the blue planet is starting to turn into darker hues with its oceans being dumped with all sorts of wastes and pollutants that are harmful. Agard thus names the oceans of the planet “ailing sea” (Agard, “Inheritance”, Line 5). The oceans and seas across the globe are not just polluted by factory outlets and other chemicals, it also includes radioactive byproducts that are released from different atomic power stations and other research labs. On a global level, a total of 85,100 TBq ( $8.5 \times 10^{15}$  Bq) of radio-active waste are being released at over 100 ocean sites, as measured in initial radioactivity at the time of dump (Wikipedia). Though many atomic researchers claim that the byproducts released are diluted they are far from reality. The materials affect the different life forms of the ocean and ends the food chain through fish and other sea foods, ultimately finding its way back to its creators, that is, the humans.

The impulsive instinct of man to act without thinking is the root cause of all the dilemmas. Mankind today is only concerned about materialistic wealth, all that matters is heaping huge profits. When money is the only focus all other aspects that play vital roles in our survival are neglected. In the obsession for wealth, mankind has exploited and plundered from mother earth more than what can ever be given back. According to UN Environment’s *Global Resources Outlook 2019*, prepared by the International Resource Panel, resource extraction has more than tripled since 1970, including a fivefold increase in the use of non-metallic minerals and a 45 per cent increase in fossil fuel use (UN Environment programme). If retribution for the acts is sought for, the only way would be to stand together and prevent

further destruction while obliging time for the planet to heal itself. The planet has already reached a level of damage, from which reversal is practically impossible. Nevertheless, during the COVID pandemic lockdown there was a drastic decline in the amount of pollution rates, for instance, recent analysis shows that there has been a 17% decline in the levels of CO<sub>2</sub>, that are annually released into the atmosphere (PNAS Organization). This data illustrates the planet can be successfully restored to a sustainable state. But the need of the hour is to act, it is this very conflict in human mind to choose between comfort and action, which gives rise to a questioning conscience eventually leading to a disturbed mental state.

### Remorse

Literature all over the world stores within it a great deal of scenic beauty and mystical descriptions of how blissful Earth is. Agard also mentions him and others who would still remember how the world was before man-made alterations. Agard calls it a moment of nostalgia to remember the green grasses that grew soft on the ground, filling the void with greenery. Agard mentions that if the present rates of pollution and exploitation continue then, “...the grass goes nostalgic/ at the mere mention of green” (Agard, Inheritance, Line 9-10). These lines are very much relatable to anyone as over the years there has been a significant diminishment in the level of greenery around. And anyone who has lived over fifty years could substantiate this claim.

The UNFAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation) estimates that 10 million hectares (24.71 million acres) of forest are cut down each year. This is not a fact that should be read while comfortably sipping coffee, mankind ought to act before it’s too late. On average one acre of new forest can sequester about 2.2 tons of carbon dioxide annually. This is significant considering that no man-made technology can accomplish such a feat. With the current rate of decrease in forest lands, there has been a significant rise in the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere leading to global warming and all other disasters connected to it. It is a shame for mankind that a single species has managed to

vandalise the planet, which is a host to innumerable species. Yet it is not necessary that industrialization and modernization should be put to an abrupt end to save the planet, mankind have adopted to live within comfort zones and the solution encompassing both would be to implement sustainable measures.

### Realisation

Agard on moving towards the closing of his poem, puts forth one question to all the readers, which could also be inferred as the desperate questioning of one who cares for the planet. "One question: should we dance/ or break into gnashing of teeth/ at the news of our inheritance?" (Agard, *Inheritance*, Line 16-18). Agard's view is one that every human should have. The dilemma one faces when considering, if he/she should feel happy that the planet we received as inheritance is not fully deleterious or if the person should feel desperate about the inheritance that the present generation will pass on to the next. These lines are a call to the public to act on their part. In the words of Mr. Lester R. Brown, an American Environmental Analyst it was rightly put is "we have not inherited this earth from our forefathers; we have borrowed it from our children"

Every parent desire to provide for their children to the best of their ability. Hence it can also be interpreted that Agard is trying to approach the readers emotionally to make them realize the seriousness of the issue hoping that some kind of measures will be undertaken. Even in the Bible one comes across the verse "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?" (Matthew 7: 9-12, *The Bible*). When everyone, however self-centred he/she might be, knows always give the best to their children, why isn't the same logic applied when it comes to our planet, which is the largest inheritance one leaves behind for his/her generations to come.

### Conclusion

Though space researchers and scientist claim that there are numerous planets which resemble Earth and its atmospheric makeup, such as Gliese 667CC, Kepler-22B, Kepler-69C, Kepler-62F, Kepler-186F,

Kepler-442B, Kepler-452B, Kepler-1649C, Proxima Centauri B and Trappist-1E (Space.com), Earth is the only one where human being can live. Earth alone is the only planet that helps survival of *homo sapiens*. The current scenario is one where the planet and its inhabitants are under threat. In accordance with the phrase, "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush". It is always wise that we protect what we have with us rather than live in hope of a chance of escape that no one has ever seen. The society today has no realization that it is already too late to act, worse is the fact that many live in false hopes that money can safeguard their lives from all approaching dangers. The poet experiences utmost pain because of guilt, which is mostly caused by his apprehension that he is not able to protect the inheritance of his children.

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## HUMANISM IN TAGORE'S SHORT STORIES

**R. DHANUPRIYA**

*Ph.D. Research Scholar  
Takshashila University, Tindivanam*

**R. PRIYADHARSHINI**

*I M.A. English  
Idhaya College of Arts and Science for Women, Puducherry*

### Abstract

*This paper sincerely attempts to illustrate Tagore's humbleness and generosity with which he portrays some of the characters of his short stories. This research paper has chosen three short stories of Tagore, "Kabuliwala", "The Postmaster" and "Subha" to bring forth the elements of Universal Humanism. Tagore's Universal Humanism is largely expressed through his concept of inter-personal relationship. The paper also throws lights on Tagore's deep love and affection that brought him closer to his characters such as farmers, fishermen, family heads and ordinary women. The paper further examines how Tagore assessed those people of different race and social status and especially those steeped in pain and poverty. Tagore is regarded as the inventor of modern Bengali short stories. Most of his works later came into English either through the translation by Tagore himself or by others. Finally, the paper finds out an assessment of Tagore's persistent feeling of sympathy and his anti-racist stand which make him a groundbreaking humanist. Tagore's in-depth observation of human sufferings and concern for mankind produce such characters as Subha, Kabuliwala, Ratan who will continue to echo for generations in human minds.*

**Keywords:** Human Sufferings, Universal Humanism, Humbleness and Generosity.

### Introduction

Tagore is widely viewed as the creator of the modern Bengali short story. He has introduced colloquial language into Bengali literature. Tagore can be placed with the forerunners of short story like Edgar Allan Poe, Anton Chekhov and Guy de Maupassant. His stories usually set in rural Bengali villages are based on the under-privileged sectors of Indian society which echo his commitment to social justice.

Tagore was a great humanist and a true citizen of the world. He believed in one world and in the eternal vision of man growing into Vasu Deva Kudumbagam. Thus Tagore looks at man both from within and from without. The dehumanization in all affairs of life has pained Tagore. The best of man as Tagore rightly thinks suffers terribly because the best of his thoughts die unborn and unexpressed.

Tagore's short stories throw lights on the simple life styles of men and womenfolk of Indian society. The primary themes of his stories are universal love and care unbiased. His stories habitually focus on the

spirit of psychological and social realism of women, the underprivileged and the downtrodden, with concrete human situations and therefore, provide a searching analysis of their position in Indian society. Through his stories, Tagore vividly portrays the different moods of his characters' pressures, battles, paradoxes, preventions and humiliations, marital relationships and various forms of separation of wedded life. His stories throw lights on the changing part of our Indian society from the polarities of **tradition and modernity** (yesterdays and today's) and **idealism and opportunism**. In the name of tradition, his women characters are struggling against the dehumanization of our society. Tagore assigns a central place to women in his short stories. Tagore has presented the two identical aspects of human personality with equal zeal.

## Literature Review

V.S. Naravane comments on Tagore:

*"Tagore the short story writer and novelist, like Tagore the philosopher, recognizes that man has in him an Infinite as well as a Finite element; and that nobility, love and calmness are as 'real' as depravity, hatred and tensions. He, therefore, creates people who have the same passion, foibles and frailties that we have, but who can surprise us by clashes of profound wisdom or by acts of supreme self-sacrifice."*

## Objectives

1. To study and explore how contemporary literature reflects and shapes our understanding.
2. To study and explore Tagore's major contributions in the field of short stories.
3. To study and explore the Humanism through Tagore's short stories and find rooms for further research.

## Research Methodology

In this research work, the researcher has used the qualitative research in the form of literary work. Statistics and data analyzing are not necessary in examining and exploring the facts in qualitative research. Therefore, it does not require any calculation and enumeration. The researcher works on descriptive method.

## Findings and Results

The short story *"Kabuliwala"* is about an unlikely friendship that blossoms between a dry fruit hawker Abdur Rahman, and Mini, a five-year-old girl. Rahman hails from Kabul to Calcutta to sell dry fruits and nuts. Mini lives with her parents in Calcutta. Her father is none other than Tagore himself, is the narrator of the story. Mini is a slightly shy in front of Rahman upon first meeting, but they form a sweet wholesome bond as days pass on. Rahman is arrested for man handling a person who refused to pay his debts to him and spends years in prison. As years pass on Mini grows up and forgets about Rahman. The twist in the story happens when Kabuliwala comes back to meet her after his release from prison which is on Mini's wedding day.

The story, *"Kabuliwala"*, is narrated from the first-person perception of Mini's father. There is a vibrant social-class difference between Abdur Rahman and Mini's family. In the opening scene, the narrator is indifferent towards Rahman, casually conscious of their places in society. He observes the friendship developing between Rahman and Mini, how Rahman handles Mini's questions and engages her. It is when Rahman comes back from prison to see Mini again he observes and realizes that Rahman, too, has a daughter back in Kabul of Mini's age and Mini reminded him of her.

There is a friendship between them despite the social-class difference. They understand each other's concern. After Mini gets married, she won't be a part of her parents' life in the same way again. On the other hand, Rahman has lost so much time with his daughter, and he wants to build a connection with her again.

Mini grows up, and her calculations with persons change including with her parents, and she forgets about the Kabuliwala. Here, the story throws lights on how human emotions and relationships change with time. It is one of the most prominent things we noticed while reading the story. As a young girl-child, Mini loved spending time with her father, it didn't matter what they were going to do. When she grows up, her life got totally changed upon and now she is getting married. In the story, Rahman's imprisonment appears to be his time being frozen. He expects that things will be the same when he gets out of prison, but unfortunately, that's not the case.

We feel like the way the situation ends up for Rahman, is so sad. He has lost all his time, in prison but when he comes out he comes to know that life has moved on. The story stands honest in its ground but it deals with complex human emotions. The way the story is written pulls at our heartstrings. It does a lovely job capturing the time of a colonial India. It is minimalistic, but it is whole-hearted and deep.

The short story, *"The Postmaster"*, is about a contrasting bond that blossoms between a Postmaster and an orphan girl Ratan. The Postmaster is brought to a far-flung village, where he finds himself deserted and needs somebody to share his feelings.

Ratan is an orphan girl who longs for love and warmth. She helps the postmaster by doing his household work, while he showed his concern by teaching her language lessons. Their bonding grows up in spite of their different social status.

Human relations have no barriers. When the postmaster resigns from his job, Ratan's intimate feelings become obvious. He fails to understand her emotions. He finds refuge in the thought that there are many departures and deaths in life. On the other hand, the poor girl is not in a position to understand. The bond between the postmaster and Ratan grows through the course of the story. It develops from the need of both of them to have a companion.. One day, the postmaster tells Ratan that he is going to teach her to read and write. She grows closer to him and sees him as her only family member. She develops dependent on him. When the postmaster falls ill, Ratan takes care of him and he recovers, just taking her presence for granted. But, he decides to leave the village. He calms down Ratan by saying that he would inform the new postmaster about her. He even offers her some money for her living. She refuses both and expresses that she doesn't want to stay no longer there. She yearns for him to come back, "wandering about the post office with tears streaming from her eyes".

In the short story "**Subha**", we have the themes of fear, isolation, loneliness, connection, selfishness, innocence, tradition and control. This story is narrated in the first person narrator. Subha is the youngest of the three daughters of Banikantha's family. The three daughters have rhyming names "**Sukeshini, Suhasini and Subhashini**". Tagore understood the deprived Indian men and women better than anyone in Indian Writing in English. Tagore portrayed the everyday agonies of the women rather than questioning the wider question of feminism. In '**Subha**', Tagore addresses isolation and lack of chance for women with auditory and speech impairment. The heading of the story is known after its main character, 'Subha'. Her full name is Subhashini which means 'soft-spoken'.

The story takes place in a small village called Chandipur, by the riverside in present-day West Bengal. Subha's parents had got two elder daughters married '*with usual expenses and effort.*' Subha lived on the sidelines, after finishing her domestic chores; she would go to the riverside along with her two friends "**Sarbbashi and Panguli**", the two cows. Her isolation found solace in a friendship with two cows, goats and a kitten. Another relationship that the story discovers is between Subha and a young boy named Pratap. The boy is idle and spends time by the river by fishing. Subha usually sits at a distance to him. There is no communication between them.

As the villagers began to talk about the young unmarried girl at Banikantha's home, Subha's father left for Calcutta for a few days. On arrival, he said, "*We must go to Calcutta*". This was intolerable for Subha. In Calcutta, the groom visits with his friend and finds the teary-eyed Subha suitable for marriage. Tagore justifies in such a way that Subha was not at fault, for she never deceived anyone. But leaves the reader thinking on what future might behold for Subha – the innocent voiceless village girl and now send back from her in-laws house. Gender plays an important role for the chances and in future possibilities. As woman, Subha is at a disadvantage which is added fuel to her burning impairment.

### Interpretation and Discussion

The short story of "**Kabuliwala**" revolves around the theme of The Transcendental Quality of Human Connections as it discovers the bonds that form between people from different backgrounds and the emotions that surpass language and cultural differences. The main theme of this story is that humans, no matter what their nationality, are all the same, the deep love that fathers have for their children. While "**Kabuliwala**" shows how time can test relationships, the story also shows the long-lasting power of human emotions. The result of time on relationships is best seen in the bond between Mini and the Kabuliwala. When she was a child, both Tagore's daughter and the old Kabuliwala were the best friends.

In the short story, *"The Postmaster"*, we find out his longing for a human companion when the author describes: *He felt how it would be to have a close companion here, a human object for the heart's most intimate affections.* Slowly it seemed that the bird was saying this, again and again; that in the afternoon shade and solitude the same meaning was in the whisper of the leaves. The incessant rain shuts the world out and a depressing mood is created. The narration follows a sequential order, producing the effect of watching a film. We also notice a metaphorical use of language and appropriate figures of speech. One of the finest stories of human love and emotion, revolving primarily around the theme of 'yearning and separation', we could ever set our eyes upon.

In the short story of *"Subha"*, we have the themes of fear, isolation, connection, selfishness, innocence, tradition and control. Tagore portrays how Subha, though deaf and mute had feelings and emotions that people around her seen indifferent. And, the parents' burden of marrying off a deaf and dumb girl is above the anxieties and desires of the girl. The heading of the story is given after its central character, 'Subha'. The full name is Subhashini which means 'soft-spoken'. "When the girl was named as Subhashini, who could have guessed that she would be dumb?"

The women characters in short stories of Tagore are full of vigour and variety. Immense variety of women is presented in the short stories of Tagore. Each character is unique by itself. The brief analyses of above women characters from the short stories of Tagore would provide sufficient evidence to say that

women characters in the short stories of Tagore are lively, charming and sparkling.

### Conclusion

Finally this paper identifies and illustrates Tagore's ideology in terms of the women (inner) experience; the different dimensions of man-woman relationship and the importance of love in one's life. While revealing the heart of women in the short stories, Tagore has advocated about the psychological need to give physical and mental 'space' to women.

The dehumanization of men and women as seen in all cruelty affairs of life has pained Tagore. The best of men and women as Tagore rightly reflects suffers terribly because the best of his thoughts die unborn and unspoken. Tagore as a humanist, throughout his stories stands in between - the flesh and the spirit, the human and the divine, social obligation and individual life, the respect for tradition and the respect for social justice. These opposite feelings must be reunited, not by tentative compromises but by building a true consistency out of the inconsistency.

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## SILENT STRUGGLES: UNVEILING THE PAIN OF WOMEN IN MAMANG DAI'S *THE LEGENDS OF PENSAM*

**W. BLESSY**

*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English & Research Centre  
Women's Christian College, Nagercoil  
Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli*

**Dr. G. J. HAMLIN**

*Assistant Professor, Department of English & Research Centre  
Women's Christian College, Nagercoil  
Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli*

### Abstract

*The traditional beliefs, cultural norms have been challenges for the growth of women from the times immemorial. The study highlights the difficulties that Adi women encounter in the society and it also emphasis the silent suffering that women experience in their day to day lives. The primary objective of the paper is to expose the reality of women in Northeast India through the female characters of Mamang Dai's The Legends of Pensam. Mamang Dai, an Indian writer from Arunachal Pradesh, often reflects the diverse roles of women in her works. Dai belongs to Adi tribe; her artwork depicts the survival of Adi people amidst horrible incidents. She investigates the multiple roles of women in Northeastern India. The women in Northeastern society, accept their fate as subordinate without questioning the dominant's discourses. Through the amplification of women's voices and experiences, Dai's storytelling illuminates the goals, difficulties and contributions of women in the region. This paper seeks to examine the hardships faced by women in Northeast India. It also aims to look at the sufferings of women and how they remain entangled in a web of traditions and customs.*

**Keywords:** Tradition, Sufferings, Adi Tribe, Marriage.

The Northeastern region is renowned for its surreal beauty and bewildering diversity. The Northeastern region comprises the seven sister states, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim. Mamang Dai is a typical poet, novelist, and journalist from Arunachal Pradesh. She is notable for her novel, *The Legends of Pensam*.

*The Legends of Pensam* is a series of interconnected stories. It authentically portrays rich oral history of Adis, lifestyles, their myths and legends. It depicts the day-to-day life structure of Adi tribes, as well as their customs and traditional beliefs. It also demonstrates how their lives are left vulnerable to supernatural forces like spirits, shamans, and unnatural events. The women of the Adi tribe led traditional lives, believing in fate and accepting customs and rituals as they were. Women's thoughts and desires were unmet a lot

since they sacrifice their lives to support their families. In Adi tribe, most women had lived half happy life because they lost their husbands in hunting accidents. In the novel many widows are seen. Unpredictable things often happen in the society. Injury and death often occur in family, life seemed to be cheerful in the morning and depressing in the evening. Majority of the women were sufferers because within adulthood they lost their husbands, and they were left with no happiness for the rest of their life.

Individuals who have a strong bond with the natural world experience a great deal of loss and suffering but they tackle those situations with their courage and self-determination. For women in Adi tribe life seemed to be altering due to unfortunate events so Dai portrays life as "In the midst of injury and death, newly-weds fought, stormed out of their homes, deserted the children and hurled abuse at one

another, as if the business of living and loving was a temporary arrangement” (15).

The women in Northeastern society lived their life as usual like others but they concealed their suffering and went through many aspects in life. In the chapter “Pinyar, the widow” Pinyar is in love with a man named Orka from another village; because Orka’s clan is harmful, Pinyar’s family rejects her love, but she finds it difficult to accept, whereas she became pregnant with Orka’s child. So, her family members agreed to commemorate her marriage. However, Orka intended to leave Pinyar within a year, taking a baby with him. Since, she was the cause of her tragedy, Pinyar was viewed as inferior by society. Pinyar expected Orka to live with her, offering her a sense of fulfillment in life; nevertheless, his rejection caused her to lose her identity in the society and until her death she lived scheduled life without any identity. Similarly, in Gita Hariharan’s *“The Thousand Faces of Night”* the writer depicts the ways in which societal expectations force women to conform to specific roles and suppress their true selves, ultimately pushing them further from their identity. Through the novel, the novelist also portrays the characters’ inner strength to make sense of their circumstance and defy social and cultural expectations in order to withstand in society without losing identity.

The underlying presumptions that underpin society’s framework have an impact on women’s lives and compel them to live inauthentic lifestyles all the time. For women, marriage life is a significant aspect of life. So, Pinyar is again married to Lekon. She tragically lost him in a hunting accident so she was thought to be unlucky, the town exiled her after her house burned down in fire. Therefore, she lived in the forest and is disconnected away from the society. Pinyar says, describing her situation as “It seems my destiny is cursed” (28). Women were held accountable by society for the events in their life. In, Pinyar’s case she experiences social oppression by the society because no one is willing to accept her. While society relied on women to shoulder the responsibilities of raising a family, it did not acknowledge the wants and desires of women. Due

to cultural norms women’s desires were repressed. The societal norms, cultural attitudes, and historical structures are reasons for women’s suffering. Toril Moi in *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* depicts the views of Beauvoir’s main concerns about the status of women in history as follows:

throughout history, women have been reduced to objects for men: ‘woman’ has been constructed as man’s Other, denied the right to her own subjectivity and to responsibility for her own actions... patriarchal ideology presents woman as immanence, man as transcendence... these fundamental assumptions dominate all aspects of social, political and cultural life and, equally important, how women themselves internalize this objectified vision, thus living in a constant state of ‘inauthenticity’ (90).

In the chapter “the words of women” Dai illustrates the daily struggles that women confront. The women in Adi tribe worked in the forest every day by cutting woods. The work is too hard for them as they could not talk to each other amidst the work because of the work burden. Due to heavy work the character, Arsi exclaims ‘Hai! Why? Why do we have to kill ourselves like this? Is this a life? Is this all there is? How can it be!’ (74). Arsi hated the place she lived because of the harsh realities which she faced. Even the climatic conditions like constant rain made them unhappy so Arsi exclaims ‘In my next life I shall be born a bird’ (75).

When Arsi shared her longings and wishes to Mimam, she states that if a woman becomes too intelligent, no one will marry her. She also says that a woman must marry and the real measure of a woman’s value is how well she fulfils her duties as a wife and mother. In culture rooted society women were viewed as incomplete without marriage. According to Fredrickson & Roberts, women are frequently seen by society as sexual objects. Women’s potential and inner desires were restricted because they were viewed as nothing more than objects and instruments. As illustrated by the life of Arsi’s mother, even married men have the desire to marry another wife. Arsi’s mother was enraged when her husband decided to take another wife while she was battling for her life. Arsi, a young child who had lost her mother, asked, ‘Why is life so sad when

it is so short?"(78). A man vows to love women for ever but, he tests her, leaves and returns to her it is explicated in the life of women.

The character Nenem described in the chapter "river woman" Nenem, the river woman, fell in love with David, a British officer. Despite all of the rumours and shock, she accepted miglun's attention and loved him. She loved freedom. Love seemed such a difficult goal for them. When scandal broke out Sogong, the headman, avoided talking to his daughter. Nenem is capable of doing anything if baited or prevented from doing what she wanted. Nenem's mother cursed the day in which Nenem was born. Nenem's mother also cursed her drunkard husband. The Senior of David claimed that the inhabitants of this place are peculiar and they won't transplant easily. Nenem was devastated, yet she chose not to accompany David because of her strong bondage with her land, and her deep bondage with culture. She did not allow her natural self to flourish because she was uprooted with her culture and land, but she was heartbroken. "She threw up her hands to her face and wept. 'Oh! he is gone! We will never see each other again! What will I do? What will I do?'" (108). When David left the place, Nenem's aunt told her that "Let him go. Don't hurt yourself" (116). She counselled her to share her love with other good people. Nenem resumed her previous lifestyle and did household chores after some days. She pretended she was untouchable because she had overcome her fear of pain and hurt. Nenem told herself as 'No one dies of love. I loved him, and now I am enough on my own'(109). Nenem is unable to leave her land so for five years she pined in secret. Then, Nenem is shocked to hear the proposal from Kao, eventually he married Nenem. But she never forgot David. Even the true feelings of women were not valued. Moreover, the true reality of women in society is described by Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* as the women were entangled by culture prescribed roles and it does not allow their natural self to flourish.

In, the chapter "the Golden Chance" following the death of his wife, Rigbi left the village and the people around him said he could marry again. But

the same society treated Pinyar as unlucky after her husband's death and the people around her subjugated her from society. She remained enslaved because of the corrupt values in the society and it taught her, her purpose in life is to serve man. Throughout the novel, Women silences their voices in their representation. And like oppressed, they adapted themselves to the rules of game that do not reflect their interest or desires and women were alienated from their true selves.

Thus, through *The Legends of Pensam*, Mamang Dai voices out the silent struggle experiences of Northeastern women, how they accept traditions despite psychological obstacles, as shown in Pinyar's life. The women were looked upon by society as inferior even though it seems they were placed in higher status comparing to rest of the country. The women did not allow themselves to flourish because of the social system because the cultural norms created a notion among Adi tribe as "To be happy, a woman has to be born lucky" (82). If women experience any unusual incidents over their lifetime like Pinyar, they were viewed as unlucky. Thus, the deep desires and longings of the women are frustrated. So, in order to make life meaningful women should therefore be able to handle such circumstances and establish their importance in society by doing beneficial activities in the society.

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## BLUE HUMANITIES IN '*LIFE OF PI*'

ARYA S NAIR

Research Scholar, Department of English  
AVVM Sri Pushpam College (Autonomous), Poondi, Tanjavur

### Abstract

*Blue Humanities is an emerging area of research in the field of English Literature. Water is a major component that occupies nearly seventy percent of the total of earth's surface in various forms like ice, streams, ponds, oceans etc. Human beings cannot survive on Earth with no water. And planet Earth is popularly known as 'blue planet'. So, 'blue' stands for water and humanities means 'the life of essence of being human beings'. Therefore, 'Blue Humanities' study of life in water bodies like oceans, rivers, ponds etc. This research paper attempts to have a blue humanities in the world famous novel, 'Life of Pi'. It is a renowned novel of the Canadian writer Yann Martel that was released in 2002. The novel tells the courageous fight of Pi with the waters of Pacific ocean. The issue of human versus nature can be seen in its totality. Along with Pi, is the tiger - Richard Parker. He too survives at the end of the novel by battling with the water. The power of water as a boon and bane to humanity can be read along with Blue Humanities approach in 'Life of Pi'.*

**Keywords:** Blue Humanities, Water, Nature, Pi, Richard Parker.

In *Glossary of Literary Terms*, literature is defined as 'fictional and imaginative writings – poetry, prose, fiction and drama' (Abrahms and Harpham 199).

Literature is the product of an age. It is the amalgamation of fiction with reality. Through literature, life gets expressed explicitly. The word 'literature' is believed to have originated from the Latin word, 'literatura' which means letters. The earliest manifestations of literature were the pre historic paintings by the nomadic man. The nomadic man used to travel from one place to another place in search of food and shelter. With the passage of time, oral poetry came into being. Then, with the invention of printing press, the letters became fixed. Then, by fifteenth century, drama came into being. In drama, the encapsulation of the oral and the written words take place. By the eighteenth century, the genre of novels came into being. With novels, the readership increased among people of all age groups. Then, by nineteenth century, the development of films took place.

Eighteenth century is popularly known as 'age of novels'. Since then, novels as a genre created its own niche in world literature. They are those literary creations in which imagination is kept in its highest order. In one single sitting, one can complete reading

a novel. There are different type of novels like epistolary novel, gothic novel, romantic novel etc. Gothic novels place emphasis on supernatural elements. Epistolary novels are those novels in the form of letters. All these novels depicted the reality of life to its fullest. Adventurous novels are those novels that places high prominence on adventures. Adventures provide energy to mind and the body. These are sort of picaresque novels. These kind of novels also provide space for adventures of all sort.

The aesthetics of literature got enhanced by the introduction of theories. One of the recently developed and developing theory in the field of literature is 'Blue Humanities'. 'Blue Humanities' study of water and the life associated with it. Water was a major symbol in literature since ancient times. But, now water has become subject for 'academic scrutiny'. English Professor Steve Mentz coined the term, 'Blue Humanities'. The major thing about Blue Humanities is that the shift of "focus" have changed from the land to the sea. This branch also provides multi dimensional aspects of ocean study, especially its negligence. The paintings of M W Turner and Winslow Homer provided notches of Blue Humanities. With the aspect of sailing, water studies

in particular ocean studies became an area of exciting discovery and attention.

Blue Humanities studies about water bodies in general and it is interdisciplinary in nature. It has relationship with Ecological Studies, Environmental studies, Physics, Bio - Chemistry etc. Another name for Blue Humanities is 'Blue Cultural Studies'. The main scholars of Blue Humanities approach include Dan Brayton, Steve Mentz and Hester Blum. One of the main reasons why ocean literature studies have come up is due to the cultural insignificance given to ocean studies.

The term 'Blue Humanities' can be decoded in the following way. The colour 'blue' is related to water. For example, 'blue economy' is the name given to water related aspects. Blue colour also stands for royalty. This can be directly linked to the significance of water in human life and on earth. Water accounts for seventy percent of Earth's surface. Then, 'humanities' refers to the study of human beings in general.

*Life of Pi* is a world renowned novel by Yann Martel. It was released in the year, 2001. The year, 2001 makes it very clear that it was the beginning of a new century - a new dawn. This particular novel created a wave in world literature through its evoking powerful imageries. Yann Martel is a Canadian writer who got a place in world literature through *'Life of Pi'*. His initial literary works failed to create an impression on world readers. Critics have claimed that Martel's initial writings were filled with 'immaturities'.

*Life of Pi* is a famous by Yann Martel. It was released in the year, 2001. The year, 2001 makes it very clear that it was the beginning of a new century - a new dawn. This particular novel created a wave in world literature through its evoking powerful imageries. This noted literary work won the prestigious Man Booker Prize and was adapted into a movie with the same title, by Ang Lee. The novel also uses 'I' point of narration.

*'Life of Pi'* tells the moving story of Pi. One day, he was caught in a storm and he lost all his family members. Pi survived the storm attack along with

some animals including the ferocious tiger, Richard Parker. Pi at first and throughout the novel is afraid of Richard Parker. Both of them seemed to develop a sort of intimate relationship. But, always the 'aura of fear' existed between them. Man - animal fight is seen with full vigour. Towards the end of the novel,

The ocean becomes a place of utmost safety for Pi. After the ravaging storm, it becomes his 'second home'. It is said that 'charity begins in home'. During the time spent in ocean, Pi recognises the importance of his family. At times, Pi aspires to have his parents around him, especially his mother.

Through the life in ship in ocean, the life of Pi became closely aligned to nature. Aristotle has correctly said that 'man is a social animal'. The waves and other currents of the ocean make the life for Pi and other creatures including Richard Parker very fearful. Though man is part of nature, to live amidst the deep blue waters is really a fear arising factor. The waves in the high level create fear in anyone's mind. Waves are caused as a result of the high tide and low tide in the moon.

The leftovers of the stored and then eaten foods are thrown to the ocean. As a result, ocean becomes polluted. This activity shows the negligence to water bodies from the part of human beings. Water is the basic necessity of life. No life is possible without water. The ocean water is unfit to drink due to the larger presence of sodium chloride. Pi, who is left alone along with some animals and Richard Parker, the tiger survives with the help of the stored food and stored water in the boat. Hence, the importance of water as a means of basic necessity are given priority.

The last part of the novel is highly touching one. The boat reaches the shore. Pi is almost unconscious. Richard Parker on seeing the forest, goes to there without giving a single glance to Pi. This shows the innate animal nature and can be linked to 'animal studies' of English literature. To conclude 'Blue Humanities' is an emerging area of study and research. And, it can be aptly seen in *'Life of Pi'*. And literature is the 'mirror of life' and is the 'encapsulation of imagination with reality'.

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## PATRICK AND PROSPERA: SUBVERSION OF MASCULINITY IN THE SHAKESPEAREAN ADAPTATIONS

**R. SOWMIYA**

*Research Scholar, Department of English  
School of Social Sciences and Languages  
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore*

**E. PAVITHRA**

*Research Scholar, Department of English  
School of Social Sciences and Languages  
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore*

### Abstract

*This paper explores the adaptations of two Shakespearean plays, namely *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tempest*, in the films *10 Things I Hate About You* and *The Tempest*, respectively. The primary focus is on the theme of masculinity and its various expressions, including violence, authority, and heroism, as portrayed in both the original plays and their adaptations. The paper critically examines how these adaptations present and challenge conventional notions of masculinity. It analyzes how these characters both defy and conform to traditional expectations of masculinity, providing a nuanced understanding of their complex nature.*

**Keywords:** *Masculinity, Subversion, Complicit Masculinity, Hegemonic Masculinity, Film Adaptations.*

### Introduction

Masculinity, encompasses a range of attributes, behaviors, and roles associated with men and boys. The extent to which masculinity is shaped by biology or society is a topic of debate. (Wharton, 2009) Further, masculinity is distinct from the biological definition of male sex, as individuals of any gender can exhibit masculine traits (*What do we mean by "sex" and "gender"?* 2012). Recognizing the multiple masculinities, Connell put forth hegemonic masculinity, denoting practices that reinforce men's societal dominance, and elucidates the mechanisms by which men sustain their privileged social roles in comparison to women and individuals with "feminine" gender identities. (Scott et al., 2014) Examining Shakespearean plays reveals the diverse and fluid nature of masculinities influenced by social and cultural contexts.

Films adaptations of Shakespearean plays have proved to combine both 'high' and 'low' cultures into one whole culture which transcends the boundaries of an individual's taste for art. Further, Taymor's

*Tempest* is regarded as cross-cultural and inter cultural adaptations, rather than solely American adaptations, as she skillfully incorporates Eastern theatrical elements and European heritage to accentuate the intricate and extravagant nature of the events portrayed in the plays (Stakor, 2017)

This paper is about two film adaptations – *10 Things I Hate About You* and *The Tempest*. These adaptations subvert the idea of masculinity which is portrayed in their source materials. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *The Taming of the Shrew* are taken for the study because of their notoriety of having misogynistic, gender discriminative underpinnings. Prospera is created with the conscious to challenge the idea of masculinity, which one way or another keeps influencing the storyline. This paper examines how female scriptwriters and directors subversively reshape the mentioned plays, emphasizing flaws in the literary counterparts.

## Kat and Patrick

### *The Taming of the Shrew*

William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* centers on the courtship and marriage of Katherine, an independent woman, and Petruchio, a determined suitor. Critics argue that the play reduces female characters, particularly Katherine, to objects or prizes for men. Karen Newman, in '*Renaissance Family Politics and Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew*' contends that the gender dynamics in *The Taming of the Shrew* may have been more acceptable in Shakespeare's time but are problematic from a modern perspective. She highlights that "Women is represented as spectacle (Kate) or object to be desired and admired, a vision of Beauty(Biance)" (Newman, 1986, p.92). Further, the play is widely criticized for its highly misogynistic tone. For instance, Germaine Greer, (2006) in her influential book *The Female Eunuch*, argues that *The Taming of the Shrew* perpetuates patriarchal ideologies and reinforces harmful gender dynamics.

### *Things I Hate About You*

On the contrary, *10 Things I Hate About You*, which is based on *The Taming of the Shrew*, paints a picture of the shrew without any taming. It was directed by Gil Junger, released in the year 1999, and is still relevant to the present scenario in its social context. This film is set in a high school in Seattle and follows the story of two Stratford sisters Katarina (Kat) and Bianca. The scriptwriters Kristen Smith and Karen McCullah have derived the concept of betting and taming, turning the play into a high-school drama.

## Patrick

Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* embodies traits commonly associated with dominant masculinity, such as assertiveness, control, and the desire for power within his relationship with Katherine. He employs strategies to 'tame' Katherine and exert dominance over her, reinforcing societal norms of male authority and control. Additionally, Petruchio takes on the role of the authoritative figure in his interactions with Kate. He dictates her actions, imposes his will upon her, and expects obedience. In

Act 4, Scene 3 (Shakespeare et al., 2003) Petruchio asserts his authority by refusing to allow Kate to eat, sleep, or dress according to her desires until she conforms to his expectations. This exercise of authority reinforces the power dynamics within their relationship aligns with the ideals of hegemonic masculinity of that time.

Furthermore, Petruchio displays aggressive behaviour as a means of asserting his dominance. He engages in physical confrontations, uses intimidation tactics, and engages in disruptive behaviour. In Act 2, Scene 1 (Shakespeare et al., 2003) Petruchio even arrives late and dressed outrageously for his wedding, showcasing his disregard for social norms and his desire to assert his dominance through disruptive actions. In Act 3, Scene 2, (Shakespeare et al., 2003) Petruchio purposefully delays their departure from the wedding feast, drawing attention to his authority and asserting his masculinity in front of others. He challenges Kate verbally, engaging in verbal sparring to establish his control over her. In Act 2, Scene 1, Petruchio dismissively responds to Kate's fiery remarks, stating, "I say it is the moon" (Shakespeare et al., 2003, 2.1.153). This interaction showcases his desire to undermine her opinions and establish his authority in the relationship.

Also, he demonstrates economic control. He dictates the terms of their marriage, controls Kate's access to resources, and uses financial manipulation to assert his authority. In Act 4, Scene 1, (Shakespeare et al., 2003) Petruchio insists that Kate agree to his terms or risk not receiving a dowry, emphasizing his control over her economic well-being.

On the contrary, Patrick comes as a surprise to those who expect similar attributes of Petruchio in him. There is a polarity of qualities between these two male characters. The character of Patrick Verona, in particular, is seen as a departure from the conventional 'bad boy' trope, as he demonstrates emotional depth, vulnerability. He challenges toxic masculinity and encourages the embrace of sensitivity and authenticity.

He challenges the notion that masculinity should be defined by aggression, dominance, and the

objectification of women. He is a gentleman who rejects Kat's advances. When she tries to kiss him, he refuses because she is drunk and he is sober. He engages in thoughtful conversations, challenges patriarchal norms, and encourages Kat to embrace her independence. For example, during a conversation about feminism, Patrick questions societal expectations and invites Kat to critically analyze gender roles. His refusal to conform to traditional gender norms positions him as a counterforce to traditional masculinity associated with dominance and aggression. By engaging in genuine and equal partnerships, Patrick subverts traditional gender dynamics, highlighting an alternative path to masculinity.

Patrick and Petruchio represent contrasting approaches to masculinity within their respective narratives. Hereby Smith and McCullah have authored a hero who is "without the tension or risks of being the front-line troops of patriarchy". Therefore, Patrick Verona differs from his literary counterpart, though the act of getting money for wooing a woman is despicable.

## Prospera

### *The Tempest*

In 2010, Julie Taymor directed *The Tempest* featuring a gender-swapped protagonist. "...casting of Helen Mirren as Prospera changes the direction and standpoint of the play away from Prospero's patriarchal approach to Prospera's maternal one" (Vinson, 1). Set on a remote island, the story follows Prospera, a sorceress and exiled Duchess of Milan, seeking revenge on her brother Antonio.

If Patrick are the new and improvised versions of Petruchio, then Prospera is the paragon of transformation in the context of Shakespearean adaptations. Taymor transforms Prospero into Prospera, altering the background by making her the Duchess of Milan after the Duke's death. Accused of witchcraft by her brother Antonio, she and her daughter Miranda are exiled to a distant island with Gonzalo's assistance. Excluding this part, the remaining plot stays the same as the source material.

Moreover, Taymor's *Tempest* is considered as 'faithful to the original source'. (Sanna, 1, 2015). A.O.Scott (2010) in *The New York Times* review writes the gender-switching in *The Tempest* as "Taymor's most provocative and persuasive act of revision."

Prospero's focus on power contrasts with a subversive attitude that challenges traditional masculinity when the character is transformed with Prospera. Introducing a maternal figure alters dynamics, eliminating male rivalry between Prosper and Ferdinand. In shaping romantic relationships, Prospera's scrutiny carries a warm, motherly tone, akin to Mrs. Bennett in *Pride and Prejudice*, revealing her interest in securing a suitor for her daughter. Going to great lengths, including conjuring a tempest, Prospera orchestrates events to shape Miranda's anticipated future.

The master-slave binary is broken into shreds as Prospera shares a parental bond with Ariel. Whenever Ariel has done something magical, she encourages him like a mother who motivates her child. (Taymor, 2010, 01:22:09-11) The way she treats her trusted minion and Ariel's servitude remind the readers of the relationship between the mother and son. When Ariel asks "Do you love me master?", she says "Dearly, my delicate Ariel". (Taymor, 2010, 01:16:41-48)

Further, Prospera is depicted as aging and a member of the 'weaker sex, and her magical abilities are emphasized as the key source of superiority over Caliban (Yukiko Mori, 5). Rather than masterly anger, Prospera's interactions with Caliban reveal a sense of disappointment as a failed parent (Taymor, 2010, 01:22:26-38). After Sycorax's death, Prospera becomes the mother figure to Caliban, teaching him language, but their relationship turns sour when he rebels and dishonours Miranda, which deeply scars her motherliness. The final moments between them diverge from the literary counterpart, with Caliban's tear-stained face reflecting the shame of a son who failed to make his mother proud. (Taymor, 2010, 01:40:41-55)

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is criticized for its lack of female characters – except for Miranda.

Taymor addresses this by rewriting the protagonist, justified by Helen Mirren's performance as Prospera. Mirren's portrayal captures Prospera's inner conflict as a mother and wronged Duchess. Judith Butler (2015) argues in *Gender Trouble* that gender is performed and is not the representation of the inner self. Hence Prospera exhibits a certain kind of 'masculinity' in her way.

Prospero and Prospera offer contrasting yet complementary perspectives on the manifestation of power, emotional complexity, and relationships. Prospero epitomizes traditional male power, controlling the island and its inhabitants with authority and manipulation. In Act 5, Scene 1, Prospero asserts his dominance, stating, "Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves, / And ye that on the sands with printless foot / Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him / When he comes back" (Shakespeare, 1961, 5.1.30-33). This display of control reflects his authoritative demeanor and aligns with conventional notions of masculinity.

In contrast, Prospera, challenges traditional notions of power and masculinity, broadening the representation of masculine traits. Like Prospero, she commands the island and utilizes her magical abilities to influence events. This subversion of gender roles disrupts the expectations associated with male power, showcasing the exercise of power typically associated with men.

Both characters exhibit emotional depth, but Prospera's portrayal defies gender stereotypes adding tenderness and maternal instincts. In relationships, Prospero seeks control, while Prospera emphasizes empathy and understanding, challenging conventional assertiveness. Prospero often exhibits emotional restraint, prioritizing intellectual pursuits and his quest for knowledge. While he experiences moments of vulnerability and remorse, his overall demeanor remains composed and authoritative. In contrast, Prospera's femininity adds a different emotional dimension to the role. She displays tenderness, compassion, and maternal instincts towards her daughter Miranda, defying the stereotype of

emotional detachment associated with traditional masculine roles.

Lastly, the themes of forgiveness and redemption resonate with both characters, showcasing personal growth irrespective of gender. Prospero's transformation involves releasing his desire for vengeance and discovering his capacity for forgiveness, reflecting a masculine journey of growth and self-reflection. Similarly, Prospera's arc explores these themes, transcending gender boundaries. The exploration of forgiveness and redemption remains consistent, highlighting the universal nature of these experiences irrespective of gender.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the character Patrick from *10 Things I Hate About You*, Petruchio from *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Prospera from *The Tempest* reveal a diverse portrayal of gender and masculinity in Shakespearean adaptations. Petruchio embodies traditional hegemonic masculinity, emphasizing dominance and control, while Patrick challenges norms by embracing vulnerability and rejecting toxic masculinity. Prospera, a gender-swapped Prospero, defies traditional power and masculinity, showcasing empathy and maternal instincts beyond gender boundaries. These adaptations reflect an evolving understanding of gender roles, challenging stereotypes and providing alternative narratives that embrace diversity and explore human complexities. Characters like Patrick, and Prospera redefine traditional masculinity, encouraging a more inclusive understanding of gender roles in literature and society.

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## BREAKING CHAINS: COMBATING THE DEVADASI SYSTEM IN WEB OF DECEIT BY MOOVALUR RAMAMIRTHAMMAL

**T. FATHIMA MUNOVARA**

*Research Scholar, Department of English  
Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil  
Affiliated to Manonmanium Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli*

**Dr. H. JIMSY ASHA**

*Assistant Professor, Department of English  
Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil  
Affiliated to Manonmanium Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli*

### Abstract

*The Self Respect Movement was a social movement in India that fought for gender equality, including the rights of Devadasis in 1925. The Self Respect Movement, initiated by E.V. Ramasamy, commonly known as Periyar, who played a pivotal role in Tamil Nadu's pre-independence history. It aimed to eradicate the caste system and advocate for a society where all individuals enjoyed equal rights. Periyar, regarded as the father figure of modern Tamil Nadu, founded the Self Respect Movement, contributing to the political influence of specific parties in the state. This protest used print media to unveil the plight of Devadasis and to advocate for their rights. Devadasis were young girls who were dedicated to the serve god and goddess in temple for the rest of their lives, but in reality they were often forced into prostitution. This system deeply ingrained Brahmin superstition and tradition, required extensive awareness-raising and eradication efforts before it was finally abolished throughout India in 1988. Moovalur Ramamirthammal's ground breaking work, "DasigalMosavalai" (Web of Deceit), provides a comprehensive understanding of the historical reality of being a Devadasi and showcases their lifetime struggles. This provides a unique perspective of Devadasi system and their culture. Moovalur Ramamirthammal was a supporter of Indian National Congress, but later she quitted the Congress and joined Periyar's Self Respect Movement. As a Self-Respect activist she played an exceptional role in the abolition of the Devadasi system. Her novel also reflects on various reforms and the voices for reform.*

**Keywords:** Devadasi System, Self – Respect Movement, Caste Discrimination, Struggles, Male Domination.

Devadasis are the women who were dedicated to the service the god and goddess of temple in India. The term 'Devadasi' is a Sanskrit word which means "female slave of god". This tradition dates back to the 6th century CE in South India during the rule of Keshari dynasty, and it is surmised that the rise and fall of Devadasis is parallel to the rise and fall of Hindu temples. The numerous destructions by invaders impoverished the temples and the loss of patron kings led the Devadasis to a life of poverty and wretchedness, pressuring them to practice prostitution in the name of customs and religion. The Devadasi system, which was outlawed in all over India in 1988, required extensive awareness-raising and eradication efforts, as it was deeply ingrained in

Brahmin superstition and orthodoxy. Social reform movements, led by renowned social thinkers such as Ram Mohan Roy, E.V Ramasamy, Muthulakshmi Reddy, S. Muthaiah Mudaliar, Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, M. Krishnan Nair, C.N. Annadurai, and more, challenged the practice of the Devadasi system, which was one of the primary causes of women's exploitation in caste-based Indian society.

Moovalur Ramamirthammal, a Tamil social reformer and author who worked tirelessly to abolish the devadasi system alongside with Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, was born in 1883. She was forced into the devadasi system by her family, but she steadfastly trusted that this "pottukattal," or dedication of girls to gods, was a 'pernicious practice' that degraded

women to the level of 'objects of pleasure'. From that day on, she despised the religion that promoted and protected this system. She realized that this system was only supported by a small number of men who sought a luxurious and lucrative life without much work, including wealthy landowners and temple priests.

Moovalur Ramamirthammal was a supporter of the Indian National Congress, but later became a member of Periyar E. V. Ramasamy's Self-Respect Movement, which is one of the most significant movements in the history of Tamil Nadu during the pre-independence era. The movement aims to create a society where every human has equal rights by eradicating the caste hierarchy and class discrimination. E. V. Ramasamy, universally called as the father figure of modern Tamil Nadu, commenced the Self-Respect Movement, which gave rise to several political parties in Tamil Nadu. It is noteworthy that the Self-Respect Movement, which emphasizes gender equality, also has feminist values. She is the one who shared Periyar's conviction in the form of print media as a tool for non-Brahmins, and it is observed as their advantage, together with it is used to shed light on the agony of Devadasis in her novel "Dasigal in Mosavalai" (Web of Deceit), which haul up public awareness of the plight of Devadasi, "the novel is a testimony to the travails of a community"(3).

The prominent characters of this novel Kantha and Gnanavathi, the daughters of BogaChinthamani, possessed both looks pretty with musical talents. The essential qualities for a devadasis are singing and dancing (female servant of a temple deity) which is popularly called as 'Satir' (sadirattam). Their musical talent and jaw dropping beauty attracts all the wealthy men and landowners to increase their riches. Kanakavalli, another devadasi who was a neighbor of Kantha and Gnanavathi, was yelled at for not being able to bring in men as other dasis did. She despairingly narrates the hellish torture of the devadasi system "Why was I born in a wretched shameless caste such as this? What caste is this where there is not even a mustard seed of kindness, patience, love or consideration for a daughter?" (49).

Kantha and Gnanavathi met the Tiruchi Minor on the train, where he was deceived and humiliated by otherdasis. When the Tiruchi Minor searched for Kantha and Gnanavathi at the address they had given him, he met Sivaraman and Gunabusani. This was a watershed moment in the life of the Tiruchi Minor, who had spent a fortune on devadasis.

On the other hand Gunabusani, a reformed devadasi who had dedicated her life to helping other dasis, educated both men and women about the evils of the devadasi system. When she met the Tiruchi Minor, she understood his plight, which was the same as the plight of most men who met dasis. With the help of her husband, Sivaraman, Gunabusani educated the Minor about the system and the treachery of devadasis. She exhort him to return to his wife to endure true love and to save his remaining properties.

Though Gunabusani was born into the devadasi community and she was coerced as devadasi by profession, enduring torments at the hands of her aunt, Boga Chinthamani, she refused to adhere to the custom because she fully understood its evils. Instead of focusing on becoming a skilled devadasi. She concentrated on her studies and chose an intelligent man for her husband who promised not to marry any other woman. In this way, Gunabusani became a patron saint for many other devadasis, such as Kanakavalli, who were silent sufferers but wanted to break the chains and lead happy and respectful lives. For Gunabusani, education was one of the most essential tools for resisting the system and gave her the broader mind to question the practices of her community.

Somasekaran, the younger zamindar of Dharmapuri, was tricked by his friends into meeting their expenses. He happened to meet Kantha and Gnanavathi and immediately smitten by their charms. He slowly lost his property to them, but was saved by his wife, Gnanasundari, whom he had abandoned on the day of their wedding. Gnana sundari was a mature young woman with strong convictions for social reform, a shining beacon in her kingdom. Somasekaran is known for his arrogant

pride of descent, caste hierarchy, and gender inequality which is proved in these lines, Gnanasundari was “a mature young woman with firm views on social reform, a shining beacon in her samasthanam.” (93). Somasekaran is from Dharmapuri which is known for its “pride of descent, caste arrogance, inequality of men and women.” (95). Class Hierarchy and discrimination are clearly portrayed in this novel through the life corridors of all the characters.

Gnanasundari, a young zamindarini from a land where many social reforms emerged. She understood the pain of a woman who did not have the love of her husband. She was grief-stricken at the loss of her bridegroom to the dasis on their wedding day, and wondered about the exasperation of other ordinary women. Gnanasundari comprehended the need for the reformation of dasis who were forced into prostitution, and proposed her reform schemes to her father, the Sonapurizamindar, DigvijayaMarthanda Deva Bhupathi Maharaja, who was “a firm believer in progressive social reform” (92).

Additionally, Gnanasundari resolves to restore her husband to the samasthanam (kingdom) by teaching him the pernicious consequences of prostration at the feet of Dasis. Thus, with the assistance of the Minor, who has already infiltrated the household as maternal uncle alongside Somasekaran, Gnanasundari conceals her identity as a zamindar and travels to the opulent residence of Kantha and Gnanavathi. After the arrival of the new zamindar, Somasekaran is abandoned and ultimately commanded to leave the premises. This act humiliates Somasekaran, and he laments abandoning his spouse. His sorrow intensifies when he learns that his wife has embarked on a journey to find him. However, when Somasekaran discovers that Kantha has come seeking him, he is prepared to relinquish his memories of Gnanasundari and rekindle his affection for Kantha. Gnanasundari astutely exploits the situation, assuming the identity of Kantha to bring him along and enlighten him about the true nature of dasis.

The erstwhile zamindar has departed from BogaChinthamani's abode, leaving the residents to lament the loss of their benefactors. Senavathi, Karunakaran's tormented spouse, who was accused of their misfortune and the paucity of men in the household, gives birth to a resplendent maiden who shimmers like the sun. Senavathi and Karunakaran, resolved to spare their child from the destiny of a dasi, are ejected from the domicile.

Senavathi is another stalwart woman who defies the system. Although she was born into the abode of a dasi, she staunchly resisted her mother and wed Karunakaran to liberate herself from the hardships and evils of being a devadasi. Her mother regrets and says this one is overflowing with shame. She is also unwilling to embrace the profession. The deity who bestowed beauty upon her did not bestow wisdom upon her, this is evident through these lines “This one is full of shame, and so I decided it is best to get her married. She is also unwilling to take to the trade. The God who gave her beauty did not give her brains” (128).

Senavathi, plunged into dire straits after her husband's abandonment, relinquished her child Vivekavathi to adoption, destined to become a dasi in accordance with Kamavardhini's decree. Vivekavathi, even at a tender age, spurned the prospect of becoming a dasi, questioning the customs that instilled awe in all. She questions her mother as “your mother was poor and when she wanted you to be dasi why did you refuse? Did you not marry because you thought that it was an evil profession? You would not do this work by you think I can do it” (174). Vivekavathi adamantly resisted, declaring that she would rather be slain than subjected to such torment. When Kamavardhini ordered Vivekavathi to learn the profession, she steadfastly refused. The character of Vivekavathi mirrors the life of Ramamirthammal herself. When her entire environment coerced her into the profession, she not only steadfastly resisted but also educated others about “the evils and hardships of the life of dasis” (185). She audaciously questioned the astrologer who predicted her to be a widow within a year of

marriage “you dare tell a poor girl starving for a handful of gruel that she will be widowed and should become a dasi? What would happen to you?” (174). Vivekavathi envisioned herself as a self-respecting woman, unburdened by the label of a dasi. And furthermore, she managed to escape from the house and take refuge with the nattuvanar. Her earnings from music were given to the nattuvanar, but she was grieved by her inability to escape from the title of a devadasi and lamented when he compared her with a cow dung. Humanity cannot be seen in the lives of devadasis, because they were cursed.

Gunabasani, Vivekavathi, and Senavathi’s most admirable quality is resistance towards their profession. While Kanakavalli, Boga Chinthamani, Kantha, and Gnanavathi accepted their ill fate and remained part of the cursed community, Gunabasani, Vivekavathi, and Senavathi became beacons of light in the darkness of ignorance. Like BogaChinthamani, Kantha, and Gnanavathi who relinquished their

profession at the end of the novel, many devadasis abandoned the vocation. Through these three characters who had faith in the system, the author not only elucidated the deplorable condition, but also inspired other women to end the profession and become noble. Thus, the first step towards emancipation is to break the chains by resisting, and education strengthens this resistance. With the help of many reformers over time, the public’s perception shifted, resulting in the outlawing of the system and the wiping away of the tears of many women and men from the society.

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## MARRIAGE BEGINS IN MERRIMENT BUT ENDS IN MISERY: A COMPARATIVE READING OF AMBAI'S "CHIRAKUKAL MURIYUM" AND KAMALA DAS' "THE SANDAL TREES"

**Dr. E. PANNEER SELVAM**

*Head and Associate Professor, Department of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

### Abstract

*The Paper here seeks to bring into focus the lack of stability in most institution, in general and in the institution of marriage, in particular. Literature is seen to mirror the harsh realities of contemporary life. Familial trauma on the marital scene is a familiar drama witnessed by the members of almost all the families across the world. Marriage is no longer a life long partnership in joy and sorrow for these couples who split up. Ambai, a Tamil writer and Kamala Suraiya, a Malayali short fictionist, have both sensitively portrayed the hell that spouses pass through in the postcolonial and postmodern world where women have begun to be resistant to male tyranny. It is in this scenario that the two stories juxtaposed here gain their relevance and significance. What the title story of Ambai, "Chirakukal Muriyum" and the title story of Kamal Suraiya, "The Sandal Tress", seek to drive home discussed in the full paper.*

**Keyword:** Ambai, Kamal Suraiya, postcolonial, postmodern

Literature mirrors life in all its variety and records not only universal verities of life but also harsh realities of contemporary life on the domestic front. Familial trauma on the marital scene is a familiar drama that one frequently witnesses today among the lettered and unlettered alike. BBC recently in its world service has reported that more than half of Britons prefer to be single as they know what an unstable institution marriage has turned out to be. Indians here who have boasted of the sanctity and stability of marriage are waking up to the high rate of divorce and disharmony that threatens to bring into question the very claim that marriage is a life long partnership in joy and sorrow. *The New Indian Express* dated March 19, 2008 reports that "The number of divorce cases registered in the Chennai family court has increased to 3,874 in 2007 against 3,374 cases in 2006" (Vannan 1).

Kamala Das and Ambai in their literary roles are seen to be the most sensitive observers of the hell that some couples pass through. They have delineated with rare adroitness the anguish and angst of the men and women that the mass media in real life report escaping from marital cages. It is in this scenario that the stories compared here gain their relevance and significance.

Kamala's conception of a healthy conjugal life is concretized in the story "The House at Maahim" where the lonely plight of a young and sensitive woman is pictured with these words:

Marriage is not just the invitation card printed and sent out by guardians, or the circumambulatory walk round the lamp and the bushel of paddy or just the memory of a kiss. It is a state of mind the harmony between two persons, the love and trust between them. (106)

The title story of Kamala's collection *The Sandal Trees and Other Stories* is the story of two medical doctors, Sheela and Kalyani Kutty. It portrays Sheela's misery in marriage. Sheela is the daughter of a rich man but Kalyani is the daughter of Sekharan master, a poor man. Sheela is at the outset sketched as a modest girl who is fond of her poor but passionate friend and classmate Kalyani a very courageous and sensitive girl who lures Sheela into a lesbian relationship.

It was to separate Sheela from her lesbian partner that Sheela was hastily given in marriage to a "rich and educated relative" who is twenty one years senior to her. Her friendship with Kalyani prevented her from gaining marital harmony with her

husband whose “mouth that smelt of beer, cigarette and onion” repelled her when she compared it with hers that had the sweet smell of durva grass. She says, “However hard I tried, I could not forget the way she had caressed me, pressed her fingers hard into me and satisfied me with her lips all with the intention of giving me pleasure” (5).

After marriage Sheela graduated in medicine and then became a gynaecologist. Kalyani also was helped by Sheela’s mother to pursue her medical studies. She got married to Sudhakaran, a doctor.

When Kalyani was asked for her views on married life she said, “It’s the nights that I can’t bear. He’s destroying my health” (6). She admitted to Sheela, “I’m not the kind who’d surrender in fear the moment I saw a male body” (6). She hated him so much that she refused to give birth to his child and got her pregnancy terminated.

Sheela now feels the ugliness in her wedlock that was impossible for her to bear with an old man. She says:

To lie close to each other in the same bed and exchange the foul smell of sweat, to witness the excrement of your spouse who has forgotten to flush the toilet after use at sunrise, to feign sleep while slyly watching him masturbate ... My body, exhausted after the day’s duties, cannot stand the ugly, unnatural weight of lust ...” (13)

She even longed for a divorce but she knew that it was difficult to get rid of him who had never done any harm other than making expressions of love. She talked with contempt of old men who become shameless whereas of women who exist with a sense of shame in old age.

She too made attempts of losing her chastity. But in every individual she saw her ugly husband. So she dropped her plot. Now she had learnt to keep silence that provided her happiness in life. It grew between them like a sandal tree.

Though they never had a good relation she tried to maintain a happy union in public. She is never seen speaking ill of her husband except in her marital life. Once she retorts, “I could never see you as my husband” (16). But she was happy in maintaining their marriage intact.

Kamala Das here seems to air her views on marital harmony. When there is lack of communication between a man and his wife they are likely to stray from the path of fidelity. One tends to go back in dream to one’s puppy love, as Sheela does here; or one tries to go after another woman, which Kalyani alleges Sheela’s husband does behind her back.

The title story of Ambai’s first collection *Chirakukal Muriyum* (Wings Break) portrays the plight of an unhappy wife whose man fails to fulfill her longing for companionship. Here also one notices how the novelty of nuptials wears off leaving the couple cold and quarrelsome. The disenchanted woman, Chaya, could only suffer and be silent. The marriage of Chaya and Bhaskaran in “Chirakukal” is beneath the surface a living hell. The dominant theme here is the apathy of the male spouse and the disillusionment of the woman. The reader is told, “Her name in college was Beauty of the dream world” (110). But all her dreams have been shattered and she is now a wreck of her old self. Her repulsively obese and miserly man is memorably drawn as one who is always counting the cost of the things that they really need for happiness in life. Her desperate efforts to reduce her dependence on him for money through her decision to be a paid dressmaker show how she considers it “a folly trying to change him” and “sees no meaning in fighting back” (97). It is in her most agonizing moments that she formulates in her mind a series of laws to prevent female frustrations and male malevolence.

She feels that:

1. There should be a law preventing men from “bloating with flesh” and turning into potbellies. (80)
2. Men who have “chest without hair must not marry”. (80)
3. Kissing is to be forbidden for those men who chew too many betel leaves and make their teeth look “like a dented tin”. (80)
4. The purse of a man needs to be confiscated if he “tightens his purse the moment his wife looks at an object with desire”. (80)
5. A Draconian law framed by her says, “heartless men should be made to have vasectomies to

- prevent the birth of children to them". (81)
6. Ambai's heroines regard sex as a wholesome indulgence, like dancing and nice dinners.
  7. A husband who approaches his wife for sex when he is not wanted needs to be given a house "in the red-light district permanently". (93)
  8. Legal proceedings should be taken against Tamil film makers who portray women as ascetics. (99)
  9. Chaya is so anguished in the end at wedlock's demand of her most cherished dreams as a sacrifice that she no longer bothers to think of the law "to stop the decay and destruction of all things". (110)

Chaya typifies the silently rebellious but really self-sacrificing wife in an Indian home. As one reads here, "She got into bed as a bird that had lost its wings" (112), one instinctively describes her in the words of Matthew Arnold, which are used to depict the visionary Shelley, "a beautiful and *ineffectual* angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain" (147). Chaya's mother is reported to have been unhappy like her. So she could sympathize with her daughter's plight. The dust-covered Veena (lute) with its broken strings and its lost bridge would testify to the tyranny of her father. Her mother once used to play it skillfully. In the cage of marriage her playing Veena was put down by her man. It used to please the ears of an old man in the neighbourhood. The girlish housewife would delight the old man every evening as he reminded her of her own father living away. One day her husband got back when she was in the middle of a song. She got up only after finishing it for the old neighbour. After the man had left, her husband asked her, "Who are you married to?" She said, "Of course, to you". She could not at that tender age make it out. He then said, "Whatever you have is mine alone. Do you understand? You are not to play the Veena for everyone. You can play it for me alone" (109). That very night she broke its strings which symbolized the

disharmony and disenchantment she was to pass through ever after. The situation here reminds one of Kate Millett's thesis that male power is sustained and used through the husband's control over the sexual life of the woman. Discussing it, Pam Morris writes:

This need to retain sexual dominance explains the recurrent misogynistic images of women in literary texts, as whores or virgins, frigid or nymphomaniac, chaste or licentious. Millett suggests that such images function to justify male sexual authority and the coercion and violence used to sustain it. (15)

Both the writers are seen to be advocating equality in the relationship between a man and his wife. This they feel alone will promote harmony in marital life. Mutual sympathy and understanding are what forms the basis of a happy marriage.

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# THREADS OF FATE: UNRAVELING THE NARRATIVE IMPACT OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN EASTERINE KIRE'S *BITTER WORMWOOD*

**M. ANUSHYA**

*Research Scholar, Department of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil  
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli)*

**Dr. K. KALAIARASI**

*Research Supervisor, Assistant Professor of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil  
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli)*

## Abstract

*This article explores the character of Easterine Kire's novel Bitter Wormwood, where the narrative technique was excellent to read. The characters in it were trying to unravel or to remove the knots of social bonds which was their fate that was built by themselves. By getting inspiration from the concepts of fate the study takes the reader to analyse the characters, and how they are destined with the interpersonal relationship. This story comprises three parts and when it was read it could be found as a three-generation narrative aspect. The character of the novel plays a major role in interpersonal relationships. It explores the problem which is very difficult to follow or grasp because of human connections with Kire's novel. By examining the family dynamics, friendship, romantic relationship, conflict and resolution and cultural context of these relationships, the struggle of the character to unravel the threads of fate created by themselves and how individuals collectively try to shape society with a positive attitude was to be further analysed in this article. The work navigates big moments and little moments of clarity that provide us with new perspectives and opportunities to change our lives. It explores how the characters in the novel were connected to each other and because of this connection what kind of outlet they were bringing supportively made an effect in the overall story. In addition, we reveal how these relationships shape important themes like identity and growth in the novel.*

**Keywords:** Family Dynamics, Friendship, Romantic Relationship, Conflict and Resolution, Bonds, Character Growth.

Literature serves a wide role in unravelling the facts happened in life as a written format in the form of novel, poem, drama etc. Everyone around cannot expose their own thoughts liberally in front of the society as they like, because nothing in life is predictable.

One who starts writing would have been gone through such a similar situation in their life, or in someone else life. They must be a passing cloud through such kind of situations at any cast. Every experience of a person would shape their personality. Getting through the emotional impact by joining hands with loved ones make the people stronger mentally and physically at any situations. Twist and turns of life are unpredictable. But the resolution

which we get from that gives us great refrainment. Falling in love with books is not easy, while reading, feeling the character and living as the characters in the novel is different to be read. One of the inspiring writers who used to write the characters as an alive personality and make the reader to dwell and attach with the character itself is Easterine Kire. Prof Emeritus Paul Pimomo said in an interview

“Easterine Kire is the keeper of her people's memory, their griot. She is the master of the unadorned language that moves because of the power of its evocative simplicity”. (Paul Pimomo)

Kire in all her novels traces the aftermath of war and the impacts it gave to the normal people who don't know the reason of war and being a part of



war. The novel *Bitter Wormwood* was shortlisted for the Hindu Lit for Life prize in 2013 and in the same year she received the Free Voice award from Barcelona. This work was going to be dealt with the novel *Bitter Wormwood*, where the normal people of Nagaland get affected because of the war which was mentioned.

The story dwells with three parts, it could also be said as a three-generation story which clearly shows the war impact, and how the relationship hold the characters and lead them to next level of life. Protagonist of the novel is an old man to be mentioned when the novel opens. This article focuses with the family dynamics which upholds the bonds between parents, children and siblings were to be discussed. And also, it explores the personal relationship because of friendship, love and intimacy the conflicts and resolutions, and the cultural influences. According to *Wikipedia* Threads of Fate means a type of magical thread that isn't just meant for weaving, but to wield the greater forces of nature such as time, life, destiny, or fate. In this novel the protagonist Mose's life turns him in many situations to face it in different angel. The war which he started with the emotional attachment of his grandmother takes him to next level as warrior and later he become a loving and caring husband, best guiding father, loyal friend, and a good grandfather. The emotional attachment which makes him to become as a warrior made his grandson to take a resolution because of same emotional attachment as not to take revenge and become a warrior.

Interpersonal relationship is a concept introduced by Howard Gardner as part of his theory of multiple intelligence. This work comprises the family dynamics, friendship, romantic relationship, conflict and resolution made by the characters, and finally the character growth with the cultural influence. In an article *What is interpersonal intelligence?* It was said as, people who display strong interpersonal intelligence show compassion, kindness and objectivity when dealing with others. These are critical leadership quality that also helps you work well in teams.

Austrian physician and psychologist Sigmund Freud, who lived between 1856-1939 and known for his psychoanalytic teaching, Theodore Roosevelt, who lived between 1858-1919 and was the twenty-sixth president of the United States, and Martin Luther, the leader of the American Civil Rights Movement, who lived between 1929- 1968. King, Jr. can be given as an example within the scope of social/interpersonal intelligence (Emet Gurel).

It connects the family dynamics that means the bonds between parents, children and their siblings. It analyses how the family dynamics get together in many situations and get their actions done with the decision they make together. This novel *Bitter Wormwood* comprises of three generation people's story. At first the family dynamic or the bonds of love, action, and decision revolves around Mose his mother Vilau, father Luo-o and his grandmother Khrienuo. This small family possess a land where they used to cultivate and harvest their own food for the whole year they need. Luo-o had a great bond and love for his family. "Luo-o was a proud father. He liked to carry his son round the village square" (19).

The family was complete in happiness and love. But their comes the fate to weave its thread that is the death of Luo-o in an accident were his head was crushed by the tree which they went to cut for the new gate. The happiness in the family was shattered with the tragic news. The dynamics of love and family lead them to next level by the character Khrienuo, she gave positive approach to the family mad them move to next level of their life. Khrienuo says that "If life is hard to you, you simply harden yourself so its griefs are easier to bear.

That is the only way to meet" (22). The words given by Khrienuo shows that a person with strong interpersonal intelligence can show compassion, kindness and objectivity when dealing with others. Here Khrienuo plays a strong role of interpersonal relationship.

The next family dynamics revolves around Mose, Neilhounuo and her daughter Sabunuo and family of Mose's friend Neituo, he is Mose's childhood friend who is known for his loyalty,

personal growth and mutual understanding. His family comprises his wife, mother Kezevinuo and his son Vilal. Both Mose and Neituo had a good family life. Role of friendship played a great role in their togetherness. Neilhounuo was a Naga warrior in underground among the group in jungle, she was called as Rifle girl by the co-warriors. Later she came out of the group and married Mose. Neilhounuo had a great bond with her mother-in-law Vilau. She took care of her in law during her period of ailing. Mose and his family were pushed forward by Neilhounuo, where she showered her love and compassion to Mose and his mother who is ailing in her bed in last minutes of life.

During the freedom struggle normal people of Nagaland suffered a lot. Mose's loving grandmother was shot by the Indian soldier while working in the field. And that situation made him to take revenge for his grandmother's death. So, the normal people who were affected unnecessarily were brought into a community to defend against the Indian freedom struggle. As first coined by E. L. Thorndike (1920), social/interpersonal intelligence refers to one's ability to understand and manage other people and engage in harmonious social interactions. Thorndike (1920) divides intelligence into three aspects: the ability to understand and manage ideas (abstract intelligence), tangible objects (mechanical intelligence), and people (social intelligence).

The life of Mose and Neituo paved ways to different suffering. Because of so many wars struggle, it gave lot of impact in their social life. Mose and Neituo came to their own home and started a new life with marriage and children. Though the war was taken up by the man, it was woman who have gone through many pains like losing their husband, lovers, brothers and sons. They held the brave actions by staying in the same sides of warriors and Indian Soldiers by holding secret and sharing food. Mose and Neituo gone through jungle life and finally married. But even after the war there was a struggle for freedom.

Similarly, Moss and Hunt (1927) defined social/interpersonal intelligence as "the ability to get

along well with others". Vernon (1933) defines the most comprehensive definition of social/ interpersonal intelligence as "the ability to get along with people in general, or comfort in society, knowledge of social issues, sensitivity to stimuli from other members of a group, temporal moods of strangers, or underlying personality" (Emet Gurel).

Threads of Fate leads its next part by unravelling a knot in the life of Sabunuo and Vilal. Sabunuo was the daughter of Mose and Vilal was the son of Neituo. The purity of friendship leads the next generation with different perspective. Protection brings romantic relationship between Sabunuo and Vilal. Though they were undergoing with the Naga freedom struggle there was intimacy of love portrayed between them.

It was a funny love story. They never went far from each other even in their growing up years. Now the two planned to marry when Vilal had saved a little more money from his job. "They were talking about dates and considering an end-of-the-year wedding" (153).

Even after leaving the underground Mose was completely shattered because of the news that few people who were left the underground were listed to execute by the senior officers. Mose and Neituo discussed their grief, and blabber for the reason why they have started the underground. Both discussed the activity of underground; Mose worried a lot with his friend by saying that there were said as traitors by the new underground warriors. Such a deep friendship was there between them. Neilhounuo was a brave woman as she states that

"Don't misunderstand me. I agree with you but those boys out there, they don't have any idea what honour or cultural values are. They have no sense of taboo and probably never had parents who taught them any," she finished. (163)

Neibou was the son of Vilal and Sabunuo. Mose as a grandfather comfort him in many situations. And he taught him lot about the war days and how they suffered during the freedom struggle. Mose also teaches them how much they have a relationship between the community. And also, he shared the

disability of the understanding the government made them to form the underground, that cause lot of suffering to the people especially woman.

And day by day incidents made the motivation of undergrounds to change and they gave birth to factionalism.

It is stated that interpersonal intelligence is related to verbal and non-verbal communication skills, cooperation skills, conflict management, negotiation skills, trust, dignity, leadership and the ability to motivate others. It is suggested that among the important characteristics of those with strong social/interpersonal intelligence, there is a desire to approach others' feelings, fears, curiosities and beliefs with empathy, to listen without judgment, and to help others maximize their performance (Emet Gurel).

Neibou travelled to Delhi for college and he got a friend named Rakesh. As Mose and Neituo, Neibou and Rakesh were good friends from the beginning. The impact of freedom struggle didn't bring any changes in the life of Naga people. Even after the freedom the struggle continued to woman belongs to the north east states. Ragging went to the worst extend of fighting by the illtreat of the people. The age takes him to avenge those who illtreat them at many situations. But whenever there is a conflict in the mind Rakesh was there on his side to give resolution. As Mose get Neituo at many situations to console him. There is Rakesh as a friend to convince him in outraging situation. The interpersonal relationship was brought with the understanding of the situation and helping them to come out the rage.

Thinking wisely and taking good solution to the problem is very important in the life of human in many perspectives.

Social/interpersonal intelligence is also called street smarts. Related to communication skills, this intelligence is the ability to manage other people and act intelligently in human relationships or social situations. This intelligence, which is about getting along with and cooperating with others; is the ability to understand and evaluate one's own behaviour and the behaviour of others. In this sense, social/interpersonal intelligence is the key to life and career success. (Matthew & Moses, 2021). When Mose died

because of gun shot by an unknown person, Neibou had a rage to avenge them for his grandfather. But didn't do that very wisely after reading all the papers left by his grandfather, he came to the point to forgive them. He spoke

"I have forgiven..." Neibou replied, "not as such the men... but the act itself. I always need to stop and remind myself of that so I don't get eaten up by the bitterness. I'd be of no use to anyone if I let this destroy me," said Neibou. (242)

Mose took the armed weapon in his hand to avenge for his grandmother whom he loved the most, lived as an underground. Neituo supported him as a friend in many aspects from the beginning to the end of his life. Vilau as a great mother stood bravely alone by leaving his only and loving son to battle of freedom struggle. Kezevinuo, mother of Neituo helped Vilau in many situations. Both of them stood together for each other bravely by leaving their son to the underground mission. Neilhounuo wife of Mose was a brave woman supported Mose in jungle and also as a partner in life guided him altogether. Vilal and Sabunuo stands for friendship, love and living life together with growth. Rakesh and Neibuo had a great combination of friendship and bonds of love for nation and humanity is found.

Social/interpersonal intelligence is about establishing and managing good relationships with others. People with high intelligence; have high skills in acting in accordance with other people's moods, temperaments, motivations and emotions, understanding the background of others' actions, and acting empathetically. This intelligence type, which is in the group of extroverted intelligences, is supportive in interacting with people and leadership" (Emet Gurel).

Most of character which poses the family dynamics to get together with the threads of fate is ultimate to discuss. Fate plays a major role in many circumstances, unravelling the interpersonal relationship is nothing but to reveals the family dynamics of the characters inbuilt. The novel possesses lot of characters, each character was distinguished carefully according to their relationship of the self. Mose tried a lot to repair the fact of

reason why they started the underground but after two generation it was revealed by his own grandson to bring resolution from his grandfather's death. He just forgives the aspects without taking revenge which was not done by Mose, but he earns for it every single day to do. Neibuo have got high intelligence where he acts according to the people's mood, temperament of his decision, controlling emotions according to the situation, and finally understands the background of others action. And hence he proved to be determined with the interpersonal intelligence. Unravelling the knot of social boundaries is not an easy thing to be said in words, one who is enduring the situation and leading the path without fail with self determination and pure motivation can reach its place.

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# REJECTION OF RELIGIOUS DOGMATISM AND REASSERTION OF FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY - A REREADING OF ALICE MUNRO'S "FRIEND OF MY YOUTH"

**Dr. SUSAN G VARGHESE**

*Assistant Professor, Department of English*

*Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

*(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli)*

## Abstract

*Across diverse cultures women have wrestled with the restrictive boundaries and barriers imposed by religious dogmas and patriarchal structures. The rejection of religious dogmatism and the reassertion of female subjectivity have enabled women to reclaim their position transcending the confines of religion. Most women throughout history are seen to slip easily and passively into religiously prescribed roles as they could be easily duped into believing them to be the will of God or their destiny which their past actions have culminated in. In the title story of the Canadian fictionist Alice Munro's "Friend of My Youth", one could see women being driven from a personal quest of ethics to religious scriptures which demands obedience to a socio-familial system of rules and regulations. As one examines the part played by religious morality, one sees how the authority of religion eventually resulted in the inferiorization of women.*

**Keywords:** *Female Repression, Inferiorization of Women, Subjugation of Women, Suffocated Voices, Religious Morality.*

Across diverse cultures women have wrestled with the restrictive boundaries and barriers imposed by religious dogmas and patriarchal structures. The rejection of religious dogmatism and the reassertion of female subjectivity have enabled women to reclaim their position transcending the confines of religion. Most women throughout history are seen to slip easily and passively into religiously prescribed roles as they could be easily duped into believing them to be the will of God or their destiny which their past actions have culminated in. In the title story of the Canadian fictionist Alice Munro's "Friend of My Youth", one could see women being driven from a personal quest of ethics to religious scriptures which demands obedience to a socio-familial system of rules and regulations. As one examines the part played by religious morality, one sees how the authority of religion eventually resulted in the inferiorization of women.

The Canadian short-fictionist Alice Munro has to her credit many literary accolades including the Nobel Prize in Literature for her work as "the master of contemporary short story" (Wikipedia). She is often compared with Chekov as Garin Holcombe

comments, "All is based on the epiphanic moment, the sudden enlightenment, the concise subtle revelatory detail." Munro's work deals with, "love and work, and the failings of both". Her short fictional creations include - *The Dance of the Happy Shades* (1968), *Lives of Girls and Women* (1971), *Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You* (1974), *Who Do You Think You Are?* (1978), *The Moons of Jupiter* (1982), *The Progress of Love* (1986), *Friend of My Youth* (1994), *Open Secrets* (1994), *The Love of a Good Woman* (1998), *Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Love, Marriage* (2001), *Runaway Stories* (2004), *The View from the Castle Rock* (2006), *Too Much Happiness* (2009), *Dear Life* (2012).

Jayanthi Alam in her book "Religion, Patriarchy and Capitalism" argues that "most of the oppressive structures that work against women are attributed to religion" (qtd in *The Hindu*). Religion had a harmful influence on Flora that forced her to suppress her emotions and desires. Flora being the narrator's mother's friend had a complex life marked with unquenched desires. She and her sister whom the narrator's mother calls as Grieveses sisters live with narrator's mother in "Friend of My Youth".

Grievesses' sisters represent religion for Alice at its worst. Her mother has told the narrator how these lonely sisters dispense with all the comforts of life. The reader learns that the wooden walls of their house "had never been painted but had been left to weather" (4). The narrator goes on to say:

*The log barns and unpainted house, common enough on poor farms, were not in the Grievesses' case a sign of poverty but of policy. They had the money but they did not spend it. That was what people told my mother. The Grievesses worked hard and they were far from ignorant, but they were very backward. They didn't have a car or electricity or a telephone or a tractor (5).*

The narrator's mother, a school teacher characterizes their religious sect as "Some freak religion from Scotland." She is seen making this comment "from the perch of her obedient and light hearted Anglicanism". She was initially reluctant to live with the Grievesses "in the black board house with its paralytic Sundays and coal-oil lamps and primitive notions." It is said that "On Sundays at the Grievesses' house, you could light a fire for heat but not for cooking, you could not even boil the kettle to make tea, and you were not supposed to write a letter or swat a fly" (5).

Flora is said to have "behaved like a saint." Even in the surrender of her fiancé to her sister Ellie who surreptitiously slips into his seductive arms and has a baby in her belly before she has a husband in her bed. She gives birth to a stillborn baby and a religion leads them to believe that "God rewarded lust with dead babies, idiots, harelips and withered limbs and clubfeet". Ellie is reported to have "one miscarriage after another, then another stillbirth and more miscarriages" (11). During her bedridden days Flora like a true follower of their faith would read for Ellie's peaceful sleep the book written by "some preacher of their faith." There was in it "All the stuff" of what the narrator's mother termed "their monstrous old religion" (12). It is written, "All that configuration of the elect and the damned, all the arguments about the illusion and necessity of

freewill. Doom and slippery redemption. The torturing defeating, but for some minds irresistible pile up of interlocking and contradictory notions" (12).

The narrator's mother "honoured the decency, the prudery, the frigidity, that might protect" women from the religious point of view. This was what Flora tried to do and won her admiration. From the perspective of the narrator religion had a pernicious influence on Flora who suppressed her emotions and led a sexless life submitting to what she obviously considered to be the dictates of religious morality. Alice's contempt for the female repression could be seen in the way Nurse Atkinson rids the place of the Grievesses of all the traces of their religion: "She sees the smoke rise out of the incinerator in the yard, where her books are burning. Those smelly old books, as Audrey has called them. Words and pages, the ominous dark spines. The elect, the damned, the slim hopes, the mighty torments up in smoke. There was the ending" (21).

How intolerant the Cameroonians, the religious sect of the Grievesses is shown towards the close of the story. The story ends with the author's derisive comment that "One of their ministers, in a mood of firm rejoicing at his own hanging, excommunicated all the other preachers in the world" (26).

Under rigid religious dogmatism women have found their voices silenced, their bodies controlled and their aspirations curtailed. What primarily keeps women from re-appropriating their bodies from patriarchal control is seen by the writer to be the hold of religion. Religious tenets serve only to perpetuate and sanctify male dominance. What feminist fictionists in the West seek to get across is the necessity for women to re-appropriate their enslaved bodies from patriarchal forms of oppression and rediscover their values and revalorize them outside the framework of male notions and moral standards. So one is not surprised to see the tension in the solipsistic attempts of Alice Munro to allow her female self to find fulfilment in her experiences and the conventions of her male-ordained community which seek to define the parameters with which women are supposed to live, move and have their

familial or social functions. The feminist critic could discern with delight the subversive elements in the framework of her fiction which bring into focus her revolt against the norms and values which the socio-cultural religious settings impose on them.

The Canadian writers' perceptions of morality projected through the practices of her female protagonists persistently clash with patriarchal or religious codes which have throughout functioned as a kind of "Lakshmanrekha" beyond which a woman would stray at one's own peril. Morality, when viewed from the patriarchal angle consists in the practice of conventional virtues, righteousness or dharma in thought, word or deed and in the avoidance of what, Christians for instance, would call cardinal sins. Standards of morality or principles of right and wrong, good and bad behaviour are seen to vary from age to age or even religion to religion, or even from one religious sect to another sect within the same religion. In Alice's "Friend of My Youth" what, for example, the Cameroonian Christians represented by the Grieveses consider to be morally

right would be absolutely abominable to devout Christians like the narrator's mother and quite detestable to the younger generation represented by the narrator. What Alice Munro considers to be transgressions of morality from the feminist's point of view are not violations of patriarchal or religious codes of conduct but male callousness or cruelty to women or exploitation of marginalized segments of society with a view to promoting their own pursuit of pleasures or personal welfare. The concepts of conventional Christian morality which the author is seen to jettison through her feminist protagonists have only curbed or curtailed woman's right to claim her rightful place.

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## THE AMERICAN DREAM, A FANTASY: A PERSPICUOUS STUDY OF SAM SHEPARD'S *BURIED CHILD*

**M. SIVAKAMI**

*Research Scholar, Department of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil  
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli)*

**Dr. K. KALAIARASI**

*Research Supervisor & Assistant Professor of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil  
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli)*

### Abstract

*The American Dream is the national ethos of the United States. It is a set of ideals including representative democracy, rights, liberty and equality in which freedom is interpreted as the opportunity for individual prosperity and success. Sam Shepard's play Buried Child exposes the failure of the American Dream as the Americans overvalued pleasures and materialism instead of pure ideals. The research article focuses on the causes and consequences of the failure of the American Dream with special reference to Shepard's play Buried Child. Alcoholism, negligence of responsibility, extra-marital relationship, incest, familial disintegration and poverty are identified as the negative factors affecting the contemporary American society. All the characters in the play are in some way a failure at achieving prosperity, freedom, health and happiness. Shepard cautions the Americans to uphold positive traits like morality, traditional values, family values, sense of duty, decorum and democracy to accomplish the American Dream.*

**Keywords:** *American Dream, Alcoholism, Extra-Marital Relationship, Incest, Familial Disintegration, Poverty, Prosperity, Morality, Traditional Values, Democracy.*

Sam Shepard, one of the most prominent and prolific writers in the world of American drama, displays the effects of the American Dream that is inversely associated with rates of national disillusionment. His plays primarily focus on domestic issues in American family. He has gained more audience and immense fame through his family dramas. His plays exactly depict the inside and the outside details of the American society. His plays reflect the social and the economic condition of America in the contemporary situation. His plays are well-known for their bleak, poetic, surrealistic elements, black comedy and rootless characters of American society. His characters lack moral values and integrity. C.W.E. Bigsby remarks, "His characters are, indeed, estranged from one another and from themselves. The space between them seems unbridgeable. Emotions are intense but unsustained... Husband and wife, father and son, lovers, brothers, are all strangers" (172). The

characters lack emotional bond and they are mentally fragmented from one another. The past incidents play a vital role in the characters' identity and they attempt to evade from their social and familial responsibility. The characters in *Buried Child* are in search of their identity in the materialistic American Society.

Krishna Sen in "The Beat Generation to American Postmodernism" states, "*Buried Child* is again, set on a failed farm, this time in Illinois, housing a psychotic family given to depression, crime and incest." (225). This play centres around the main characters Dodge and Halie, the middle-class agricultural couple with their two sons, Tilden and Bradley who suffer poverty and experience domestic issues. Each and every member of the family fail in achieving fortune, success, happiness, wealth and good-life, which is considered as the major components of the American Dream. All the



characters represented in the play are totally illogical, inappropriate and completely alienated from the mainstream of life. It also brings out, how the head of a family has been more irresponsible and how his irresponsibility has passed on to his generation. The characters in the play are volatile and they do not care for the feelings and emotions of the people around them. They are also unable to realise their mistakes and it paves way to familial conflict.

In *Buried Child*, the American Dream could not be even achieved by a single character. The concept of the American Dream is that everyone aspires for something in life, no matter if it is prosperity, wealth, education, employment, financial stability, safety or a decent standard of life. In addition, everyone will strive to get what they want but it is not identifiable in any of the characters in the play as they are all morally, culturally and economically weak. His characters are not focused and determined and hence they are unable to materialise the American Dream. The play pictures how Dodge, the protagonist, gets addicted to alcohol and subsequently fails from his familial and social responsibilities. He is a failure in his role as a father and as a husband. His wife indulges in incest which totally disturbs the family peace and leads to familial disintegration. All the characters in the play suffer throughout their life unable to extricate themselves from the cobweb of familial problems. It was of a common opinion that Americans nurtured cultural, moral and social value for their personal and social development but at present the scenario has adversely worsened and they are not willing to adhere to the code of moral and cultural values. Modern men strongly believe in independent and personal choices forgetting the importance of family values that may impart in them the necessity for moral living to their children. Callousness and lax morality have predominated the American society and that has adversely affected the familial bond and relationship. The increase of familial problems has become one of the reasons for the failure of the American Dream. Dodge in his seventies seems to be disconnected from his family members, as he is always found sitting in a couch and staring at the

television rather than at least having a casual talk with the family members. Shepard has characterised Dodge as an epitome of failure as he completely alienates himself to avoid comments on his addiction in consuming whiskey from the bottle hidden in the lumpy folds of his cushion. In Act I, the narrator narrates, "He pulls his left arm out from under the blanket, slides his hand under the cushion, and pulls out a bottle of whiskey. He looks down left toward the staircase, listens, then uncaps the bottle, takes a long swig and caps it again. He puts the bottle back under the cushion and stares at the T.V. (63-64). Shepard in *Buried Child* highlights that alcohol misuse is a serious issue within a family as it creates a wedge between the family members. Alcoholics may blow through the family budget, cause fights, ignore children and ruin the happiness of the people they love. Shepard's *Buried Child* is limited to a single family and their failure in the ideal of the American Dream represents the failure of the nation.

Halie pretends to be a highly pious woman. She, a woman in her sixties, is alienated from her family members and she is pre-occupied with some other activities. Dodge never heeds to her words. She overthinks over both the happy and the sad events that have taken place in her life. She always engages herself with Father Dewis and that adds fuel to the fire to the existing familial issues. She is too much worried about her past and it affects her progression in life. As she finds happiness in brooding over the past events, she is not able to live happily in the present. C.W.E. Bigsby in his article, "Blood and Bones Yet Dressed in poetry: The Drama of Sam Shepard," declares:

The casual link between past and present does not imply moral conscience born out of an acceptance of the relationship between act and consequence. His characters are never presented though they had any choice. They are figured to whom something happened and who must live with the results. The central question is never what is right or wrong but what can be evaded and what cannot" (20).

Halie does not care about her sick-husband, Dodge. She goes out with Father Dewis for lunch

leaving behind her ailing husband uncared. This shows that Halie has no love and affection for Dodge. She, as a wife is a failure in attaining the American Dream. Halie, being an irresponsible wife gives her responsibility in taking care of her husband to her two sons, Tilden and Bradley. Halie informs:

HALIE'S VOICE: Tilden's the oldest.

He'll protect you (68).

Halie indulges in extra-marital relationship with Father Dewis. She is a complex character. Her betrayal of marital trust furthermore strains her relationship with Dodge. Her unsocial behaviour, illegal relationship and her irresponsibility lead to very serious consequences ruining family peace and pride. Dodge and Halie's irresponsibility, betrayal, alcoholism, their emotional disconnect lead to the dysfunction and disintegration in the family. As a husband and wife, Dodge and Halie have a very complicated relationship besides it there lacks proper communication between them. The children of the family imbibe the flaws of their parents and the negative traits unknowingly pass to them. In a family, parents should be a strong base, strength and support to their children but in *Buried Child*, both Dodge and Halie are failure in performing their family roles.

Tilden, Dodge's oldest son, in his forties, is a former all-American-football player but he faces too many problems in New Mexico. In order to avoid social issues he resolves to abandon his career and live with his wife. He is a man who is not able to lead an independent life even at his forties. He is a perfect example of a diffident personality who deliberately neglects his opportunities to accomplish the American Dream. He is mentally sick and throughout the play he involves only in harvesting vegetables without realising his calibre. He depends upon his parents unable to earn sufficient money for his livelihood. In his very first appearance in the play, he is found with a handful of fresh corns. Dodge questions Tilden about the corn for which he replies that he had picked it from their fields out back. Dodge understands the situation and informs him that they have not sowed corns in the backfield and he orders Tilden to place back the corn from where

he has taken it. Shepard poignantly reflects the reality that when a neighbouring farm is cultivated, the laziness and drug addiction have prevented Dodge from cultivating his land.

DODGE: Where'd you pick it from? TILDEN: Right out back.

DODGE: Outback where? TILDEN: Right out in back. DODGE: There's nothing out there!

TILDEN: There's corn (69).

Dodge as a farmer has not planted crops in the backyard for several years. He was once a successful farmer who ran a prosperous farm but now the farm is uncultivated. Agriculture and farming has been the only source for their livelihood but Dodge has not cultivated anything in his field for more than years. He is a failed farmer who has no conviction and confidence to plant suitable crop and earn sufficient income. Dodge says:

DODGE: There hasn't been corn out there since about nineteen thirty five! That's the last time I planted corn out there! (69).

It is clearly evident that in the American dream, prosperity is one of the important aspects. As Dodge does not involve in farming for more than years there will be obviously struggle for their livelihood. He is not only alienated from his own family but also he does not understand the happenings going around him. Dodge says:

DODGE: I haven't had trouble with neighbours here for fifty-seven years. I don't even know, who the neighbours are! And I don't wanna know ... (70).

Dodge was a successful farmer and has dedicated himself for the welfare of his family but conditions have drastically changed, when his wife Halie has a baby with her eldest son, Tilden. He is shattered and feels ashamed of his family. The incest marks the absurdity of the American society. The family system is collapsed and shattered and hence, there had been a decline in traditional and moral values in the American society. Tilden's act of incest shatters Dodge completely and he experiences the pain of betrayal, rejection and loss of love. In order to escape disgrace, he kills the newborn baby and

buries it in the backyard. The infanticide is identified as the major reason for his failure as a responsible person by committing a crime. He becomes an alcoholic and he is unable to face the challenges before him.

Bradely, the second son of the Dodge, the next oldest is an amputee. As an amputee, he is not able to perform his own work and he is helpless. He is unable to fulfil the dreams of his parents and the society. He is cruel and rude towards his own father. His anger is an outcome of his disability and inability. Shepard hereby notifies that people with disability are not comparatively physically stronger to perform rigorous tasks. He stresses the importance of equity under law for that may provide opportunity to the differently-abled and downtrodden people to lead a standard life.

Vince, Tilden's twenty-two years old son, flees from his house to the city in order to achieve his dream of becoming a saxophonist. Similar to the act of the prodigal son, he leaves his home for his ambition against the wishes of his family. He makes his own life by building a relationship with his girl friend, Shelly through which he tries to achieve his personal dream. After six years of exile, he revisits his family but he is not recognised by any of his family members including his own father, Tilden but he tries to reconnect with them. Dodge persistently makes derogatory remarks on Shelly's appearance. As Shelly is an outsider who is not previously acquainted to anyone of the family members, she is treated disrespectfully by the family members. As Shelly is a stranger to the family, Tilden reveals the long-hidden secret of their family to her that a baby is buried in their backyard. Tilden is not worried about the shame and crime he had done. He never cares for his self-respect and dignity. The dream of America seems to be failing and fast decreasing in the contemporary America.

Danish Ahmed Mir in the article entitled "Familial Disintegration: A study of Sam Shepard's *Buried Child*" delineates, "In contemporary American society, Sam Shepard portrays the disintegration of the American family and poists the

American cultural a mere humiliation and spiritually and morally degenerated. He presents America as a self-centered, barbaric and hypocritical nation, where people care little for each other and are indulged in physical pleasures and domination over others" (613). Each family member in the family suffers an inexpressible pain. Dodge is unable to escape from the knot of the family due to his old age as he depends on his family members. Halie also forgets her responsibility as a mother and the importance of being a good wife. Bradley is not only physically ill, but he is also evil-minded. Alienation and disconnection are experienced by all the family members. The downfall of the moral and ethical code of conduct in American family is portrayed through his plays particularly *Buried Child*. The characters portrayed in the play indicates that the dream is highly difficult and impossible to achieve. The men and women characters in the play exhibit the characteristics of the failed American Dream. This play finds out the fact that there is no importance for ethics and values among the family members. This obstructs them from reaching the goal of their American Dream. Shepard makes a wakeup call to the Americans in deep slumber to eliminate the negative factors affecting individual prosperity and peace and advocates them to inculcate morality goodness, traditional and family values and democracy to extricate familial commotion, poverty, immorality and disintegration.

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## DEPICTION OF WOMEN IN TIM WINTON'S *THE RIDERS*

**Ms. S. J. BRISHMA**

*Assistant Professor of English*

*Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

*(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli)*

### **Abstract**

*Tim Winton is an Australian writer who loves to explore the concept of masculinity and femininity. In portraying his characters, he contradicts typical ideologies lurking behind gender and family relationship roles. The Riders is a novel that conveys contradictory messages about women. This research paper focuses on the depiction of the women characters in The Riders and to move further with this theme, the Australian social and cultural context has also been taken into consideration. The purpose of this research paper is to analyse the three female characters with a view to identify the messages on femininity conveyed in the novel. There is an insight into gender in a world where men can cry and women can have a life that they prioritize over maternal roles.*

**Keywords:** *Stereotypes, Identity, Patriarchal Society, Female Ambiguity, Disappearance.*

Tim Winton is an Australian writer who loves to explore the concept of masculinity and femininity. This research paper focuses on the depiction of the women characters in *The Riders* and to move further with this theme, the Australian social and cultural context has also been taken into consideration. Winton's fictional women are usually portrayed according to female archetypes. This leads to their negative portrayal making them irresponsible, as is the case of Jennifer and Irma in *The Riders*. In contrast to both these characters, Billie is a positive female character in the novel.

*The Riders* is the story of Fred Scully, an Australian who wishes to settle in the Irish countryside with his wife, Jennifer, and his seven year old daughter, Billie. The story starts with Scully working hard to improvise the old house to make it good enough for moving in with his family. In the airport, Scully meets only his daughter since his wife has disappeared without an explanation. When Scully asks Billie, she does not say a single word and remains silent and so Scully decides to go for a journey to Europe with Billie to search for his disappeared wife as he wants to know the reason for her disappearance. In this journey, he encounters Irma, a woman who bonds with him and tries to disturb his pursuit. Along the way through the

journey, Scully learns more about his own identity. Primarily, Jennifer, Billy and Irma are the reason for his quest of self-discovery. The purpose of this paper is to analyze these three characters with a conception of surveying the highlights on femininity brought about in *The Riders*.

Sarah A. Aguiar opines that female archetypes were produced and ignited by men as the traditional writers of civilization. She tells, "The characters passed down through legend and the oral tradition, even if they originated in female consciousness, reveal a deeply ingrained capitulation to patriarchal doctrine" (134). The arena of women met with a change in the twentieth century. Jennifer is a best example of this change. Before analysing this character, it is important to produce a small description of the changing social attitudes towards women throughout history. It is also crucial to have an understanding on how these changes have inflicted Australia. Usually, men and women are given different roles in a society. Like all cultural constructions, these roles and conceptions are mixed and mingled through the idea of socialisation.

It is through this concept of distinctive socialisation that women have been taught for the private limits such as chores, care, reproduction, etc, whereas men have been directed to involve

themselves in public fields such as politics, science, culture, etc. Gilles Lipovetsky divides women into three historical categories: the first woman, who was dangerous. Later, there was a second woman. After sometime the praises and appreciations that were provided to the second woman and they went through a great number of changes that formed the idea of woman as the stereotype of domestic women. Now Contemporary society has created a third type of woman who is free and independent and this type can articulate their own identity.

The common concept of a woman as a sensible wife and a caring mother has changed now. The empowerment of women and the prominence of feministic narratives have made it possible to put forth the issues of male chauvinism to limelight. The new woman's energy involved in raising questions and doubts against the patriarchal assumption that man is strong and powerful as he is the head of household. Man is treated likewise as he is the one who earns money for the household and makes life safe for women to live. This traditional side surrounding masculinity has been questioned in recent times since it is considered as a cultural construction.

Australia has also gone through many changes in gender roles. Australia is a multicultural country, but Australia is still a country that is "overwhelmingly white, ancestrally British, a persistent echo of the old memories" can still be heard (70, Feingold).

In Tim Winton's *The Riders*, Jennifer is the prototype of the third type who is modern, free and independent. She is shown as atypical, as she does not exhibit any affinity towards her family, home and child. In her husband Scully's words, "[She] loved working, you know. She was never the type to stay in and look after the kids. That was more me" (39, Winton). In Alex's words, "She was sensibly deserting domestic bliss" (157, Winton). Jennifer married Scully who is also an atypical man. He is different because he does chores that are dedicated to women right from the beginning.

Winton portrays Jennifer as "straight" and as someone who loves things that are "neat and sharp" (72, Winton). She works as a civil servant in

Australia, but she dislikes her current comfortable position as she wishes to become an artist. She desires for anything that is new, satisfactory, weird and risky. In her present state, she feels inactive, safe, and dull so she decides to quit her job and go to Europe. She yearns to become an artist because an artist could proceed with his / her artistic intentions with sheer freedom, and happiness. Jennifer wants to enjoy and live by the little things in her life and she loves to live life to the fullest.

Jennifer's declaration to move from Australia can be related to the current double standards of the country. She is a woman with a strange ambition in a country which is still strict and egoistic towards women. Hence, she decides that she can achieve liberty and independence and frame her own identity only after leaving Australia.

Jennifer is a transgressor of the patriarchal norms of the society. Winton portrays her in a negative and bad shade when she leaves her family, yet she can be seen as the one who stands up for the whole clan of women. Her negative features are highlighted only through Jennifer's role as a wife and mother. In the entire novel, Jennifer's absence is conveyed through her silence and this depiction is done in a usual manner. She does not even show her presence clearly throughout the novel. The author brings out the character and nature of her through other characters such as Scully, and their past life associated with her. Her character is not felt directly by the readers but it is through the memories that she forms a mild connection with the readers. Due to these reasons, we can be understood Jennifer's marginalization due to her indirect presence.

Irma, another female character in the novel, is also portrayed with negativity who can be associated with hazards and issues. The author introduces her character in the middle of the novel and it is through her that the author disturbs Scully's real identity which provoked him to search for it. She is like a danger that Scully sees amidst his search for self which is evident from the following lines, "He knew now that he had to get free of her. She was like a foul wind, the whispering breath of nightmares" (223,

Winton). Irma defines herself as: “I’m the good, the bad and the ugly” (225, Winton). She openly lures a snake, a symbol of sin and temptation. She is also associated with objects such as a knife, teeth, nails, a cigarette, etc.

Billie is a small child in the novel, and in Winton’s words, she is a “little-woman” (168, Winton), but her actions make her appear that she is too mature for her age. She is seven years old and has a healthy relationship with her father Scully. Billie is the only female character in the novel portrayed in a good way. In the novel, she is the only female character who is given a proper voice. Her understanding and comprehensive skills are the strong points in *The Riders* and in the life of Scully as well as she presents her ideas in a realistic way. Though she never opens her mouth at the beginning of the novel, it is this silence that provokes and promotes Scully to proceed with alternative plans. In the course of the novel, she becomes clearer and stronger. It is Billie who leads and guides her father despite his lack of understanding and foolish deeds. She becomes the guide and mother of her father. She paves way for the rebirth of her father in a place called Amsterdam, which can also be called a cocoon and a womb.

Towards the closure of *The Riders*, it is Billie who takes Scully away from the riders.

Scully locates them two times in the novel. The appearance of the riders in the novel is a metaphor for Scully’s interior struggle to reach for a powerful identity. It cannot be denied that Billie is the saviour

and flirts with Scully and so Scully himself refers to her as a whore. In the novel, she is also compared to of Scully, and this is stressed throughout the novel by Winton.

*The Riders* is a novel that expresses different conceptions about women. Jennifer and Irma are depicted from an archetypal male point of view. Both the characters are vague, puzzling and so they are dubious beings, who only produce conflicts for the male character. Jennifer is depicted as an irresponsible mother who prioritizes herself over others. On the otherhand, Billie is seen in an elegant way. Therefore, it can be said that the novel *The Riders* encourages the perception of relating in depth to the ideas of women that proclaim against the pluralism of contemporary women roles.

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## AN EXPLORATION OF SIMBA'S JOURNEY IN THE MOVIE *THE LION KING*

**S. GIFTY**

*Research Scholar, Department of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil  
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli)*

**Dr. K. KALAIARASI**

*Research Supervisor, Assistant Professor of English  
Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil  
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli)*

### Abstract

*Children's literature aims to capture the attention of children by using magic and fantasy elements. It also provides insight to the children by imparting moral values and awareness regarding the real world. This research paper explores Simba's life, a character from The Lion King, and its various encounters from cub to lion. Various themes like family bonding, relationship, betrayal, friendship, and the importance of nature are discussed. As a cub, Simba's responsibility is overshadowed by fear, and he sheds it as he matures. Simba's family and their reign are broken by the evil plot of his uncle Scar, who intends to take up the position of the King by killing his own brother Mufasa and by marrying Mufasa's wife. The goodness of Mufasa's reign is reflected in nature, with its abundant wealth and prosperity. Along with all such abundance, the cycle of life is also maintained. The abundance of prosperity and wealth diminishes during the reign of Scar due to improper leadership.*

**Keywords:** *Nature, Betrayal, Responsibility, Leadership and Family Bonding.*

Children's literature features characters that showcase certain values without aiming to gain a specific audience; its primary audience is children. It incorporates a wide range of genres, themes, and formats. Picture books, fairy tales, fables, fantasy, adventure, and realistic fiction falls under children's literature. The stories often revolve around relatable characters, diverse settings, and imaginative plots, aiming to entertain, educate, and stimulate a child's imagination. Key elements include engaging language, vibrant illustrations, and age-appropriate challenges that cater to the developmental stages of young readers.

Children's Literature often incorporates fantasy and magical elements, including talking animals with the ability to speak or perform magic or possessing supernatural powers. Such characters are found in the movie *The Lion King*, where talking animals play a prominent role in the narrative. These characters aim to entertain children as well as to teach them moral

values, manners, and awareness regarding the real world. Values are taught to children, so that they practice, cherish and uphold them in their lives. Children get a chance to learn lifelong practices with ease and eagerness.

Simba, the son of King Mufasa and Queen Sarabi, is a character in the movie *The Lion King*. He is the next heir to ascend the throne and this news appears to be unpleasant to his uncle, Scar. Twists and turns visit Simba's life when jealousy and vengeance enters Scar's mind. Simba cherishes good times with his father, Mufasa, and learns values and the real happiness of being a good leader. Scar plots evil actions against Simba and Mufasa. Eventually, Scar makes Simba get into trouble, and while protecting Simba from the danger, Scar kills Mufasa. Unaware of the reason behind Mufasa's death, Simba is manipulated by Scar, who makes him believe that he has killed his father. In fear, Simba runs away, but he meets Timon and Pumbaa. Forgetting the ills and



odds, Simba enjoys his life with his new friends. The wise old Rafiki encounters Simba and leads him to a pool. Seeing his image on the water, Simba realizes it is the image of his father.

He remembers everything and runs back to the Pride Lands. Simba has pure intention; he is not seeking the throne for himself but for the sake of the Pride Lands. Nature paves its way in helping Simba reveal the truth that he has not killed his father, Mufasa. Nature stands with Simba in the course of his difficult times. Destiny brings Simba to Scar, and later, Simba learns that he is guilt-free, and Scar is the murderer of Mufasa. Simba and Scar get into a fight, and Simba takes back his Pride Lands as the King. Nature welcomes Simba as a king with the Rain.

Family bonding incorporates shared activities, open communication, mutual respect, and emotional support. It involves creating a sense of belonging and connection among family members through positive interactions and shared experiences. Activities like meals, games, or outings strengthen the sense of togetherness and support within a family. Family bonding helps the members of the family to stay connected to each other. Good bonding within a family enables people to stabilize their emotional and mental health.

A family that creates and cherishes memories together is important in shaping the social characteristics of a person. People develop certain qualities which they have learned from their family members. A good societal bond is necessary to lead a healthy family life. Children learn and adapt the qualities of their parents. The Former Prime Minister of UK, Winston Churchill states that "There is no doubt that it is around the family and the home that all greatest virtues, the most dominating virtues of human, are created, strengthened and maintained" (Churchill).

Simba, as a cub, learns good qualities, values and life lessons from his father, Mufasa and cherishes care, love and playful time with his mother, Sarabi. As a family, they spent quality time, values and creating long-lasting memories. Scar does not have a good bond with his own brother, Mufasa. Due to the

lack of bond, he gets the courage to hurt his own brother's family.

Mufasa, as a King of the Pride Land, fulfills his duties well, taking care of the animals as well as the ecosystem in a responsible manner. Mufasa is a great leader, father and husband. He maintains his kingdom and ecosystem with good care. His death not only affects his family but also the whole Pride Land. Simba has great respect and affection for his father, he cannot accept the fact that he is the reason for his father's death.

Betrayal is the act of being untrustworthy, leading to broken relationships, emotional pain, trust issues, and long-lasting psychological effects, impacting both personal and professional aspects of life. Betrayal affects individuals emotionally, leading to feelings of hurt, anger, and sadness. It erodes trust, impact self-esteem, and results in difficulty forming new connections. Coping mechanisms and support play crucial roles in the healing process.

People believe each other with trust and faith. When promises and words are not kept, people consider it a kind of betrayal. Betrayal breaks any kind of relationships even though they have shared years together. As brothers, Scar and Mufasa live in the Pride Lands. Mufasa loves his brother Scar as much as he loves his wife, Sarabi and Son, Simba. But Scar is not loyal to his brother, within his heart, he harbors vengeance and grudge towards his brother, Mufasa. He cannot bear the fact that he cannot be the King of the Pride Lands because Mufasa's son, Simba is announced as the heir to the throne.

Scar betrays his niece Simba by planting wrong ideas about bravery, urging Simba to visit the Elephant graveyard, symbolizing danger. Scar plots several dangers to kill Simba, joining forces with hyenas Banzai, Shenzi and Ed. Scar's friends give an evil look with dark mindset reflected in their faces. Scar asks the hyenas to kill Simba in the Elephant graveyard; Mufasa saves him, Scar gets angry at the Hyenas, offering them a deal: if they kill Simba, they can enter the Pride Land when Scar becomes a King. Scar betrays Simba by asking him to stay in the Gorge; Mufasa arrives to save Simba.

The evil Scar kills his own brother, Mufasa and betrays Simba by falsely claiming he is responsible for his father's death, threatening Simba to run away and never return. He threatens Sarabi and by marrying her, Scar becomes a King. In the play *Hamlet*, written by Shakespeare, a similar incident unfolds: Hamlet's father is killed by his uncle, Claudius, mirroring Simba's father being killed by Scar. Both Claudius and Scar commit these acts with the intention of claiming the throne. The Pride land loses its abundance and turns more or less like a desert. When Simba returns to reclaim the Pride Land, Scar sarcastically reveals the truth about Mufasa's death. Scar faces his own fate and dies by falling from the cliff.

Relationships are centered around personal and professional spaces outside family and blood ties. They do not require any commitment to staying loyal. Relationships are built on communication, trust, and mutual understanding. Nurturing these elements fosters healthy connections, whether they are friendships, family ties, or romantic partnerships. Healthy relationships offer emotional support, companionship, and a sense of security. They provide opportunities for personal growth, shared experiences, and a support system during challenging times. Being in a good relationship positively impacts mental and emotional well-being. It contributes to increased happiness, reduced stress, improved self-esteem, and a sense of belonging and support. Healthy relationships enhance life satisfaction. A good relationship leads to mutual happiness, emotional fulfillment, and a supportive environment where individuals thrive personally and collectively.

The Relationship between Zazu and Rafiki with Mufasa is professional; Rafiki serves as an advisor and spiritual guide, standing by Mufasa in every good deed for the Pride Land. Rafiki is not only loyal to Mufasa but also supports Simba, guiding him in reclaiming his role as King. Zazu, Mufasa's minister maintains a professional association but cares for Mufasa's family as his own, showing genuine love and concern for Simba and Nala. In contrast, the relationship between Scar and the Hyenas is based on

an agreement to help Scar seize the throne by eliminating Simba and Mufasa. Scar promises the Hyenas a good life in exchange for their assistance, emphasizing personal gain over authentic relationships.

Friendship helps individuals maintain a good social status and mental health, molding with positive values and habits. Friendship is a social bond between individuals characterized by mutual affection, trust, and shared interests. It involves companionship, emotional support, and a sense of camaraderie. Friendships vary in intensity, from casual acquaintances to deep, lifelong connections. Effective communication, understanding, and reciprocity are essential for nurturing and sustaining healthy friendships. They play a crucial role in one's social and emotional well-being, offering a support system, shared joy, and a sense of belonging.

Timon and Pumba share a genuine friendship, caring for each other with good communication and intentions. When Simba moves away from his family, he enters the friend circle of Timon and Pumba, enjoying a new world away from family and guilt. Timon and Pumba take care of Simba, playing a significant role in his growth. In the movie *The Jungle Book*, directed by Favreau, Mowgli, a young boy, is cared for and nurtured by a group of wolves, just like Timon and Pumba care for Simba.

Simba and Nala, having shared their initial days after birth with a strong bond of friendship, later fall in love and get married. Nala is supportive of Simba's decisions, remaining loyal to him as both a wife and a friend. On the contrary, bad friendships lead individuals toward destruction. Scar and the hyenas have evil intentions, their friendship based on capturing the throne of the Pride Lands. Scar's malicious decisions and friendship eventually lead to his own demise. Their friendship lacks qualities like loyalty and good deeds, solely driven by personal gain.

Nature in the plays a pivotal role in serving as a silent witness. From the sweeping landscapes to the changing weather, nature reflects the emotional states of the characters. The circle of life is vividly portrayed through the natural elements, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all living beings. The flora

and fauna of the Pride Lands contribute to the rich and diverse backdrop of the story. Nature becomes a source of guidance and revelation, leading characters to self-discovery and important truths. Symbolically, the rhythm of the natural world mirrors the characters' internal conflicts and resolutions. It underscores the delicate balance that exists in the animal kingdom, echoing the broader themes of harmony and disruption.

Earth holds a vital role in caring for all living beings, providing nourishment for those dependent on it. A balanced ecosystem is essential for the cycle of life, and in Mufasa's reign, nature abundantly blesses the Pride Land with rain, food, and all necessities. Nature favors those with good hearts and belief in its harmony. Scar, with evil intentions, faces rejection from nature, resulting in scarcity and drought during his rule. Simba's return to the Pride Land and ascension to the throne is met with nature's approval, as it showers blessings in the form of rain.

Good deeds carry a positive energy that remains within a person throughout their life. Conversely, any bad deed generates negative energy, overshadowing the individual's positive characteristics. Simba and Mufasa exemplify characteristics supported by nature. Each life phase is marked by unique experiences. The good deeds a person upholds never diminish their spirit.

Simba undergoes diverse circumstances, such as forming a family, distancing himself due to assumed guilt, leaving his homeland, facing betrayal by his uncle, discovering true friendship, and living a life intertwined with nature. In every circumstance, Simba consistently demonstrates loyalty to everyone he is connected with. Children's literature inculcates

moral values through each and every character.

Through Simba's journey from cub to lion, essential themes like family, relationships, betrayal, friendship, and the significance of nature are explored. As Simba matures, he sheds the overshadowing fear of responsibility and embraces his role. The disruption caused by Scar's evil plot, aiming to usurp the throne, highlights the impact of improper leadership on the abundance and prosperity reflected in nature during Mufasa's reign. The narrative not only entertains but also imparts moral values and awareness of real-world challenges to its young audience. Simba's story, with its universal themes, continues to resonate, emphasizing the enduring power of children's literature in shaping values and fostering imagination in the minds of the next generation.

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## INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY: TRACING THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS IN DAVID MAMET'S *BOSTON MARRIAGE*

A. RESHMATHI

*Assistant Professor of English*

*Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

*(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli)*

### Abstract

*David Mamet's Boston Marriage delves into the complexities of relationships, particularly focusing on the dynamics between the two female protagonists, Anna and Claire. Their friendship, history, and interactions reveal layers of emotions and intricacies. The characters in the play seek independence and autonomy in a time when societal expectations for women were more restrictive. The play examines the characters' desires for personal freedom and fulfilment. This paper attempts to trace the complex relationship who try to seek independence and autonomy in the play.*

**Keywords:** Dynamics, Complexities, Emotions, Intricacies, Independence.

David Mamet's *Boston Marriage* involves examining the intricate relationships among the characters. The focus is on how they navigate societal expectations and seek personal freedom. In terms of Female Independence, the play explores the theme of independence through characters like Anna and Claire. Taking place in the early 20th century when societal norms for women were stringent, Mamet's character revolts against their unconventional choice to live together without conforming to traditional marriage norms reflecting a desire for autonomy. The characters in *Boston Marriage* are presented with decisions that can align with or challenge societal expectations. Mamet uses these choices to emphasize the struggle between personal desires and societal norms. The narrative revolves around pursuing personal freedoms, such as the liberty to choose one's partner and lifestyle.

The play delves into the intricate balance between intimacy and independence within relationships. Mamet explores how individuals assert their autonomy while navigating the complexities of human connections. The nuanced dynamics between Anna and Claire and their interactions with other characters showcase the challenges of maintaining personal freedom within relationships. *Boston Marriage* introduces various challenges that pose threats to the characters' autonomy. These challenges may arise from societal expectations, conflicts

between individuals, or personal insecurities. Mamet utilizes these obstacles to underscore the difficulties of sustaining independence and the compromises that may be necessary.

Mamet's distinct dialogue style becomes crucial in depicting power dynamics and characters' attempts to assert themselves verbally. Language is portrayed as a means of negotiation, manipulation, and expressing personal agency. The clever exchanges and sharp dialogue contribute to the exploration of autonomy within the realm of communication. The play challenges traditional expectations and stereotypes related to gender roles and relationships. Through the characters of Anna and Claire, Mamet questions societal norms, prompting reflection on the necessity of conforming to conventional structures for happiness and fulfilment.

A driving force in the narrative is the characters' pursuit of personal fulfilment. Mamet raises questions about whether autonomy and independence lead to genuine happiness or if they come with their own set of challenges and sacrifices. The play delves into financial independence, with characters like Anna and Claire navigating challenges to sustain themselves without relying on traditional familial or marital support. Pursuing financial autonomy becomes pivotal in their journey toward independence, emphasizing the broader theme of self-reliance.

Mamet examines how societal expectations influence the characters and their rebellion against these norms. Anna and Claire's decision to live together and define their relationship challenges societal expectations, underscoring the importance of asserting autonomy in the face of societal pressures. Sexuality intertwines with autonomy as characters grapple with societal norms. The play portrays characters redefining relationships beyond traditional heterosexual norms, challenging societal impositions on personal lives. Mamet advocates for the idea that genuine autonomy includes the freedom to authentically express one's sexuality.

The play underscores the significance of friendship for support and companionship. Anna and Claire's relationship is portrayed as a chosen family, emphasizing the autonomy found in selecting companions without conforming to conventional family structures. Mamet explores self-discovery as a route to autonomy. Characters navigate relationships, emphasizing the importance of self-awareness and understanding desires in achieving genuine independence. The characters confront and redefine their identities, highlighting that true autonomy is rooted in self-knowledge. *Boston Marriage* sheds light on power dynamics within relationships and their impact on autonomy. Characters engage in verbal sparring and strategic maneuvers, illustrating the negotiation of power as integral to asserting individual agency. The play suggests that autonomy is not always freely given but often claimed through strategic interactions. Mamet delves into the potential costs and sacrifices tied to autonomy. While characters strive for independence, they grapple with challenges and consequences. The play prompts reflection on the price one pays for autonomy, questioning whether the pursuit of personal freedom comes with inherent trade-offs.

*Boston Marriage* introduces ambiguity in characters and motivations, adding complexity to autonomy exploration. Mamet leaves room for interpretation, encouraging the audience to question its foolishness. *Boston Marriage* highlights societal flaws and foolishness, emphasizing that not only the

whether characters genuinely achieve autonomy or if their actions are driven by other motives. This ambiguity prompts contemplation on the nature of true independence. In essence, *Boston Marriage* intricately explores independence and autonomy, touching on financial self-reliance, defiance of societal norms, the intersection of sexuality and autonomy, the role of friendship, self-discovery, power dynamics, the costs of autonomy, and the inherent ambiguity in pursuing personal freedom. The play invites critical engagement, challenging conventional ideas of relationships and individual agency.

In *Boston Marriage*, David Mamet presents two affluent, older characters and a seemingly vulnerable younger one, whom they alternately patronize and victimize. Catherine, the maid, maintains dignity despite the humiliation, patiently delivering messages that Anna and Claire refuse to acknowledge. She emerges as a positive character in Mamet's repertoire, unlike his typical depictions of manipulative or pitiable individuals. While Anna and Claire seek fulfillment through desired objects, Catherine appears devoid of such obsessions, pouring herself into others despite being ignored. Among the three, she seems most justified in feeling lonely, hailing from a distant place without family companionship.

Mamet's play mirrors the society he inhabits, portraying characters reminiscent of his real social counterparts. Emotions like love, treachery, friendship, betrayal, and trust are expressed with clarity and realism. As Anna and Claire reconcile and decide to leave their opulent life for an ordinary one, Mamet underscores hope for society's renewal. Despite the characters' encounters with gloominess and despair, some, like Anna and Claire, overcome them, symbolizing a rebirth.

The play openly addresses controversial relationships prevalent in contemporary society, reflecting real-life behavior. While respecting America's cultural heritage, Mamet doesn't shy away from revealing the society's darker aspects and elderly but also the younger generation feels isolated due to deteriorating relationships. Love and

commitment are lacking, contributing to the ease with which relationships break apart.

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## AMBIVALENCE OF SLAVERY AND TURBULENCE IN SUZAN LORI PARKS *FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS* (PARTS 1, 2 & 3)

**J. CHITRA**

*Assistant Professor of English*

*Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil*

*(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli)*

**Dr. K. SUMATHI**

*Research Supervisor, Head & Associate Professor, Department of English*

*Vivekananda College, Agastheeswaram, Kanyakumari*

### Abstract

*This paper critically explores various challenges faced by the suppressed Penny in the chains of slavery. It also explores the social oppression of Penny in the plantation of America. The play, Father Comes Home From the Wars focusses on the struggles of African Americans to form a new self at the time of Civil War. Parks focusses on the life condition of the African American Negro community in the plantations of America. Parks focusses on the life journey of Penny and concentrates less on the journey of Hero. She affirms that the contribution of women is very much essential to break the iron chains of slavery. The tension between the victim and dominant patriarchal system exposes the existence of upheavals in the society. Parks uses the backdrop of the Civil War that silenced the black women and their experiences in her works. As in American history, the male Hero's journey occupies the spotlight and it is taken as a universal identity. The slave woman gives the last section of the play, its main event that disrupts the dramatic, the historical structure and the story line. Hero's journey is well documented and known while Penny's journey is unknown and open-ended. The story of Hero completing his journey on coming back home and getting his freedom is satisfied and complete.*

**Keywords:** *Racism, Discrimination, the Mess of War, Freedom, Heartbreak of Love.*

Suzan-Lori Parks, a black American playwright, and novelist, express the plight of African American in most of her plays. Parks points out the Slavery, Racial discrimination and Illusion faced by the Afro American women in the western society. Parks has portrayed the immigrant experiences of men and women who struggle hard to uphold their self-identity in an alien land. She has highlighted how the women have been betrayed and misused by her own life partners.

Turbulence is a ubiquitous human emotion that affects people irrespective of age, colour, gender, social status and nationality. It evokes when an individual or a community experiences injustice. Turbulence has been an integral theme in Black Literature as it focusses on the physical and the mental conflict of the Black people. The chaotic state of the indigenous due to oppression and displacement has caused an extreme disorder in their lives. Suzan

Lori Parks has exposed that the racial discrimination fuels turbulence in the United States of America. The racially oppressed people are less educated and Poverty-stricken. She also pays attention to the internal trauma caused by injustice, disparity and historic commotion. She reveals that conflict is not always between factions, but also with in each and every individual and the people of the same community and race. Ogunyemi Christopher Babatunde rightly points out in *Violence in African American Literature: A Comparative Analysis of Richard Wright's The Man Who Killed a Shadow* and James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* says: "Violence has been used by groups speaking power, by groups holding power and by groups in the process of losing power violence has been pursued in the defence of order by the privilege in the name of justice by the oppressed and in fear displacement by the threatened" (10).

The Black writers expose the theme of violence in their literary works to urge the whole human society to opt for a change in the socio-political system that has obstructed their growth so far.

Turbulence is also perpetrated in art when writers use their works to expose the various levels of economic stagnation, environmental degradation and the problem of identity among other social and political vices. Wright and Baldwin, Afro-American writers use ironies in the domain of their narratives to explain the forces in the American society in order to guide the readers to understand the situations and sufferings of the black people. In order to have a proper understanding to turbulence, the Afro American writers have explored their ironic vision in explaining the social frame work of the American society. Chidi Maduka in *The intellectual and the power structure: Abrahams, Achebe, Wright and Flaubert* states, "Irony is a device for revealing, attacking or resolving contradictions plaguing society. The author uses ironic mode to portray the vision of society". This frame work is for understanding the process of social transformation.

Parks describes the struggle for power and possession of the humans in the materialistic world. Brutality and killing has conquered the entire world for various reasons. Black race is not the only community deprived of equal rights. Even there is a lot of discrimination within a single community, considering one another inferior.

The sense of considering oneself superior to others and treating others as inferior might have been inherited from the foreign race which has considered itself superior. John Arthur in *Race, Equality, and the Burdens of History* has highlighted that the belief in racial theory can take five different forms. They are:

1. *Intellectually inferior* (naturally less able to understand complex problems or less artistically creative);
2. *Morally inferior* (inherently less virtuous, less trustworthy, hardworking, loyal);
3. *Physically inferior* (less athletically gifted);
4. *Aesthetically inferior* (less physically attractive); or
5. *Emotionally inferior* (less nature and more

childlike). (35)

It is no doubt by taking the above-mentioned factors into consideration it can be inferred that the black race which has been under estimated for the above might have got accustomed to the same practice and eventually they start exercising the same among themselves to fall a prey at last to their own mistake.

Parks' *Father Comes Home From the Wars* presents the culture, torments and slavery experienced by the Africans who have been taken to America as slaves to work in the West Texas Plantation. The Play is an outcome of the playwright's inspiration of her father Donald Parks who was a career soldier. Through the play, Parks recalls the civil war from the view point of an Afro- American slave who is "Big, brave, smart, honest and strong" (FCW 9). The play centres around the theme of liberty that has been longed by the black slaves in America. The life condition of the black people has been painted without bias in the play.

Parks discusses about death and its effects on the bereaved family members. Death is obviously round the corner and it may happen to any individual person at any moment irrespective of age, gender, race and economic status. The playwright makes it clear that the people of the society should prefer only natural death which is an unknown guest. The old man in the play accompanies Penny in her search for her Hero's dog odyssey at night. The black slaves mistake the old man's absence for his death. A black slave reckons, "It happens. He was pretty much as old as Person should get" (FCW 11). Parks profounds that men should not allow themselves to die due to starvation, war, violence and brutality. Parks hopes for a peaceful co-existence which is free from treachery and violence.

Parks' play *Father Comes Home From the Wars* gives an account of the US Civil War and the concept of freedom. She presents the Hero who is caught under the agonising moral dilemma.

As a slave on the West Texas Plantation in 1862, he is promised freedom if he joins his Master in fighting with the rebel Confederate Army but his wife Penny and some of the other slaves wanted him



to stay at home but the Hero prefers going along with his master. The Hero admits “Boss gave me these remnants to weak, if I choose to go” (FCW 16). This sounds that Hero has been given an option to join the master in the war. As he is very much under confusion, Hero discusses it with the old man. He calls, “Father stay with me a while” (FCW 18). This shows Hero’s love for his community, particularly to the elders. The old man with all his experiences simplifies the situation and resolves, “Take the place of the Rightful Freedom that he’s been denying you” (FCW 20). He also adds, “I want you to go, son. There I said it. I’ll tell you true, I want you to go to the war” (FCW 21). It is quite evident that the Africans are not cowards but the proud warriors and saviours of their people and their country’s pride.

Parks uncovers the malicious attitude of the white masters who exploit the labour of the black slaves through false promises of freedom. The master who promises freedom for Hero if he participates in the civil war is not an exception. Hero concedes, “This morning when Boss and me spoke alone together. He promised me “my freedom for my service” (FCW 21). Such promises have been quite a few times infringed by the master and Hero too is quite aware of it. Hero has become too inquisitive to know what does the word freedom mean. The perplexed state of mind has created a feeling of hatred and turbulence in the mind of Hero and that of the black slave.

The inconvenience and hardship enforced on Hero has made him imagine of murdering the master so that he and his community may set extricated from the fetters of slavery and oppression. The old man who has got accustomed to the ill-treatment of the maser does not want the younger generation to experience cruelty and humiliation. Black People have been dehumanized and ignored for their colour and race till today. The old man seconds “kill him and there’s no life for you” (FCW 22). People who have been submissive for centuries have begun to react differently as the viciousness of the dominant class has made the black community to think of teaching what they have learnt.

The Africans are multi-talented as they are capable of performing any task assigned to them or willingly chosen by them. They have proved to the world that they have been excellent agriculturalists, hardworking labourers, skillful hunters and veteran warriors. Parks specifies that Africans are strong in mind and sturdy in body. Their valour is cunningly exploited and utilised by the white masters, the colonisers. Hero is fearless, resolute and gallant. He is determined to participate in the Civil War and at the same time, he is highly hopeful of coming back home to serve his community and obtain liberty from their master.

Freedom is the most essential one for the enslaved black community as they have been suffocating a lot under suppression. Parks also vouchsafes the manipulative nature of the white master who instigates violence among the black. This is evident in the slaves fighting as opponents in the civil war and Boss-Master’s plan to kill Homer, a black man under the control of Hero. Master has said, “I’ll give your freedom if your cut off Homer’s foot” (FCW 22). The reasoning capacity of Hero is felt when he refuses to injure Homer. The old man says “A man like you can make a wholesome things out of bits and pieces” (FCW 23). Parks seems to advocate that the younger generation of black community need to understand their potentiality to surpass all the hardships that they encounter in their life.

Parks is likely to impart a message that not even a single black individual to lose his life without a cause, particularly in a war in which the blacks fight mostly against their own community to protect the pride and interest of their white master.

Parks presents the pathetic plight and struggle of the Africans who have been deceived by their masters under the pretext of granting freedom. The life of the black is not considered valuable by the white. Whatever happens, the white gets benefitted through it while the black suffers for the cause of his master. In short, colonialism has destroyed African culture, custom, tradition and freedom.

Parks reveals the conflict between thought and action with in the black community. The villagers

differ in their opinions regarding Hero's participation in the Civil War. The old man expresses his opinion Hero has expressed a contradictory opinion. The conflict within the community leads to several ideas.

Penny is reluctant in sending her husband to the Civil War that may put an end to his life and eventually make her a destitute. She also has no belief in the promise of the master while Hero and the old man do believe his promise. It is due to their anxiety to get liberated and lead a free life with no one to wield power over.

The old man who has unaltered faith in honesty, confidence and relentless spirit believes that Hero would come back from the war while others don't. He imparts a note of optimism in the play. As an elderly person the old man shoulders the responsibility of providing valuable suggestions and opinions. He is experienced and mature enough to consider all the African slaves as his children. He is contrary to the character of Joe Keller in Arthur Miller's *All my Sons* who fails to consider all the American youths as his own children, particularly during the Second World War for he is ambitious to hoard money and hence, he fails to consider all the American youths as his own children, particularly during the Second World War.

This study has highlighted how the characters struggle hard to grab success on facing challenges and changes. Their fortitude changes them into

to Hero that he should fight in the war to liberate the villagers from slavery and tyranny. Penny, wife of tolerant, patient and poised individuals to pursue and possess their goals. Further, they are motivated by their vision of a splendid future born out of their struggle and forbearance. Hence the vision of transition endows the victimised individuals of turbulence with fortitude to achieve their mission of conquering liberty, equality and victory.

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## DIVAKARUNI'S *INDEPENDENCE*: A SUIGENERIS DIEGESIS OF THROE

**Dr. SHASHI SRIVASTAVA**

Assistant Professor, Department of English Studies  
Dayalbagh Educational Institute (DEI), Dayalbagh, Agra

### Abstract

*We all need to realize the fact that the cause of suffering, agony and pain on this earth is the outcome of the greed and selfishness of man—the highest creation of God, who has an absolutely different aim to achieve. The lust for wealth, power, knowledge, land, status and popularity is killing the humane values. Man is inflicting pain and suffering on each other instead of healing the same. Men in general and women in particular, have undergone a lot of suffering in the pretext of war, violence, riots, agitations, crime, theft, calamities, recession, disability, and patriarchy as external causes. There are internal sources of trauma and agony too. Complexes, fear, crisis of identity, setbacks and emotional turmoil are the reasons to name a few. These complexities of life have been depicted by the literary artists in their treatises. There have been accounts of horror and trauma from the Partition. Masterpieces like Train to Pakistan by Khushwant Singh, Manto's Mottled Dawn, Pinjar by Amrita Pritam, Ice Candy by Bapsi Sidhwa, Two by Gulzar are well known. Not all the firsthand accounts of violence against women have been a part of the public platform. "Some people survive and talk about it. Some people survive and go silent. Some people survive and create." – Nikita Gill. We find the same in The Parted Earth by Anjali Enjeti, Fozia Raja's Daughters of Partition, where the novelist's grandmother had desired the novelist to write the story of her life. Similarly Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Independence is the outcome of the insistence of the author's mother to narrate the same. This novel is set in the turbulent and traumatic years of Independence. The life of three daughters takes a turn after their father is killed and the partition separates them. They face a traumatic situation. Are we, as human beings, not supposed to help each other, console each other and support each other to overcome them? Do we have to add fuel to the fire or act as soothing agents? Leo Tolstoy has rightly said, "If you feel pain, you're alive. If you feel other people's pain, you're a human being".*

**Keywords:** Partition, Agony, Traumatic, Suigeneris, Resilience.

We all need to realize; the fact that the cause of suffering, agony and pain on this earth is the outcome of the greed and selfishness of man—the highest creation of God, who has an a different aim to achieve.

The lust for wealth, power, knowledge, land, status and popularity is killing the humane values. Man is inflicts pain and suffering on each other instead of healing the same. Men and women have undergone a lot of suffering due to war, violence, riots, agitations, crime, theft, calamities, recession, disability, and patriarchy as external causes. There are internal sources of trauma and agony, too. Complexes, fear, crisis of identity, setbacks and emotional turmoil are the reasons.

Trauma is itself a traumatic word that gives a dangerous feel. *The Cambridge Dictionary* defines trauma as "a severe and lasting emotional shock and pain caused by an extremely upsetting experience, or

a case of such shock happening". We have known a great psychologist, Sigmund Freud, who believed that trauma is a wound inflicted not upon the boy but upon the mind. "Trauma is perhaps the most avoided, ignored, belittled, denied, misunderstood, and untreated cause of human suffering." – Peter Levine.

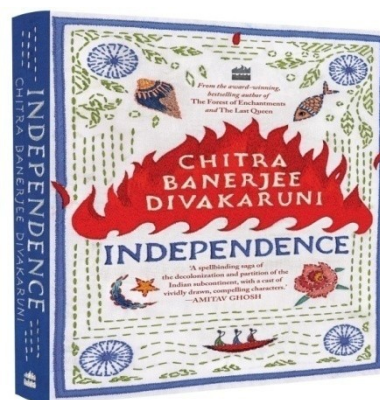
Literature which is inseparable from life portrays all that is there in life: the good and the bad, the positive and the negative. Therefore trauma is also reflected in literature. These complexities of life have been depicted by literary artists in their treatises. There have been accounts of horror and trauma from the Partition. Masterpieces like *Train to Pakistan* by Khushwant Singh, Manto's *Mottled Dawn*, *Tamas* by Bhisham Sahni, *Pinjar* by Amrita Pritam, *Ice Candy* by Bapsi Sidhwa, *Two* by Gulzar are well known. Not all the firsthand accounts of

violence against women have been a part of the public platform.

“Some people survive and talk about it. Some people survive and go silent. Some people survive and create.” – Nikita Gill. We find this in *The Parted Earth* by Anjali Enjeti, Fozia Raja’s *Daughters of Partition*, where the novelist’s grandmother desired the novelist to write the story of her life. Similarly, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s *Independence* is the outcome of the insistence of the author’s mother to narrate the same.

Recipient of an American Book Award, a Light of India Award, a Premio Scanno (Italy), and a Barbara Deming Award, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is known to be a renowned South-Asian American writer. We know her for being a bestselling author, poet, activist, and professor. She teaches Creative Writing at the University of Houston. Her work has been published in over fifty magazines, including *The Atlantic* and *The New Yorker*, and included in *The Best American Short Stories* and *The O. Henry Prize Stories*. Her books are translated into twenty-nine languages, including Dutch, Hebrew, Bengali, Russian, and Japanese. Several have been used for campus-wide reads and made into films and plays. Divakaruni was fortunate to have been chosen by the *Economic Times* for their list of *Twenty Most Influential Global Indian Women*.

Divakaruni’s *Independence* has been published by HarperCollins, in India and in the US by William Morrow/HarperCollins. The Indian publication by HarperCollins has a serene white cover with certain elements that depict Bengal and its heritage. The Kanta threadwork, the boat, the fish, and the Ashoka Chakra complement the story.



Publisher’s Weekly Starred Review: “A dazzling tale, hair-raising. . . . Divakaruni seamlessly weaves the political upheaval into the characters’ lives while also depicting the beauty, vitality, and vastness of India. This is a must.”

The review of the novel, as mentioned in the *New Indian Express*: “Independence binds the reader in a spell. The narration is beguilingly informal and taut, while the storyline is immense yet immediate. It is extremely rare that an author establishes such a spontaneous rapport with an unknown reader. With this novel, Divakaruni firmly marks her territory among the foremost storytellers of this nation and of her destiny.”

The novelist wanted to remind people about the struggle and aftermath of the Partition 75 years ago. She revealed her purpose of penning this novel to a CNBC TV correspondent on February 22, 2023

### “Q. Why Write a Book Like *Independence* at a Time Like Now?

A. This is the perfect time for this novel, with us having just celebrated 75 years of independence. It really struck me that more than 75 percent of Indian citizens were born after Independence! I felt that it was important to remind them of the struggles, heroism and tragedies of the freedom movement and partition. Also, this is a good time to remember that India became free because the country was able to come together, putting aside differences of language, religion, region, caste, etc. to fight against the British.”

## Q. What do you think Makes *Independence Stand Apart from Other Classics of this Genre*?

A. *Independence* is different partly because it is set in Bengal. The freedom movement, interwoven with the songs of Tagore, Nazrul, and Bankim Chandra, had a different flavor here. Muslims and Hindus worked very closely together for independence until Direct Action Day, 1946. And then overnight there was great and inexplicable violence between the communities (the Calcutta Riots). So that is a central conundrum in this novel—what separates us as Indians? What do we have in common? How can we come together and help—and perhaps even love—each other?”

In an interview with *Vogue* on November 20, 2022, the novelist said, “I wanted to tell the story of common people, women like you and me, and how independence affected them,” explains the author what inspired her to write on this subject immediately after *The Last Queen*, her previous book on Rani Jindan of Punjab. “I also wanted to write on how a time like that made ordinary women into heroes. They had to reach deep inside to find the courage within them, and learn what independence really meant. It all led to the book in your hands today.”



Published on November 30, 2022, this novel is set in the turbulent and traumatic years of Independence—the freedom movements in India, particularly Bengal, beginning from August 1946 till the epilogue in 1954. The life of three daughters: Deepa, Jamini and Priya takes a turn after their father is brutally killed and they get separated because of partition. They face a traumatic situation. The book was also shortlisted for the AuthHer Awards 2023 in the Fiction category.

There are five sections and an Epilogue in this novel. (I) August 1946, (II) August-October 1946, (III) October-December 1946, (IV) March – November 1947 and (V) November-February 1948.

The novel is set in Calcutta, when it had witnessed the drastic and frightening incidents for the Partition. It began in August 1946—just before the Hindu-Muslim riots of Direct Action Day.

Set against the backdrop of the months leading up to India's Independence and a few years after that, the novel gives a sense of the way lives were torn asunder in the upheaval of Partition. It seems to suggest that independence, even at a personal level, does not come without its share of pain.

Nabakumar, an ideal doctor, an exemplary human being and a very broad minded personality got along very well happy with his Muslim doctor-friend Dr Abdullah Khan and his nephew Dr Raza who is also a member of the Muslim League. They were practicing together in a small locality of the busy Calcutta. They never charged their patients who could not afford the fee or the treatment. Following in letter and spirit, the oath that every passing medical student takes in his life, they carried out their duties as the saviours.

It has been very rightly said, “People may not reward or thank you for the good things you’ve done. But when God is your reason for serving you will receive greater blessings.” (1)

Known for his benevolence, Nabakumar was always supported by his friend and benefactor-Somnath. God rewarded his generosity. Somnath was always supporting Dr Nabakumar financially. Thus, he was able to carry out his noble service to humanity.

There is a mournful strain that captures the emotional climate of that age: weeping widows, burning cities, dance of death, rivers of blood. Sparks fly at the sight of the other; the air seems to be coated with gunpowder. Shivers run down your spine as communal fires rip through a country trying to find its feet” (2).

Nabakumar had taken his family from Ranipur to Calcutta for an outing. Riots break out and they

had to confine themselves indoor. The turning point for the Ganguly family and the country came on August 16, 1946. This was the date the Muslim League led by Mohammed Ali Jinnah declared a "Direct Action Day," to be observed all over India as a day of protest. It was unfortunately and coincidentally at the same time the family took a rare holiday in Calcutta staying at Somnath's palatial city residence.

"Muslim League had ordered businesses all over India to close down on 16 August so that they could have a mass meeting. There might be violence, Looting." (25)

Dr Raza says, 'It's a crucial time in the history of our nation...' (27)

"A curfew has been imposed, but the rioters are ignoring it. Violence continues to escalate as vigilantes from both communities seek revenge; shops and homes are burned, people hacked to death." (43)

Nabakumar did his best to take the risk of his life to reach his charitable clinic to help so many victims of this violence.



A true humanitarian, he could not tolerate the screams of a victim injured by the mob-who could not get up to come inside his clinic for medical aid-and went out to assist him inside to save his life. What was the fruit of his love and care? He was shot by the mob fighting ruthlessly and blindly killing the innocent. Their bullets didn't differentiate the Hindu and the Muslim.

"There are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds." - Laurell K. Hamilton.

The degree of communal violence that can leave a very drastic effect on the victims is not explicable

by words. Bina loses her husband in this violence how deeply is she wounded not physically but mentally and emotionally is very tragic.

The family is shattered. The wife and the daughters lose their bread earner---with him not only their hopes, dreams, aspirations, ambitions but also the necessities of survival are at stake.

The aftermath of this traumatic incident turns the lives of the family upside down. They not only face the poverty and indifference of the others but also the change in the attitude of their neighbours who do not even pity Bina's severe sickness. Her agony and anguish is very intense.

"Bina has lost weight. Dark shadows under her eyes as though someone had pressed hard their thumbs." (57). "Bina has had fainting fits." (58) "...many neighbours have stayed away as though misfortune were an infectious disease." (60)

All this and much more is the outcome of the fissures between the Hindu-Muslim communities.



Divakaruni has presented the detestable reality of the time when even the rural areas were not left from the clutches of violence. And in rural Bengal incidents of killing and looting at different regions had increased. The fury of Partition reaches Ranipur. Jamini and her mother Bina are caught in it. Amit comes just in time to save them, but who will marry Jamini, whose honour stands questioned because of an attempted rape? How atrocious was it for these insecure females?

It was not less excruciating for the eldest daughter Deepa to leave her family and go alone to live with Dr Raza, a Muslim. She has to go to Dacca. The traumatic experience of losing not only one's



identity but also breathing with fear every minute was painful for her. First faking to be a Muslim and then faking a wedding with Raza. She feels a churning inside, a pain as though she is being torn into two. The trauma does not come to an end here. Raza dies, leaving a widowed Deepa who is in danger of being forced to marry a local strongman in Dhaka. Priya and Jamini, with Amit's help, rescue her in a dramatic operation, with gunshots ringing out all around and people in hot pursuit. It did leave the innocent daughter Sameera petrified.

Amit is also shot in this backdrop of India's division. Will his father overcome this trauma? Will the others ever be able to come out of their intimidating past? The words of Gulzar, from his novel *Two* have the answer. "The wounds will take decades to heal, centuries to overcome the trauma." — Gulzar, *Two*  
 "Most people have no imagination. If they could imagine the sufferings of others, they would not make them suffer so." – Anna Funder

Divakaruni's assertion and message to her readers have been communicated in her response to the interviewer from Vogue.

Some of the incidents it focuses on-communal riots, disowning children who fall in love with someone from another religion, the constant divisions of 'us' and 'them'-could very well make it a book about contemporary times. So much has changed since 1947, I point out to Divakaruni, but so much is still the same. What, then, does she wish readers take away from her book? "I hope people will see exactly that. What happened in 1947 is still happening today. We need to accept that India is a multicultural, multi-religious country. We're all Indians, who our *shaheeds* fought and died for. Instead of thinking of 'us' and 'them'-which led to the Direct Action Day riots-the message of this book is that we can think of 'us' together and move towards something better. Let's drop our defences momentarily and remember the dream with which India was created. Maybe then we can go back-or forward-to that dream."

Arundhati Roy, a well known novelist has rightly said, "The Partition of India was a traumatic event that shaped the destiny of millions."

Are we, as human beings, not supposed to help each other, console each other and support each other to overcome them? Do we have to add fuel to the fire or act as soothing agents?

Leo Tolstoy has rightly said, "If you feel pain, you're alive. If you feel other people's pain, you're a human being."

Calcutta, where the novel has been set, also reminds us of Mother Teresa. Her words, "We do not need guns and bombs to bring peace. We need love and compassion."

Trauma, of any type, will vanish with these ideas.

Divakaruni's *Independence* is undoubtedly a Suigeneris Diegesis of throe of the victims of traumatic Partition that takes place in Bengal.

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## RESILIENCE AND SURVIVAL IN *ONE AMAZING THING* BY CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI: A STUDY

K. AATHITHYA

III BA English

Pioneer Kumaraswamy College, Nagercoil

### Abstract

*Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a renowned Indian-American author known for her compelling storytelling and rich character development. She has written various novels, short stories and poetry collections, exploring themes of identity, culture and women's experiences. Her work often incorporates elements of magical realism and draws inspiration from her own multicultural background. In her novel One Amazing Thing presents an odd group of nine people from various background trapped inside a visa office at an Indian Consulate after a massive earthquake in an American city. It is a compelling story that showcases the human spirit and the power of resilience. The characters in the novel face a lot of challenges in a collapsed structure and must find ways to overcome their struggles. They must find strength within themselves and survive together. It is a captivating and thought-provoking novel that delves into the complexities of human nature. The characters face various difficulties during the building block crisis, and their stories of resilience and survival are truly inspiring.*

**Keywords:** Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Earthquake, Trapped, Diversity, Adversity, Strength, Hope, Human Spirit.

Life is filled with ups and downs, challenges and triumphs. We all face adversity at some point in our lives. It is a natural part of the human experiences, and it is how we respond to it that truly matters. The ability to not only survive but thrive in the face of hardships is a testament to one's resilience and strength. It is inspiring to see individuals rise above challenges and come out even stronger on the other side. We all have the potential to overcome adversity and achieve greatness. In this novel Banerjee has attempted to display the incredible resilience and will to survive in the face of adversity. Despite the challenging circumstances, they find hope amidst the chaos. It is inspiring to see how they draw strength from one another and refuse to give up, even when things seem bleak. Their determination and ability to adapt to the situation highlight the indomitable human spirit. It is a testament to the power of resilience and the capacity for survival in the most challenging.

An odd group of nine people: Mangalam and Malathi - two visa officers, Jiang, a old Chinese-Indian woman, her grand daughter Lily, Cameron, an ex-soldier, Tariq, a young Muslim of about 25,

a white couple Mr. and Mrs. Pritchett and Uma, an Indian-American girl are these people were trapped in a visa office at an Indian Consulate after a massive earthquake is an unidentified city of US. They find themselves trapped together in a building when a powerful earthquake strikes, the building becomes unstable and in collapsing structure, and there is no rescue operations, though people are eagerly waiting for it, with very little food, limited access to water and medical supplies, lack of resources, dwindling oxygen l, rising flood water, and no electricity and phone service, people go on panicking, cursing each other and even fighting and put their lives at great risk and uncertainty of rescue create a truly intense and perilous environment.

There is much agitation in the minds of the characters, they doubt each other as they are so different from each other. Cameron, an African-American who formerly served in the Army, survival training skills help them stay alive while they wait for help. At first his authority is questioned by Tariq, a young Muslim in the group. Until they calm down and begin to help each other. There are a number of

minor skirmishes and instances of people looking out primarily for themselves.

They have to rely on their resilience, resourcefulness and determination to survive. They face the constant fear of aftershocks and the uncertainty of when or if they will be rescued. It is a gripping portrayal of the challenges they must overcome to survive in such a dangerous and life threatening situation. They are forced to confront their fears, past mistakes and personal struggles while waiting for rescue. The confined space intensifies the tension and brings out both the best and worst in each character.

To bring unity to the group and to keep them from harming each other, Uma, a graduate student, suggests that they each take turns telling stories from their own lives. She is inspired by Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, which she is reading for an English class when the earthquake first strikes. Although there is resistance to this idea at first, eventually everyone agrees to tell a story. As they share their personal stories. This helps them group and support each other through the difficult situation.

It is a moving portrayal of human resilience and the bonds that unite us. Humans have an incredible capacity to endure challenges and adapt to difficult situations. People develop resilience through their experiences and the ability to find strength within themselves and in others. It is about learning to bounce back from adversity and grow from different situations "Everyone has a story,... I don't believe anyone can go through life without encountering at least one amazing thing" (65). It may be the mechanism of lessening their present pain and fear, strengthening psychological insight, improving confidence, and supporting others to forget others' pain. They listen attentively during the story telling, because stories evoke emotions by allowing people to relate to the experiences of the characters, fostering empathy, emotional connections, inspiring reflection and understanding.

The stories told by these characters distinctly reveal their most crucial moments of their lives as well as the reason why they need a travel visa to

India. Jiang begins the story, she is an elderly woman who grew up in Calcutta's Chinatown. She is a talented and successful business woman, her personal life is very pathetic. Most of the Chinese people who live in India do a tannery business and do not get respect. They are considered to be inferior. And she starts to manage her father's shoe shop. At the time, she fell in love with a Bengali young man, Mohit Das, who works as a manager at National and Grindlays Bank. Her love marriage was interrupted by political reasons; it was dangerous to be Chinese in India. Jiang immediately married a middle aged man and settled in the United States with a man of Chinese descent.

The next narrator, Tariq, a young Muslim man who was raised in America, has recently become critical of America culture and government and has become more engaged in his Muslim roots. All this was caused by his girlfriend, Farah and a group of more radical friends.

The next one to narrate the story is Mr. Mangalam, another employee of the Indian Consulate, married into a wealthy family to raise his own family's station. After becoming increasingly unhappy with his marriage, he begins an affair. His wife's family exerts influence to threaten Mr. Mangalam and his mistress and as a result, he was sent to work at this post at the Indian Consulate.

The next character of the story is Mr. Pritchett, a Caucasian accountant, overcame a childhood of poverty and abandonment. He is bewildered by his wife's recent behavior and hopes a trip to India will be a new start for them.

The next narrator Lily, Jiang's granddaughter, lived for a long time in the shadow of her older brother, who aspires to be a cancer researcher. She teaches herself how to play the flute and becomes very good at it, giving concerts and winning acclaim. One day she simply feels she can no longer play: it is the same day she leaves that her older brother has been failing at the university. So she decides to encourage his brother to promote. So she decides to move to India.

The next narrator, Cameron, who becomes the leader of the group, is going to India to meet Seva, a girl he sponsored at an orphanage. It is the end of a long journey to absolve himself from a lifetime of guilt over high school girlfriend's abortion and many atrocities he witnessed and participated in during his career in the Army.

The ultimate narrator, Uma, who suggested the telling of the stories, tells her story last. She is traveling to India to visit her parents, who have relocated there. She has been keeping secrets from her parents and wants to unburden herself when she arrives.

Emotions, understanding allows individuals to relate to other's experiences, strength and inspiration in these stories. Shared stories help build connections by allowing people to step into someone else's shoes and understand their experiences. It is like creating a shared understanding and the bond between story teller and listener and it is like building a bridge between our hearts and the hearts of others.

*One Amazing Thing* is an open ended novel. The nine survivors have heard of the sounds might be a rescue team or it collapses even worse to a level of killing everyone. They are experiencing death to the utmost conclusion. The fear of death makes them reconcile with each other and find moral support. Thus, through the hardships of nature, it has made humans understand the value of life and relationships. Divakaruni has proved to be an inspiration and postmodern writer. She leaves the conclusion depending upon the mindset of the readers whether to unite nine individual people to redeem their follies or unrequited love or they would die to witness the adversity which turns them to be good. The conclusion of the novel actually renews their life to have strength to face whatever hardship

comes. The characters not only survive but also they regain their spirit to achieve whatever they tend to face. She shows her character's unity though the adversity merges them into a nearly collapsed state.

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## RELIGION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF EXPLOITATION: A PSYCHOANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF MULK RAJ ANAND

**R. ESTHER RESHMA**

*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English and Comparative Literature  
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai*

### Abstract

*The present study analyzes Mulk Raj Anand's aim on exposing the fraudulence that has crept into the practice of religions. Regarding Hinduism, Anand's main target of attack is its caste system. He finds the division of society on the basis of caste abominable. In the earlier days, the caste system has been based on the division of labour. Later on, it has been degenerated into a system in which the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas look down upon the lower castes. They do not even like to touch the sweepers or to be touched by them. Like Untouchable, The Village also reveals the miserably unhygienic living conditions of the sweepers. They live inhaling the most obnoxious and rotten air of the most foully odorous pond in the midst of the dirt of the city. Almost the same miserable unhygienic conditions prevail in The Road. The upper caste people have a sense of superiority. The Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the two upper castes in Hindu society, justify their superiority by asserting that they have earned their position by the good-deeds of multiple lives. In The Road, the outcastes are not permitted to enter the holy shrines. Pandit Suraj Mani bars the way of the Untouchables by joining hands with the caste Hindus when they want to worship. The Untouchables are deprived of some of the most 27 essential needs of human life and by this deprivation they are made abject and servile. One such thing is the denial of education. Bakha views education as a means to escape from his hereditary profession. In Coolie Prabha Dayal is unable to pay back his creditors as he has been cheated by his partner Ganpat. In the initial stage Prabha does not realize that his partner is wicked. Mulk Raj Anand's condemnation of the exploitation indulged in by the British capitalists is revealed through the unhappy and miserable life that the native workers are made to lead in the cotton mill in Coolie and tea-plantations in Two Leaves and a Bud.*

**Keywords:** *untouchable, the road, coolie, the sword and the sickle, the village, two leaves and a bud, the big heart, religion, economic exploitation.*

Mulk Raj Anand's parents were only outwardly religious and neither of them knew much about religion. Anand seems to have inherited from his father an irreligious mind and he used to join his father in making fun of his mother's idolatrous devotion to all gods both in heaven and on earth.

This has made Mulk Raj Anand get interested in bringing into focus religious bigotry and hypocrisy. In most of his novels the chief theme is the degradation of institutionalized religion into an instrument of exploitation. In almost all his novels, Anand makes sarcastic references to religion. People have developed a natural tendency towards the outward form. Mulk Raj Anand highlights this decadent state to which traditional religions in

general and Hindu religion in particular have fallen.

The noble Intention of religion is to establish a communion between man and God and harmony among people. Hence, it ought to make man a noble and compassionate being. But religion does not seem to have served its purpose. As Paul observes, "... the world teems with people who make a show of religion rather than practice it" (58). The sham and corruption promoted in the name of religion could be seen everywhere.

Priests play a major role in exploiting people. Mulk Raj Anand finds these supposed representatives of God to be cheats. He is enraged that these religious men entrap the superstitious folk by exploiting their innocence. As counterfeit it

sainthood is a phenomenon that is seen everywhere in our country, it forms a recurrent theme in Indo-Anglican fiction. R. K. Narayan has made this the central theme of his novel *The Guide*. This novel shows how a criminal released from jail cheats the people under the mask of saintliness. Taking into advantage the gullible nature of the villagers the hero Raju acts like a saint. One of the main reasons for which he does so is to fill up his stomach.

The representatives of organized religion are often found to be actively involved in doing the wicked things. Mulk Raj Anand's satirical attack on fake saints and fake priests stems from his righteous anger against exploitation of any kind, whether it is religious, social or economic. Religious faith is bred in the bones of the Indians. The credulity of the people is shamelessly exploited and various atrocities are committed in the name of religion. People have no proper religious leaders, and their guidance is like that of the blind leading the blind.

The holy men who appear in Mulk Raj Anand's novels are obviously fake. Anand's attitude towards them is not one of comic acceptance but of moral Indignation. The priests and Mahants who appear in his novels are criticized by the author "...not for their lack of spiritual authenticity, but for the tyranny and hypocrisy they precise" (Mukherjee 108).

The priests make their fortune by exploiting the ignorance of the people. As Sharma says, the Brahmins and priests "... pick the pockets of the poor peasants and extract money by conducting ceremonial and ritual rites" (33). The people are made to part with their money for the performance of special prayers and ceremonies which are believed to ensure their well-being. The priests of Anand are like the scribes, whom Jesus Christ talks about to his disciples: "...desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief room sat feasts; ... devour widow's houses, and for a show make long prayers... (Luke 46, 47).

The priests in Mulk Raj Anand's novels make a show of everything and try to keep up their prestige only. In *Untouchable*, the priest Pandit Kali Nath is

an ill-humoured person with a moral weakness. This weakness gets the better of him as he lacks the real strength of a spiritual person. He is not able to ward off temptation. His rigid respectability gives into waves of a morousness and he covers up his weakness by bullying others. In the episode where the *Untouchable* gather around the well to get water, one could see that Pandit KaliNath's eyes are always yearning for a pretty face. As Anand says, he has "as good an eye for a pretty face as he had a bad ear for the sound of a request" (*Untouchable* 33). That is why Pandit Kali Nath first calls Sohini to get water from him. And, in order to hide this weakness, he splashes water on the other outcasts.

The warmth that Pandit Kali Nath has felt by standing near Sohini spurs him to call her to come to clean the temple courtyard. When Sohini comes to clean the courtyard he tries to molest her, Sohini tells Bakha that when she "... was bending down to work, he came and held me by my breasts" (*Untouchable* 71). When the attempt is foiled, he accuses her and her brother of defiling him and the temple. It is ironical to note that A Brahmin makes such nun ashamed attempt. But he escapes, and the innocent Bakha and Sohini become victims. This brings into focus the hypocrisy and the double standards that underlie the supposed purity and spirituality of high class people.

Pandit Suraj Mani of *The Road* is also a hypocrite like all such characters of Anand. He also has a moral weakness like Pandit Kali Nath. This could be seen from his desire to be seen naked by the village women while bathing. As Mulk Raj Anand says, "Pandit Suraj Mani devoutly lifted the triple cord from his waist upwards to the shoulder and then adjusted it around his left ear..." (*The Road* 11). This act has given "him just the time he needed to appreciate the contours of Rukmani's figure" (*The Road* 11). He makes the girl blush with his smile and it is said that his "eyes caressed the curves of her (Rukmani) body with the concentrated lasciviousness of old age" (*The Road* 12). All these things, as Shivpuri puts in his article "*The Road: An Interpretation*," "Epitomizes... the entire

exhibitionism of his character” (20). In *Untouchable*, the priest offers water to Sohini, the outcaste girl. There is a similar situation in *The Road*. Here Pandit Suraj Mani receives water from Rukmani, a high caste girl. Though Suraj Mani surreptitiously gazes at her figure, he does not make bold advances to her as she is a caste Hindu girl and the daughter of a powerful man in the village. While Pandit Kali Nath shouts and abuses to hide his weakness, Pandit Suraj Mani mutters ‘Ram! Ram!’

The fat yogi of the shrine of Bhagat. Har Das in *Coolie* is a craftier version of Suraj Mani. He distributes free water to people. Though water is said to be given free of cost, it is really paid. After drinking water every one throws a copper coin at the feet of the holy man. When Munoo does not throw a copper after drinking water, the “Brahmin scowled at him and muttered the proverb: ‘May the misers fade away’ ” (*Coolie* 154).

Munoo is taken in by the yogi’s appearance and seeks his help to initiate him to spirituality so that he could prove to be a worthy person. The yogi entertains Munoo to serve him saying “we will make you a disciple and you may rise to be a saint if you serve your guru” (*Coolie* 156). But Munoo is overpowered by a sense of shame when he sees through the mask of saint lines sworn by the yogi, who specializes in enabling rich and young childless women conceive and beget children. Thus the yogi seeks physical gratification under the pretense of performing rituals.

Mulk Raj Anand not only shows the so called holy men or the representatives of God as indulging in immoral activities, but also accuses them of being gluttonous. The pious people shower delicacies on the priests. In *Untouchable* Pandit Kali Nath recalls “... the taste of the various delicacies to which he was so often treated by the pious” (31). His gloating comments are sickening. “How nice and sweet is the kheer, sticking to the teeth and lingering in the mouth. And Kara parshad, the hot, buttery masses of it melt almost as you put a morsel of it in the mouth” (*Untouchable* 31).

He suffers from a chronic constipation due to over-eating. That is why he condescends to draw water for the untouchables. He thinks that the exercise would do his belly some good.

In *The Road* it is said that Pandit Suraj Mani could eat twice as much as anyone in the village. Dhooli Singh’s description of Suraj Mani is very apt. He says: The crafty Brahmin dog was at the root of the whole trouble . . . the hypocrite, with the rosary in his hand, eating twice as much as anyone in the village, with the feasts on the death anniversaries falling due somewhere in the village every day, saying things with double meanings. (*The Road* 18)

As Pandit Suraj Mani depends on the high caste families for his food, he changes sides as the situation suits his purpose. When he talks to Dhooli Singh, he praises him for the project he has undertaken. When he talks to Thakur Singh he pleases him saying that Dhooli Singh is defiling the land and that he would receive punishment. Later on, one could see that Suraj Mani is willing to accept an offer of mangoes from Dhooli Singh, the leader of the defiled party, whom he has been about to excommunicate a little earlier at the instance of Thakur Singh.

The Mahant Nandgir in *The Village* is a master sinner; secure in his saffron robes. His avarice for food is no less than that of the other priests referred to earlier. He reveals his greed by fleecing the poor of the village and taking gifts, money and other delicacies in exchange for mantras and other religious rituals. Lalu, the protagonist of the novel says that he is a “religious teacher who in greed is so gluttonous that he will suck the blood of the poorest” (*The Village* 24). He forces the poor to give grains, clothes and other gifts while they die of hunger. Thus he feeds “...upon the life-blood of the poor peasants” (Sharma32).His characteristics can be best summed up in Lalu’s words: “The lecher! He ate sumptuous food, dressed in yellow silks, smoked charas and drank hemp, and if reports were true, whored and fornicated. And he was kept a holy man, the Guru of the community” (*The Village* 67).

The Mahant thus proves to be a confirmed glutton, drug-addict and lecher. Thus from Mulk Raj

Anand's portrayal of the priestly figures in his novels, one could know about the nature of the priests and how they exploit the people in the name of religion. But Anand's presentation of priests tends to be monotonous. He focuses on only one side of their life. This may be due to, as Paul observes, "... it is not his intention to present any unified image of the priests as such in his novels. His principal aim is to project exploitation in all its facets, religion being one such facet" (66).

The tradition-bound people develop an apathetic attitude towards life, and this is well-illustrated in many of Anand's novels. As Paul says Religion makes some of his characters accept their lot abjectly, prevents them from resisting evil and promotes inveterate inertia" (60).

In *Untouchable* Bakha resents the incessant in human treatment meted out to the Untouchables by the caste Hindus. He tells his father: They think we are mere dirt, because we clean their dirt. That pundit in the temple tried to molest Sohini and then came shouting: "Polluted, polluted." The woman of the big house in the silversmith's gully thrift the bread at me from the fourth storey. (*Untouchable* 89)

Thus Lakha is very much touched by this. But when Bakha says that he could have retaliated, Lakha consoles him saying: "No, no, my son, no... 'we can't do that. They are our superiors. One word of theirs is sufficient against all that we might say before the police. They are our masters. We must respect the man doas they tell us" (*Untouchable* 90).

Thus, Lakha advises Bakha to bear the ill-treatment with patience and fortitude. Similarly in *The Road* Bhikhu's mother advises him to be passive to all insults. She asks him to love the caste Hindus so as to ensure for them a higher birth in the next life. Lured by the hope that they may be born in a higher caste these innocent people subject themselves to all humiliation and suffering in the present life.

The untouchables believe that their misfortunes they experience are due to some lapses on their part in this life or in an earlier life. For instance in *The Road* when the huts of the untouchables are burnt

down by the caste Hindu boys, Laxmi attributes the cause of their misery to her delay in lighting the saucer lamp at the feet of the goddess and her son's defiance of the caste Hindus. In *Coolie*, the poor coolies accept their plight questioningly and murmur, "Ram, Ram" even when they are condemned to a hellish existence. The harijan sin *Untouchable* as kohli says, are "riddled with the

False sense of karma and are willing to succumb to pressures" (233).

Similarly, every human suffering is accepted as an inevitable punishment for the evil deeds done in the past life. People believe that the saintliness of the righteous is tested through mishaps. This faith is an age-old malady of Indian society. All these things show that what remains of religion is its bare skeleton. It is extremely regrettable that religious sentiments and even religion as such are sought to be exploited for the attainment of one's own selfish ends. Mulk Raj Anand particularizes the corrosive effect the so-called religious practices have on the very soul of man. To the gullible, regular visits to the temple and performance of rituals are signs of being religious.

The temple, a symbol of spiritual emancipation is not open to all. The Untouchables are not permitted to enter the temple. Only the high caste people could go into the temple. Some of these privileged people go to the temple not to worship God in the real sense, but for some other reason. People like Thakur Singh in *The Road* come to temple to invoke the gods to spite their rivals. Some people like Murali Dhar in *The Big Heart* change the temple into a rendezvous.

The untouchables are not allowed to enter the temple because it is said that "A temple can be polluted according to the holy books by a low-caste man coming within sixty-nine yards of it..." (*Untouchable* 70). Bakha too realizes that "an *Untouchable* going into a temple polluted it past purification" (*Untouchable* 66). In Romen Basu's novel *Outcast* one could see that Mahanta is publicly humiliated, beaten and arrested for the one and only reason that he has entered the kali temple to offer a

hibiscus flower to the God. The rituals intended for the promotion of one's spiritual well-being are performed for the fulfilment of selfish desires. People do charity with the hope of getting happiness in the next life or for are getting sponsor toward off evil. For instance, the Hindu sepoy in *Untouchable* gives Bakha a pair of boots and puttees, with the Intention of ensuring for himself happiness in the lives to come. The house wives don't take food before dispensing hospitality to the ash- smeared sadhus. Bhagwanti in *The Road* plans to sacrifice a goat and distribute its meat among the chamars to prevent set- backs in life. This is indicative of people's ignorance of what religion truly is or what the religious observances are meant for.

Mulk Raj Anand's aim is to expose the fraudulence that has crept into the practice of religions. Regarding Hinduism, Anand's main target of attack is its caste system. He finds the division of society on the basis of caste abominable. In *The sword and the Sickle* Prof. Verma says: "Hinduism is no religion, apart from the social Organism of caste. Anyone professing any belief is a Hindu, so long as he is born of the castes!" (166-67).

This shows that casteism is more marked in Hinduism than in other religions. Raghava rightly points out that: "The division of society into groups or start an arranged into a hierarchy of wealth ,prestige or power is a universal factor. But, a society divided on the basis of caste groups is peculiar to India, especially the Hindu society" (57).

In the earlier days, the caste system has been based on the division of labour. Later on, it has been degenerated into a system in which the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas look down upon the lower castes. They do not even like to touch the sweepers or to be touched by them. The outcastes are segregated from the rest of the people. It is religion that is responsible for this division; organized Hindu religion has the concept of untouchability deep-rooted in its caste system" (27-28). In *Untouchable* Bakha and his brethren live outside the town. It is said that: The outcastes' colony was a group of mud-walled houses that clustered together in two rows,

under the shadow both of the town and the cantonment, but outside their boundaries and separate from them. A Brook ran near the lane, once with crystal-clear water, new soiled by the dirt and filth of the public latrine situated about it, the odour of the hides and skins of dead carcasses left to dry on its banks, the dung of donkeys, sheep, horses, cows and buffaloes heaped up to be made into fuel cakes. (*Untouchable* 11)

In such a dirty place live the scavengers, the leather-workers, the washer men, the barbers, the water-carriers, the grass-cutters and other outcastes. They should be content to live in such an unhygienic place, where the "...absence of a drainage system had, through the rains of various seasons, made of the quarter a marsh which gave out the most offensive smell" (*Untouchable* 11).

Like *Untouchable*, *The Village* also reveals the miserably unhygienic living conditions of the sweepers. They live in halting the most obnoxious and rotten air of the most foully odorous pond in the midst of the dirt of the city. Almost the same miserable unhygienic conditions prevail in *The Road*.

Religion has thus played its role in exploiting the Untouchables. Caste system has been prevalent in India from time immemorial. Life has been sovery prominently governed by caste divisions that there are gradations among the Untouchables as well as the high castes.

Regarding the theme of religious exploitation, that is exploiting people In the name of religion, Mulk Raj Anand not only attacks Hindu religion but also other religions such as Islam and Christianity. Though Islam does not encourage the practice of caste distinctions, the Muslims have a deep communal feeling. *Coolie* shows that Hindu, Muslim and Sikh coolies mix freely with each other on the basis that they all belong to the class of laborers. *Untouchable* also shows that the Muslims do not treat the outcastes with contempt. But their communal feeling lies deep within them. This could be seen in *Coolie*, It manifests itself in primitive forms when a communal riot breaks out. The Hindu



and Muslim coolies begin to clash among them. Due to the riot, Munoo flees from the spot and faints on the road and is knocked down by a car. The lady of the car wants to take him home. But the driver, a Muslim, recognizes Munoo to be A Hindu, and, excited beneath his apparent reserve by strong religious sentiments, he did not care if the boy died or what happened to him. If he had mythic alone, he might have killed him deliberately. As it was, he thought he had done so accidentally. He would have left him lying there, but he was afraid of the Memsahib. (*Coolie* 284)

Christianity, though it is not an Indian religion, has taken firm roots in India. Mulk Raj Anand, in spite of his great admiration for Jesus Christ, cannot accept Christianity in to. Mulk Raj Anand's attack on Christianity is directed against the missionaries who are engaged in proselytization. He accuses Christian missionaries of exploiting the caste differences and untouchability among the Hindus to draw the Untouchables into their own religion.

Mulk Raj Anand's condemnation of the exploitation indulged in by the British capitalists is revealed through the unhappy and miserable life that the native workers are made to lead in the cotton mill in *Coolie* and tea-plantations in *Two Leaves and a Bud*. The chief motive of the Britishers is to earn profit without bothering about the conditions in which their employees live.

Economic exploitation has play edits role so effectively that the poor are subject to a great deal of suffering and have no fear of death. They consider death as a release from all their miseries. In *Coolie* Hari takes his family to sleep in a place where a man is said to have died the previous day saying that "he has attained the release. We will rest in his place" (*Coolie* 190)

Religion also plays a major role in exploiting the ignorant poor people. Anand is able to write in detail about this because his mother was a superstitious and ignorant woman. She observed all religious practices and used to distribute oil to barbers and feast the already over-fed priests.

Anand looks at the rituals intended for the promotion of one's spiritual well-being as meaningless ones performed just for the fulfilment of selfish desires. People do charity with the hope of getting happiness in the next life. The Hindu sepoy in *Untouchable* gives Bakha a pair of boots and puttees with the intention of ensuring for Himself happiness in the lives to come. Bhagwanti in *The Road* plans to sacrifice a goat and distribute its meat among the chambers to prevent set-backs in life. This is indicative of people's ignorance of what religion truly is or what the religious observances are meant for Lured by the hope that they may be born in a higher caste; these innocent people subject themselves to all kinds of humiliation and suffering in the present life. They accept every suffering as an inevitable punishment for the evil deeds done in the past life. Gangu is dominated by the feeling of abject self-pity and passiveness. He accepts the misfortunes that come across his life without any protest. He is prepared to accept every humiliation. Anand rails at those aspects of Hinduism that stupefy people and make them passive and submissive.

Anand is passionately concerned with the hardship of the life of villagers, their poverty, squalor and backwardness coupled with gross ignorance. So he writes about them with feeling and passion in his novels and short stories. As Agnihotri observes, Anand's heroes are unable to fight "...the in exorable economic and social forces which toss them this way and that till they break into pieces, because they are ignorant and uneducated..." (54). These poor ignorant people accept their lot without questioning. It may also be said that they take their misfortunes and sufferings as naturally as sleep. For such a condition, lack of education is the root cause.

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