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Special Issue on
**THE BEACON OF LITERATURE:
SHAPING SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHANGE**

Editors

**Dr. N. PRASHEEBA | Dr. T. CHRISTENA
Dr. S. R. BENILA | Dr. A. SAJENA**



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From the Principal Desk...

It gives me immense pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all the participants and distinguished speakers of the Bodhi International Conference. This conference stands as a beacon of literature, shaping social consciousness and change in young minds to explore innovative ideas. I am confident that the serious discussions and interactions over the course of these events will leave a lasting impact, act responsibly, and contribute meaningfully to society. I congratulate the organizing team for their dedication and vision, and I wish all participants a fruitful experience.

Dr. A. REJO JEICE

Principal

St. Teresa Arts and Science College for Women

Mangalakuntur

Editorial Note

It is our pleasure to present the proceedings of the one day international conference titled "The Beacon of Literature: Shaping Social Consciousness and Change", held on March 06, 2025 at St. Teresa Arts and Science College for Women, Mangalakuntu. This conference brought together experts and researchers from various parts of the country to share their knowledge and insights on various emerging themes in literature. The articles are analyzed with the lens of various transformative power of Literature in shaping social consciousness and inspiring social change. The conference provided a platform for lively discussions, debates, and exchange of ideas, and we are proud to capture the essence of this event in these proceedings.

The editorial board carefully reviewed and selected the papers presented in this proceeding, ensuring that they meet the highest standards of academic excellence. We are proud to showcase the diversity and depth of research in the field of Literature. All papers presented in this proceeding have undergone a rigorous peer review process, ensuring that they meet the highest standards of academic excellence. Our esteemed reviewers, drawn from a pool of experts in the field, carefully evaluated each submission based on its originality, relevance and artistic merit.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and conference organizers for their contributions to this publication. We also appreciate the support of sponsors and other partners without which the conference would not be a successful one. We hope that this proceeding will serve as a valuable resource for scholars, researchers, and practitioners in the field.

Editors

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Aim & Objectives

Academic Excellence in research is continued promoting in research support for young Scholars. Humanities, Arts and Science of research is motivating all aspects of encounters across disciplines and research fields in an multidisciplinary views, by assembling research groups and consequently projects, supporting publications with this inclination and organizing programmes. Internationalization of research work is the unit seeks to develop its scholarly profile in research through quality of publications. And visibility of research is creating sustainable platforms for research and publication, such as series of Books; motivating dissemination of research results for people and society

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LITERATURE AS A HEALER: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THEA DORN'S NOVEL *CONSOLATION: LETTERS TO MAX*

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Abstract

*Literature has the capacity to engender happiness in several ways, providing the reader with both emotional and intellectual enrichment. By immersing themselves in fictional worlds, readers can escape from everyday life and become absorbed in stories that fascinate or calm them. This escape facilitates the reduction of stress and the experience of positive emotional responses. Literature has been shown to play a significant role in facilitating understanding of emotions and fostering connection with characters (Smith, 2019). When a character experiences grief or anxiety, it can encourage readers to reflect on their own emotional responses to loss or stress (Brown, 2021). This paper will also examine one such text, a German novel entitled *Trost–Briefe an Max* (Consolation–Letters to Max) by the German writer Thea Dorn, who is also a crime fiction author and TV host. This epistolary novel represents the protagonist's sorrow, sadness, outrage and anger, and how she seeks hope in philosophy and scriptures. The work is an excellent literary reflection of the Lockdown world. The postcard-letter narrative employed in the novel enables Thea Dorn to delve into profound existential questions that frequently escape the attention of modern, technology-driven societies.*

Keywords: emotions, empathy, pandemic literature, reader, reflections.

Introduction

In recent years, the entire world has succumbed to social, economic and political degradation due to the drastic effects of pandemics. In the past, history has witnessed the impact of epidemics such as cholera, malaria, plague, swine flu, Spanish flu and so on. All these epidemics spread with evil wings and devastated humans. Even Pandemic including COVID-19 has devastated the human lives. The fear of Pandemic has even changed the human perception towards the diseases and towards the life. The depiction of epidemic and pandemic can be traced back to the 15th and 16th century with the publication of *The Decameron* (1620) by Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Plague* (1973) by Albert Camus, *The Scarlet Plague* (1912) by Jack London, *The Mosque of the Red Death* (1842) by Edgar Allan Poe.

Pandemic literature is defined as a genre that addresses the repercussions of pandemics on societal, individual, and cultural levels. This genre

encompasses both fictional and non-fictional works. The characteristics of pandemic literature include:

The literature examines how people and societies react to a pandemic. This includes depictions of fear, isolation, grief and survival instincts. Social order and the effects on interpersonal relationships are also often the focus. The experiences of the protagonists and society's reaction to the pandemic often reflect real fears and questions that are raised in the real world during actual pandemics. It has been suggested that pandemic literature throughout the ages may perhaps exhibit a commonality of humanistic concerns. This could be considered necessary since it deals with relevant topics of trauma, mortality, and psychological ordeals. Most importantly, through reading, reflection, and storytelling, it could be said to provide insights into the internalization and transformation of pain and anguish into hope for survival.

It seems likely that the novel "Consolation: Letters to Max"¹ deals with themes of grief, healing, and communication through literature. If I may be so bold, I would like to humbly suggest that you emphasize how literature influences emotions and helps the psyche process difficult experiences.

In literary studies, it is often considered beneficial to consider affective components such as empathy when exploring literary texts. Pandemic literature has the potential to explore a variety of issues, including trauma, catastrophe, suffering, existentialism, death and demise, displacement, and the ensuing psychological ordeals. It is thought that isolation and the occurrence of large-scale deaths can cause societal norms to collapse, which could lead to a restructuring of everyday lives.

Despite the prevailing chaos, the characters in the literary text find solace and consolation through the act of writing and self-expression, utilizing these modes of communication as a means of emotional catharsis and personal resolution. Despair ruled the world, but in that dreary darkness, there was one light that shone the brightest—art. In these trying times, one group of writers aimed to faithfully capture the dismal scene of enforced lockdown: the empty streets, desolate and abandoned neighborhoods, quiet markets, and the general sense of foreboding. Writers wanted to depict the precarious human plight, highlight uncertainty and even futility, and portray the grim shadow of death as the final curtain to life's colorful episode.

Storyline

Trost: Briefe an Max" is a novel by German author Thea Dorn, published in 2021. The story unfolds through a series of postcards exchanged between Johanna and her former philosophy teacher, Max. These postcards explore profound themes such as

mortality, the search for solace in difficult times, and the human confrontation with finiteness.

The narrative begins when Johanna receives a seemingly simple postcard from Max asking, "Wie geht es Dir?" ("How are you?").



Fig1: Postcard from the novel.²

She responds to this short question with long letters. She expresses her anger, sadness and desolation cynically and socially critically in her letters. She lost her mother in the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic, who absolutely had to take a vacation in Italy. And she is bitter that her mother first has to die alone in a hospital and then be buried without the huge circle of family members. She suffers from the unspoken words of farewell.

The question posed serves as a catalyst, prompting Johanna to confront her grief over her mother's death and the profound sense of frustration she experiences due to her inability to be present with her mother during her final days in the hospital. As the correspondence between Johanna and her mother continues, Johanna finds encouragement to address the underlying causes of her profound despair.³

¹ The title of the novel in German is: Trost- Briefe an Max, translated as Consolation – Letters to Max by the author.

² Dorn: Trost: Briefe an Max. Pg 10

³ Dorn Pg 35

Thea Dorn's epistolary novel is set in 2020 and is told from the perspective of the first-person narrator, Johanna. She works as a cultural journalist in Berlin. She mourns the death of her 84-year-old mother, who took a trip to Italy during this time despite warnings. At the beginning of the pandemic, she died alone in hospital from coronavirus in Munich. A few days after her mother's death, Johanna receives her first postcard from Max: "How are you?"⁴. Upon receiving a postcard from Max, her former philosophy instructor, which seemingly posed an innocuous question, Johanna's internal struggles, particularly the profound grief over her mother's demise and the resentment she harbored at being denied the chance to be by her mother's side during her final days in the hospital, were abruptly triggered. Subsequently, Johanna's response to subsequent postcards from Max instigated an introspective journey, propelling her to confront the underlying causes of her despondency.

Max is Johanna's philosophy teacher and an old friend. He currently resides on a Greek island, where he lives without access to telephone or internet services. In the extensive correspondence between the two parties, Johanna responds to his concise inquiries with detailed, extensive letters. Consequently, Johanna's personal tragedy is accentuated in the letter form, yet she ultimately manages to find a way out of this situation. The last postcard asked Johanna: „*Liebe Johanna, Bist du bei Trost?*"⁵ <Dear Johanna, Are you at ease? >⁶. To this she responded in her most recent postcard to her friend, about forthcoming plans to go on vacation with her friends, radiating a happy mood, taking advantage of the pleasant, sunny weather. Her tone conveys a sense of optimism and joy, suggesting that she has transcended her previous sorrows and

has begun to approach life with greater ease and lightness.

Interpretation

Coping with the loss of a close friend or family member may be one of the hardest challenges that many of us face. When we lose a spouse, sibling or parent our grief can be particularly intense. Loss is understood as a natural part of life, but we can still be overcome by shock and confusion, leading to prolonged periods of sadness or depression. Everyone reacts differently to death and employs personal coping mechanisms for grief. As posited by psychologists, individuals undergoing a grief process are recommended to engage in discourse with friends or colleagues regarding the death of a loved one, with a view to facilitating comprehension of the events that have transpired. Taking reference of the Kübler-Ross grief cycle⁷, which includes five stages—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—can be interpreted in the protagonist's story of losing her mother during the COVID-19 pandemic in a deeply emotional and personal way.

Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle



According to the above model of the five stages of grief, or the Kübler-Ross model, those experiencing sudden grief following an abrupt realization (shock) go through five emotions: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. These stages were unfolded in the protagonist's journey in the novel mentioned.

The Kübler-Ross stage theory is a model that describes the five stages of grief that people

⁴ See Fig 1

⁵ Dorn Pg 58

⁶ Translated by the author.

⁷ Kübler-Ross, E. (1969). *On death and dying*. Macmillan.

experience when facing death or loss. The stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross introduced the most taught model for understanding the psychological reaction to imminent death in her 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*. Kubler-Ross and others subsequently applied her model to the loss experience in many contexts, including grief and other significant life changes.

These stages represent the emotional responses to significant loss, whether through death, terminal illness or other profound changes. Denial is a common defense mechanism used to protect oneself from the hardship of facing a distressing reality. Anger is often experienced and expressed by the bereaved. Depression is perhaps the most immediately understandable of Kubler-Ross' stages, and patients experience it with unsurprising symptoms of sadness, fatigue and anhedonia. Spending time in the first 3 stages may be an unconscious attempt to protect oneself from this emotional pain. Acceptance describes recognizing the reality of a difficult diagnosis, while no longer protesting or struggling against it. Patients may focus on enjoying the time they have left and reflecting on their memories.⁸

In this novel, where the protagonist was devastated by the death of her mother in the Covid pandemic, she finds herself in the first stage of denial, where she refuses to believe the reality of the situation. Later she begins to acknowledge the reality of the situation and feels angry.

"Wütend und kindisch ist sie einmal! Irrational und verzweifelt ist sie auch einmal!"⁹

<Once she is angry and childish! She is also irrational and desperate at times.>

Johanna's grief seems endless, she could only be angry and directed towards herself.

In the subsequent stage of her journey, the protagonist attempts to negotiate her circumstances, seeking ways to either reverse or forestall her perceived loss. This phase is marked by profound sadness and a sense of despair, as she is engulfed by the overwhelming weight of her emotions. The intensity of her internal turmoil fosters feelings of hopelessness, leaving her struggling to find a way forward. It is within this emotional crisis that the protagonist's path toward reconciliation and inner peace begins to take shape, catalyzed by a pivotal conversation with her friend, Max. During this period, she receives a fifth postcard from Max, whose words serve as a catalyst for reflection.



Figure 2: Fifth Postcard from Max (to reach her at the final Stage of Acceptance)¹⁰

His question, "Aren't you taking life a bit too hard?"¹¹ prompts the protagonist to reevaluate her approach to the challenges she faces, initiating a process of introspection and the gradual healing that follows.

In the final stage of acceptance, she comes to terms with the reality of her loss. She now reaches a state of emotional peace and can move on, though not without sadness.

⁸ Kübler-Ross, 1969, p. 18

⁹ Dorn Pg 58

¹⁰ Dorn Pg 37

¹¹ Translated by the author.

Discussion & Conclusion

According to Hofstede's (1980) influential work on culture, individualism is defined as a focus on rights above duties, a concern for oneself and immediate family, an emphasis on personal autonomy and self-fulfillment, and the establishment of one's identity on one's personal accomplishments. Hofstede also argues that individualism is in part a reflection of social- structural conditions and assumes that individualism und collectivism form a single continuum, with low individualism corresponding to high collectivism. At a societal level, Schwartz (1990) defines individualistic societies as fundamentally contractual with specific obligations and expectations focusing on achieving status; while collectivist societies are communal societies characterized by diffuse and mutual obligations and expectations based on ascribed status. These definitions of individualism/collectivism as societal cultures reveal a dilemma between personal freedom and social obligations. Therefore, the societal value orientation of individualism/collectivism can have profound implications on the way a state deals with the inherent tensions between collective/ public goods and individual freedom.¹²

Individualism/ Collectivism as cultural/societal phenomenon

In psychology, individualism and collectivism are cultural values that affect how people see themselves and their relationships with others. Individualists tend to be more independent and autonomous, while collectivists tend to be more interdependent and group-oriented. People who are more collectivistic view themselves as overlapping with and interconnected to others. Collectivism emphasizes maintaining relationships and social

harmony.¹³ Whereas people with individualistic view focus on personal goals, rights, and independence. They tend to value innovation and personal achievement.

The pandemic affects human behavior, emotions and perception and leads to different reactions, which are almost always the same in the early stages / initial phase

Dorn's text focuses mainly on the individual's grief. 40-year-old protagonist Johanna complains about the circumstances created by regulations to protect against the spread of the pandemic, which made it impossible for her to support her dying mother and see the dead one last time, and the funeral was very limited due to the corona measures. Johanna (the Protagonist), whose mother died alone in the hospital, couldn't bear it and now she didn't know how to cope with this pain alone, so she tells Max how confusingly she ran in the forest, jumped into the cold Schlachtensee.¹⁴ cried so much in her loneliness, because she couldn't meet friends, visit cinemas, museums, concerts, theaters because of social distancing.

Loneliness and grief push Johanna to rage against everything around her. She doesn't know the pain she is in. Who is to blame? The authorities, the politicians, the scientists? All of them were able to prevent it in time, she finds herself guilty too, even her mother who went on a trip to Italy despite her warning.

Johanna's development from the desolate to the comforting.

The character of Johanna develops over the course of the novel. She goes through many phases. At the beginning, she is an angry person who complains about everything, and writes long, desperate letters to Max, where we see that she could not think

¹² Conway et al. 2006

¹³ Hofstede 1980

¹⁴ Schlachtensee is a lake in the south- west of Berlin on the edge of the Grunewald forest.

rationality, she spoke contradictorily, and the author allows Johanna to speak and counter-speak. Max's deliberately selected postcards of famous paintings, which at first seemed provocative and puzzling to her, made her think, with which she made many philosophical excursions, she began to think rationally, to express herself, to write long letters. Throughout her journey to deal with the loss, she was continuously getting Max' Postcards. In the beginning these postcards makes Johanna very angry, because of Max's seemingly heartless reactions to her suffering, she considers the postcard picture to be "holy kitsch". But slowly she realizes that his postcards are "philosophical pinpricks". Then she starts to think.

*„Inzwischen habe ich begriffen, dass du mir nicht Wahllos Trost Kitsch Ins Haus schickst, sondern mich wohl dezent darauf aufmerksam machen willst, dass ich mit schreien und Wüten keinen Zentimeter Abstand zwischen mich und meinen Schmerz bringe“.*¹⁵

<In the meantime, I have realized that you are not randomly sending me comforting kitsch into the house, but that you probably want to discreetly draw my attention to the fact that I am not putting an inch of distance between myself and my pain by screaming and raging">.¹⁶

Johanna goes through a lot on her way to find comfort. How to find comfort? Although religion offers comfort, Johanna cannot have comfort in religion because she is not a religious person. Where and how THEN? The dying scene with Socrates, where he stretched one hand over a cup, the other gesticulating in the air; he is still teaching. He is surrounded by friends. That's the opposite of how her mother died, restless and all alone.

Inspired by Max's postcards, she looked for Elias Canetti's "The Book Against Death"¹⁷ and read it again, Canetti hated death, always described himself as an "enemy of death"¹⁸, he wrote against it in notes throughout his life, did not want to accept death as something natural. Johanna read through another book: "Death of the Inconsolable: The Last Days of Susan Sontag" by her son David Rieff, who remembers how he supported his mother's fantasy that she would not die. Both authors were never ready to accept this fact.

While Johanna writes to Max, she realizes that if one has a hostile relationship with mortality, which is unavoidable, then suffering becomes infinite or perhaps eternal. She now ponders a lot about the Roman philosopher, author, politician and stoic Seneca and his contributions. Although Johanna justifies her grief and thinks that Max as a stoicker is not able to understand this, she also gives some imaginative examples to back this up, there is a shift in her thoughts which she increasingly accepts, her inner self softens. On this philosophical journey with Max, she realizes that without a loose, friendly relationship with death, it is not so easy to gain comfort. Johanna has written long passages about this to Max and has finally achieved peace of mind.

*"Trost ist die wundersame fähigkeit, alles was man ist und was man hat, aus vollem Herzen zu lieben-und es freimutig ziehen zu lassen, wenn es davonziehen will."*¹⁹

<Comfort is the miraculous ability to love everything you are and everything you have with all your heart and to let it go freely when it wants to go away.>

¹⁷ The Book Against Death is the work of a lifetime: a collection of Elias Canetti's powerful, disarming, and often bleakly comic observations, diatribes, and musings on and against death.

¹⁸ Canetti, who declared himself "a mortal enemy of death," and for whom learning how to die meant generating arguments against it.

¹⁹ Dorn Pg no 94

¹⁵ Dorn Pg 59

¹⁶ Translated by the author.

When engaging in a protagonist's emotional journey, readers often find themselves reflecting on their own internal struggles, joys, and fears. This form of literary empathy provides an avenue for understanding complex emotions that may not have been fully recognized or explored before. For instance, a character's experience with grief or anxiety can prompt readers to examine their own emotional responses to similar life challenges, such as loss or stress. By presenting these emotional landscapes, literature cultivates a deeper understanding of the human condition, fostering both personal reflection and emotional growth.

In this context, literature establishes an emotional connection between the reader and the protagonist, inviting individuals to empathize with the characters, to reflect on shared emotional experiences, and to engage in personal transformation through the narrative. It offers a space where emotions are not simply acknowledged but are also felt and internalized. In the case of this novel, it addresses universal and pressing issues that society often avoids confronting. The narrative touches on themes such as resilience in the face of adversity and the search for hope amid despair. Indeed, this work has been aptly described as "the

book of the hour for all those who are inconsolable," capturing the essence of collective human struggles in contemporary times.

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THE ROLE OF TASK-BASED LEARNING (TBL) APPROACH IN DEVELOPING ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG DOMBO COMMUNITY GRADUATE STUDENTS: A STUDY

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Abstract

This study investigates the ability of graduate learners from the Dombo community to communicate in English through the Task-Based Learning (TBL) technique. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating pre-tests, post-tests, interviews, and observations to assess the effectiveness of TBL in improving fluency, accuracy, and confidence in English communication. Findings indicate that TBL fosters an interactive and meaningful learning environment, enabling students to develop linguistic competence and communicative abilities essential for academic and professional growth. The Dalits of Odisha have faced socioeconomic deprivation and social discrimination. The most populated Odisha's 93 Dalits are in Pana, Dewar, and Dombo. South Odisha is home to the Dombo people, especially in the districts of Kalahandi and combined Koraput (Naik, 2021). The study adds to the burgeoning body of research on contextualized English language acquisition methods, especially for underserved populations.

Keywords: *english communication skills, task-based learning, dombo community, graduate students, empirical study*

Introduction

Background

English proficiency is crucial in academic achievement, career advancement, and global communication. It serves as a gateway to higher education, employment opportunities, and social mobility (Crystal, 2003). However, students from marginalized communities, such as the Dombo community, often encounter significant linguistic and educational challenges that impede their ability to develop strong communication skills (Cummins, 2000). These hurdles are caused by restricted access to excellent education, socioeconomic restraints, and a lack of exposure to English in their immediate context. (Bourdieu, 1991).

Traditional English Language Teaching (ELT) methodologies predominantly focus on rote memorization, translation exercises, and grammar-based instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Although these methods might aid students in learning formal language structures, they frequently fall short of developing communicative competence, which is the capacity to use language properly and effectively in everyday situations (Hymes, 1972). Research indicates that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds struggle more with conventional ELT approaches because they lack the necessary linguistic foundation and interactive learning environments that facilitate practical language use (Ellis, 2003).

To bridge this gap, contemporary pedagogical approaches such as Task-Based Learning (TBL) have emerged as effective alternatives to traditional methods (Willis & Willis, 2007). TBL emphasizes meaningful communication, student engagement, and real-world application, making it particularly beneficial for learners from marginalized backgrounds. By shifting the focus from rote memorization to interactive, task-driven instruction, TBL can enhance the English communication skills of Dombo community graduate students, empowering them with the linguistic competence necessary for academic and professional success.

About DOMBO Community

The Dombo community, also known as Dom or Duria Dom, is a Scheduled Caste group predominantly residing in the southern districts of Odisha, India, particularly in areas like Rayagada, Kalahandi, Koraput, and Nabarangpur. They are recognized as a particularly vulnerable group among the Scheduled Castes.

Traditional Roles and Occupations

Historically, the Dombo have served as village caretakers, known locally as *gramarakhi* or *choukidar*. Their responsibilities included reporting incidents such as thefts, suicides, or murders to the nearest police station, conveying news about births and deaths within upper-caste families, disposing of animal carcasses, and attending to visiting dignitaries and officials. They also helped village headmen (Gauntia) with income collection, daily administrative work, and broadcasting public notices through drumbeats. They are also talented at wall painting and hold an enduring oral history of folk music, folklore, and folk dance.

Socio-Economic Status

The Dombo community has historically faced socio-economic challenges, including poverty,

limited access to education, and social discrimination. Their traditional roles and occupations often placed them in lower social strata, leading to marginalization. In districts like Rayagada, the Dombo constitute a significant portion of the Scheduled Caste population, accounting for approximately 76.12% despite their stature, they have encountered obstacles such as inadequate access to adequate schooling and economic prospects.

Cultural Practices

The Dombo community practices Hinduism and celebrates major festivals such as Dussehra, Diwali, Holi, Nuakhia, Jamata, and Bishmi. Their social structure is split into totemistic exogamous lineages, comprising Tandi, Neal, Sunani, Jagat, Nag, Dongri, and Duria. Male equigeniture is the basis for inheritance in nuclear, patrilocal, and patrilineal family systems. According to marital customs, widows, widowers, and divorcees may remarry, and enter into junior levirate, junior sororate, and cross-cousin marriage. The community also practices special rites associated with birth, puberty, and death, reflecting its rich cultural legacy.

Contemporary Challenges

In contemporary times, while there have been efforts to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Dombo community, challenges persist. Issues such as economic deprivation, social discrimination, and limited access to education continue to affect the community. Studies have shown that the Dombo people in Odisha require specific interventions to improve education, economic development, and social inclusion. Understanding the historical context and current challenges of the Dombo community is essential for developing effective strategies to enhance their socio-economic status and promote social equity.

The Need for Task-Based Learning (TBL)

Task-Based Learning (TBL) has emerged as an effective alternative to traditional language teaching methods, particularly for learners from marginalized backgrounds. Unlike conventional grammar-based instruction, which often prioritizes memorization and passive learning, TBL focuses on meaningful communication through real-world tasks (Ellis, 2003). By involving students in interactive and intentional language use, this method, which has its roots in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), seeks to improve both fluency and accuracy (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Implementing TBL can address key linguistic challenges for Dombo community graduate students by fostering an interactive learning environment where language is learned through use rather than mere instruction. Studies have shown that **task-driven learning leads to better retention, improved motivation, and increased willingness to communicate in English** (Bygate, 2016). Additionally, TBL supports socio-constructivist theories of linguistic development, which highlights the importance of social interaction in language acquisition (Vygotsky, 1978). This study investigates the **efficacy of Task-Based Learning (TBL) in enhancing English communication skills among Dombo community graduate students**, exploring how this pedagogical approach can bridge linguistic gaps and empower learners to succeed in academic and professional settings.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the effectiveness of TBL in improving English communication skills.
2. To assess students' linguistic progress in fluency, accuracy, and interaction.
3. To identify challenges and opportunities in implementing TBL among Dombo community students.

Research Questions

1. How does TBL impact the English communication skills of Dombo community graduate students?
2. What challenges do students face while engaging in TBL activities?
3. How does TBL compare with traditional English teaching methods in this context?

Literature Review

Task-Based Learning: Theoretical Foundations

Task-Based Learning (TBL) is rooted in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), emphasizing real-world communication over isolated grammar instruction (Ellis, 2003; Willis & Willis, 2007). Instead of emphasizing form over meaning as traditional techniques do, TBL involves students in meaningful tasks that foster accuracy, fluency, and interaction (Nunan, 2004). The approach aligns with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which suggests that language is best acquired through meaningful exposure, and Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996), which emphasizes learning through negotiation of meaning. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) further supports TBL by highlighting the role of social interaction and scaffolding in language development.

Willis's (1996) TBL framework consists of three stages: Pre-task (introducing the activity), Task cycle (engaging in communication), and post-task (reflection and refinement). By integrating these principles, TBL provides an interactive, learner-centered approach, making it particularly effective for students from marginalized communities who benefit from experiential learning.

English Language Learning Among Marginalized Communities

Limited exposure to English, poor learning tools, and restricted access to high-quality education are some of the difficulties faced by students from marginalized backgrounds (Canagarajah, 1999).

Traditional teacher-centered methods often fail to engage these learners effectively. In contrast, interactive and learner-centered approaches, such as Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), have been found to enhance language acquisition by promoting active participation, contextual learning, and real-world application (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). These methods create inclusive learning environments that cater to diverse linguistic and socio-cultural needs, ultimately improving English proficiency and confidence among marginalized students.

Effectiveness of TBL in Language Learning

Task-Based Learning (TBL) has been widely recognized for its effectiveness in language acquisition, as it actively engages learners in meaningful tasks that mirror real-life communication (Skehan, 1998; Robinson, 2001). By focusing on practical language use rather than rote memorization, TBL enhances motivation, encourages interaction, and improves retention of linguistic structures. Research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) suggests that task-based instruction fosters fluency and accuracy by immersing learners in authentic communicative scenarios, allowing them to develop problem-solving skills and dynamically adapt to language use. This approach accelerates language proficiency and builds learners' confidence in real-world communication.

Research Methodology

Research Design

For an accurate assessment of language learning progress, a mixed-methods strategy was used, combining quantitative (pre-tests and post-tests) and qualitative (interviews and classroom observations) data-gathering techniques. In the initial session, students were given an engaging task to cut paper into the shape of a fish and write down the

communication challenges they faced. This activity served as an icebreaker, encouraging self-reflection and open discussion about their difficulties in English communication. By visually representing their struggles, students became more aware of their learning barriers, setting the stage for targeted interventions using the Task-Based Learning (TBL) approach.

Participants

The study focused on 30 graduate students from the Dombo community at a rural university in Odisha, ensuring equal representation with 15 male and 15 female participants. Selection criteria were based on their English proficiency levels and willingness to actively participate in Task-Based Learning (TBL) activities. This diverse group provided a balanced perspective on the effectiveness of TBL in enhancing communication skills among marginalized learners, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of both challenges and improvements in their language acquisition journey.

Data Collection Methods

1. **Pre-Test and Post-Test:** Assessments were conducted to measure students' English proficiency before and after TBL implementation.
2. **Classroom Observations:** The researcher documented students' participation, engagement, and progress.
3. **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Students and teachers provided feedback on their experiences with TBL.

Results and Discussion

The study aimed to assess the awareness and perception of Task-Based Learning (TBL) among Dombo graduate students. The questionnaire findings provide insights into participants' knowledge, experiences, and challenges related to TBL.

Awareness and Understanding

A majority (80%) of the participants had heard of TBL, primarily through classroom lectures (53%) and workshops (33%). Understanding levels varied, with 60% demonstrating basic comprehension, while 17% showed a thorough grasp of the concept.

Perceived Benefits

TBL was widely recognized for its role in improving communication skills (70%), problem-solving (100%), teamwork (93%), and critical thinking (90%). This highlights its effectiveness in fostering essential 21st-century skills.

Challenges Faced

The most cited challenge was the lack of proper guidance (73%), followed by insufficient resources (20%) and difficulty in task comprehension (7%). Notably, time constraints were not a significant barrier.

Participation and Effectiveness

About 53% had previously engaged in TBL activities, mainly through group discussions (57%). Of these, 80% achieved the intended learning outcomes, reinforcing TBL's effectiveness.

Implementation and Support Needs

A strong majority (90%) agreed that TBL should be integrated into the curriculum. Preferred support mechanisms included training sessions (67%), real-time task participation (17%), and faculty guidance (13%).

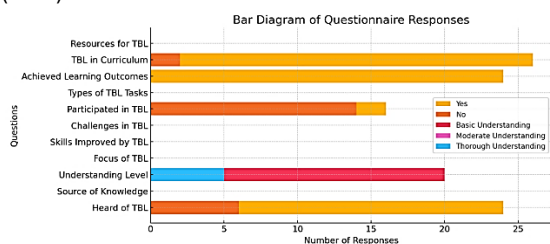


Figure 1.1 Plot of Questionnaire Responses to Task-Based Learning.

The above Figure 1.1 shows the plot of different questionnaires concerning the responses collected from Dombo graduate students. The horizontal axis shows the number of responses, while the vertical axis lists various questions related to TBL. Different colors represent response categories: "Yes," "No," "Basic Understanding," "Moderate Understanding," and "Thorough Understanding." The visualization provides insights into participants' awareness, participation, and comprehension of TBL, helping in analyzing its effectiveness and challenges.

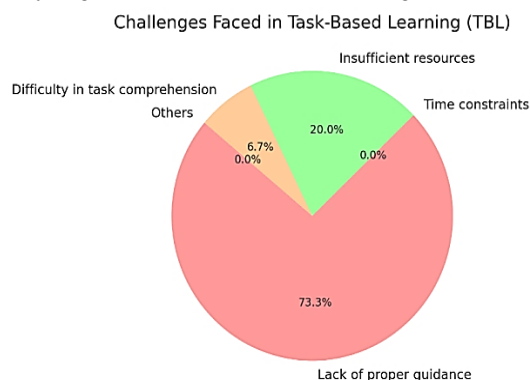


Figure 1.2 Challenges Faced in Task-Based Learning (TBL).

Figure 1.2 illustrates the various challenges encountered in implementing Task-Based Learning (TBL). The most significant challenge, accounting for 73.3%, is the lack of proper guidance, indicating that students struggle primarily due to inadequate instructional support. 20.0% of respondents highlighted insufficient resources as a barrier, suggesting that a lack of materials or tools affects the learning process. Difficulty in task comprehension was reported by 6.7% of participants, pointing to potential issues in understanding task requirements. Notably, time constraints and other factors were reported as 0.0%, implying they were not considered significant obstacles in this study.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Key Findings

- TBL significantly enhances English communication skills among Dombu community graduate students.
- Students exhibit improved fluency, accuracy, and engagement.
- Challenges in implementation can be addressed through teacher training and contextual adaptation of tasks.

Implications for Language Teaching

The study underscores the need to integrate TBL into English curricula, particularly for marginalized learners. Policymakers and educators should promote interactive and task-based pedagogies to bridge language learning gaps.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further studies can explore

1. Long-term impacts of TBL on language retention.
2. The role of technology in enhancing TBL-based learning.
3. Comparative studies across different marginalized communities.

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RECONNECTING THE INFLUENCES OF B' S IN THE PLAYS OF AUGUST WILSON: A STUDY OF SEPARATION AND MIGRATION

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Abstract

August Wilson emerged in 1980s as a major figure in American theatre. His plays have received Pulitzer Prize, Drama Desk Award, and Drama Critics Circle Award. He presents the tragic situations and realities of blacks. His plays are the perennial records of history and aesthetics of black life and situations. His characters are deeply rooted to black culture and tradition. They are the representative figures of the African American traditions. Bearden offered Wilson a new visual language that created a world populated by conjure women, trains, guitar players, birds, masked figures, and the rituals of baptisms, funerals, dinners, parades. Wilson was of course impressed by the black experience Bearden represented, but he was equally interested in his mode of representation.

Keywords: *B's, african sensibility, western influences, tradition, situation.*

Introduction

Few American Playwrights have been as explicit in naming influences as August Wilson. In the dozens of interviews, Wilson has granted in the eight years since *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* appeared on Broadway in 1984, Wilson has been unusually forthcoming not only citing his influences but in explaining specially how the four B's can be found in his plays. A good deal of Wilson's citation of the four B's may be ascribed to a generous and magnanimous soul who is sincerely grateful to those who have nourished his art. There is also behind Wilson's acknowledgement of indebtedness a sense of homage and respect that characterizes an African sensibility. As Wilson notes, "In Africa a man is judged not by what he has but by what is owed to him" (Rocha 29) Wilson's consistent invocation of

his for B's goes beyond the expression of gratitude and respect. It is part of a conscious, deliberate, programmatic effort to turn every interview he gives.

August Wilson doesn't just talk about his four B's, he teaches them, not merely as discrete influences, but as constituent elements of an African American cosmology. In offering his four B's- Bearden, Baraka, Borges, and the blues-Wilson not merely inscribes a theory of African American literature but also names the creator of sign system he inhabits. To read or see a Wilson play without learning about the four B's is, in the vernacular, not to see where he is coming from.

But before we see where Wilson is coming from, it is worth a moment to clarify where Wilson is not coming from, because Wilson has also been unusually explicit in stating who has not influenced

him. Despite the fact that in 1987 he told *Los Angeles times* that he is "sitting in the same chair as Shakespeare, confronting the same problems as Arthur Miller and Eugene O'Neil" (Arkotov 35). Wilson has insisted many times that he has never read any of the canonical western playwrights. In 1988 he commented, "I haven't read Ibsen, Shaw and Shakespeare.....I'm not familiar with *Death of Salesman*. I haven't read Tennessee Williams. I very purposefully didn't read them." (Savran 292)

I don't raise this to reveal a discrepancy in Wilson's testimony. Rather I wish to call attention to why Wilson goes so far out of his way to disconnect himself from the western tradition of drama, even though his plays reside comfortably within that tradition. I do of course hold it as improbable that Wilson, a playwright who has collaborated for eight years with Lloyd Richards and the Yale Repertory Theatre, has never read O'Neil and Miller. It is nearly impossible to avoid one reading of *Fences* as a deliberate point-to-point signifying parody of *Death of a Salesman*. It is thus all the more significant that Wilson argues so vociferously for himself as liberated from western influence.

Wilson's obvious desire to get over on the Western tradition is first and foremost what bonds him so strongly to his brother poet-poet Baraka, who is his quest for a post-white, post-American, post-Western form is the discoverer of the African American literary landscape in which Wilson has found a place. Baraka has spent his entire career 'facing' the Western tradition, no clearer instance of which comes from his autobiographical novel, *The System of Dante's Hall* (1965), when the Prodigal asks, "Who is T. S. Eliot? So what?" (134) Without Baraka posing this question, August Wilson would not be possible.

Wilson has noted that the Baraka plays that he liked most were the ones published in the volume *Four Black Revolutionary Plays* (1969), which served as the main fare of the Black Horizons

Theatre of Pittsburgh, which Wilson founded with Rob Penny in 1968 and operated until 1972. Wilson thus not only subscribed to but lived the well-known Barakan manifesto, *The Revolutionary Theatre* directing many of Barak as plays. The experience had a profound effect, for Wilson transported three quintessentially Barakan elements to his plays: the motion of history as the emergence of the African Geist out of the bones of the Middle Passage, the enactment of the ritual dance in which personal experience and racial history converge, and, most importantly, the quest for one's song that is ultimately realized in the blues.

Clay's epiphany speech in *Dutchman* aptly expresses the significance of blues in Baraka and serves as a stepping-off point for considering Wilson's biggest B of all. Clay has finally been stirred to speak the truth of his experience to Lula which his appearance belies. He rages at whites who misinterpret black culture and experience:

Love, suffering, desire, anything you can explain, she's saying, and very plainly, "Kiss my black ass". And if you do not know that, it's you that's doing the kissing. (Jones sc. 2, 34-35)

"Kiss my black ass" would be suitable title for Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, the first of his blues plays. The twenty-year gestation period of *Ma Rainey* dates back to the day in 1965 when August Wilson was transfixed and transformed by his discovery of Bessie Smith and came to an understanding of her coded message, which Baraka revealed not only through Clay but through such books as *Blues People* (1963) Wilson has often recounted how he bought a record player and pile of old 78s for a few dollars and then found Bessie Smith's "Nobody in Town can Bake a Jelly Roll Like Mine" He played the record twenty-two times in a row:

I was stunned..... It was one of the most beautiful songs I'd ever heard.... I thought, "This person is talking to me. This is mine."

If Baraka is Wilson's brother, then Bessie Smith may well be figured as Wilson's mother, for she gave birth to Wilson as what Houston Baker would call a "blues detective" who is able to decipher black forms by looking to "the limitless freedom of myth and fictive discourse" (122) It took Wilson nearly twenty years to decipher fully in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (1984) what Bessie Smith first brought into Wilson's view. In this first play of the current cycle, Ma Rainey becomes the embodiment of an African American cultural history which she pronounces with full authority:

Wilson best elaborates the monumental importance of the blues to his plays: we are not a people with a long history of writing things out, it's been an oral tradition.....

Wilson's plays are replete with knowledge from his sacred book of blues. The title of *Joe Turner* comes from a W.C Handy song, *Ma Rainey* is of course about the real-life "Mother of the Blues" and *Fences*, *The Piano Lesson*, and *Two Trains Running* contain numerous epigrams, allusions, and lyrics drawn from specific blues songs. All blues songs begin from the ontological awareness of the American condition as the sign of an absence, a broken promise-usually the specific premise is my lover's gone-and the blues is the form blacks invented to mediate this absence. So, when August Wilson discovered the blues, he in effect discovered America.

As James Baldwin first pointed out thirty years ago, Americans do not wish to face the reality expressed in the blues that life is tragic and the only fact we have is final absence of death. Wilson's 'blues people' may be taken together as an enactment of Baldwin's prescription.

One black way of confronting the conundrum of life with passion is through ritual, and it is on this ground that Wilson met Romare Bearden (1912-1988), the African American artist best known for his collages of black life created during 1960s

and 1970s. Wilson holds Bearden in reverential esteem, for Bearden has not only served as the explicit inspiration for at least two of Wilson's plays-*Joe Turner* and *Piano Lesson*-Bearden also serves Wilson as a kind of Father-figure (both grew up in Pittsburgh), a personification of the ideal for a black artist. Indeed, Wilson has adopted Bearden's credo as his own: "I try to explore, in terms of life I know best, those things which are common to all cultures" (Wilson *How to write a Play*)

Bearden offered Wilson a new visual language that created a world populated by conjure women, trains, guitar players, birds, masked figures, and the rituals of baptisms, funerals, dinners, parades. Wilson was of course impressed by the black experience Bearden represented, but he was equally interested in his mode of representation. Wilson volunteered the creation history of this new black form:

Bearden riffed on quintessentially twentieth-century language of collage, first introduced by Picasso in his Cubist experiments, to create a form capable of expressing what Ralph Ellison has called "sharp breaks, leaps in consciousness, distortions, paradoxes, reversals, telescoping of time, and surreal blending of styles, values, hopes and dreams, which characterize much of Negro American history." (qtd. in Bearden 9) Wilson describes the structure of his own plays as having this collage form:

In Bearden you've all these pieces. There's an eye here, a head over there, a huge oversized hand on a small body. It's like that with me. I've got all these images, and the point is how I put them together. The pieces are always there, it's how I put them together, the relationships between them that counts. (Rocha 32)

Where does Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1966) fit into Wilson's family? Possibly as a learned Latin cousin from whom Wilson has taken lessons in aesthetics. Wilson's debt to the Argentinian fabulist

has been the least explored of the four B's, but he was no less emphatic about the influence of Borges: Reading Borges has also taught Wilson the ethics of listening which are so important in the black communities in his plays.

Wilson's interest in story telling is the basis of his strongest bond with Borges. Mary Lucky Friedman has recently identified a "Borges and Paradigm" that may be usefully applied to Wilson:

This adumbration of August Wilson's four B's is intended only to suggest the outline of these influences. It bears reiterating that the four B's are much more than discreet influences whose traces are to be shifted out of Wilson's plays, but together form the sign system from which Wilson's plays are written. Approached in this way, the four B's provides the growing numbers who read Wilson with an extraordinary opportunity to attain a truly interdisciplinary perspective. Reading Wilson requires that we learn about the blues and American music, about Bearden and modern art, about Baraka and Black Nationalism, and about Borges and the Postmodern.

The influences are examined in the thematic structures of the plays of Wilson. The present playwrights have experimented the contemporary issues in their plays. The representation of migrants wandering and searching their dearest and nearest ones is one such example. The characters are searching their roots. The attempt at reconnection is the fundamental aspect of black American life and history. Under the disorienting aspects of black American life and history, there have been attempts

at reconnection at multiple levels. The migrants are restlessly searching for their closed relations. The ten play cycle of August Wilson clearly exhibits the centrality of Separation, Migration and Reconnection. Reconnecting the migrants is the new dermatology of Wilson.

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THE EXILIC SELF: THE FLUID IDENTITY AND CULTURAL BELONGING OF DEBBY DIMARTINO IN BHARATHI MUKHERJEE'S NOVEL *LEAVE IT TO ME*

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Abstract

Bharati Mukherjee's Leave It to Me (1997) explores the combat of exile, identification, fluidity, and cultural belonging through the protagonist, Debby DiMartino, a woman whose existence is fashioned via transnational displacement. Born to an American hippie mother and an unknown Asian father in India, deserted in an orphanage, and later adopted by way of an Italian-American family, Debby's fragmented origins define her quest for selfhood. Mukherjee represents her as an "exilic self," one which resists static identity markers and alternatively embodies an ever-evolving negotiation of a couple of cultural affects. This paper explores how Debby's transferring identity challenges of cultural belonging, and reflecting Mukherjee's broader postcolonial discourse on migration, hybridity, and self-reinvention. Mukherjee's novel subverts the conventional bildungs roman by rejecting a novel or reconciled self; alternatively, it presents identity as performative, contingent, and fluid. Drawing on postcolonial idea, transnational feminism, and the politics of exile, this study argues that "Leave It to Me" redefines the notion of cultural belonging. Debby's transformation from an abandoned baby to a self-proclaimed "avenger" of her beyond illustrates the violent ruptures and reinventions that shape diasporic subjectivities. By means of positioning her protagonist as a liminal parent who neither completely belongs to the East nor the West, Mukherjee demanding situations the rigid binaries of cultural identification. Ultimately, Leave It to Me portrays exile not merely as a bodily displacement but as an existential country-one that compels people to navigate a space of in-betweenness, forging new identities that go beyond countrywide, racial, and cultural borders.

Keywords: *exilic self, identity, culture, transnational, diaspora, postcolonial, hybrid*

Introduction

Bharati Mukherjee's *Leave It to Me* (1997) is a compelling exploration of identification, displacement, and cultural belonging via the adventure of its protagonist, Debby DiMartino. Born as Jasleen in an Indian orphanage and later followed with the support of an Italian-American circle of relatives. Debby's fragmented identification reflects the struggles of diasporic folks who exist between a couple of cultural worlds. As she embarks on a quest to discover her organic roots, she confronts the complexities of historical past, self-reinvention,

and the lingering effects of exile. Mukherjee offers identification no longer as a set entity however as a fluid and evolving assemble, shaped by non-public choices, historical legacies, and transnational movements. This paper examines Debby's transformation within the framework of postcolonial and diasporic research, studying how her moving identities mission traditional notions of cultural belonging and the stableness of the self.

Material and Methods

This study primarily examines Bharati Mukherjee's novel *Leave It to Me* (1997) as the central text and as the important textual content, analysing its themes of identity, exile, and cultural belonging. Secondary resources include important essays, scholarly articles, and theoretical frameworks on diaspora studies, postcolonial idea, and transnational identity, with a particular emphasis on works of Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Avtar Brah. Additional materials consist of literary evaluations on Mukherjee's representation of lady protagonists and their negotiations with identification and displacement concepts.

This research employs a qualitative literary analysis method, incorporating the textual analysis. A close analysis of 'Leave It to Me' to observe narrative shape, man or woman improvement, and habitual motifs of hybridity, exile, and self-invention. Equally Postcolonial and Diasporic Frameworks is explored to apply theories of cultural hybridity (Bhabha), identity as a social assemble (hall), and diasporic belonging (Brah) to understand Debby's shifting selfhood. Comparative evaluation is also examined illustrating connections in *Leave It to Me* and different diasporic novels to contextualize Mukherjee's portrayal of transnational identification. Feminist Literary complaint is explored to know how Mukherjee's woman protagonist challenges conventional narratives of belonging, self-definition, and corporation inside a globalized world. By integrating these methods, the study aims to provide a nuanced know-how of Debby DiMartino's fluid identification, positioning *Leave It to Me* within broader discussions on diaspora, postcoloniality, and self-reinvention.

Findings and Results

The novel *Leave it to me*, shows identification as a fluid and evolving construct that has shaped through

displacement, cultural hybridity, and self-invention. Through a close evaluation of Debby DiMartino's journey, the following key findings regarding exile, identification, and cultural belonging in its crude form:

1. Identity as a Fluid and Constructed Phenomenon

Debby DiMartino's journey highlights that identity is not always a fixed or inherited trait however a dynamic and evolving assemble. Unlike traditional narratives of self-discovery, *Leave It to Me* represents identity as something formed by means of migration, trauma, and pain as opposed to cultural or biological determinism.

2. The Exilic Self as a Psychological, Fragmented and Existential Condition

The novel illustrates that exile is not merely a physical displacement but also an internalized realm of alienation and in-betweenness. Debby's experience of exile persists regardless of her region, whether inside The USA or India underscoring the emotional and psychological toll of diasporic existence. Debby's adoption and transnational origins result in a dangerous state of feeling of self, as she exists among a couple of cultural frameworks. Her journey to find her own parents does no longer provide a revel in of belonging but as an opportunity reinforcing her identification as an outsider.

3. Challenging Traditional Notions of Belonging and cultural hybridity

Mukherjee's novel subverts conventional ideas of cultural belonging by showing Debby's solid homecoming or reconciliation together with her beyond. As an alternative, she stays an outsider, navigating multiple, regularly conflicting, without fully assimilating into any single identification. Debby's lack of ability to fully integrate into both her adoptive Italian-American way of life or her

biological Indian historical beyond highlights the demanding situations of cultural hybridity.

4. **The Role of Gender in the Diasporic Experience**

As a lady protagonist, Debby's journey is shaped no longer most effective by her racial and cultural hybridity but by her gendered experiences. Her struggles for autonomy and integration mirrors broader topics of transnational feminism, highlighting the intersection of race, gender, and exile.

5. **The Subversion of the Traditional Hero's Journey**

In contrast to the traditional narratives wherein protagonists acquire self-discovery or reputation, Debby's quest for identity stays unresolved. In place of looking for closure, she embraces transformation, reinforcing the idea that diasporic identity is an ongoing journey to find oneself which is always a shifting method.

6. **Cultural Hybridity and Belonging in a Globalized scenario**

The novel shows diasporic and postcolonial anxieties, illustrating how people from blended background conflict to establish a tough and fast identity. Avtar Brah's concept of diaspora as a website of intersectionality is relevant right here, as Debby's identification is formed with a couple of influences-her Italian-American upbringing, her Indian origins, and her non-public reinvention in San Francisco. In preference to attaining a novel identity, Debby embodies hybridity, demonstrating how contemporary diasporic people frequently exist and have a quest for self-identification.

7. **Violence and identification Formation**

Debby's past, marked by abandonment, crime, and political extremism, reinforces the challenges that identity is frequently common through struggle and reinvention. Mukherjee suggests that the formation of selfhood is not

always continuously a non-violent method but one that can involve rupture and confrontation. Debby's final rejection of each her adoptive and biological past indicates an act of self-awareness, deciding on self-definition over imposed cultural narratives. The novel mirrors violence, trauma, and exile with the construction of identification. Debby's past, tied to crime and political extremism, forces her to confront the darker factors of her lineage, complicating her self-perception. Mukherjee evaluations essentialist notions of identification, portraying Debby as a fabricated person from diaspora, migration, and globalization as opposed to a unique cultural origin.

Results

The findings endorse that *Leave It to Me* gives identification as an open-ended process rather than a set class. Debby's transformation underscores Mukherjee's broader argument in an international spear shaped migration and displacement. People must constantly negotiate their feel of self-past conservative cultural boundaries. Mukherjee challenges the perception that identification is biologically decided. Debby's quest to discover her own mother and father does no longer cause a clean sense of self but instead exposes the instability of ancestral ties. This aligns with Stuart hall's argument that identification is not always an inherent essence but a constructed and performative method. Debby's transformation all through the radical changes shows that self-definition is based on lived revel in preference to inherited cultural roots. Debby, who is neither Indian nor fully American, occupies a space of cultural differences in-betweenness, reinforcing the concept that belonging is not always tied to a constant notion or a historical past but is a continuously search for self-identification. In many ways, Debby functions as an anti-hero, but she remains the undisputed centre of her personal

choice. Mukherjee states that a protagonist need to be virtuous to be heroic. Debby's flaws, her anger, her violence, her refusal to comply are what makes her powerful. Like postmodern heroes, she operates outside moral boundaries. She is not seeking for redemption, nor does she ask for approval. rather, she embodies Mukherjee's vision of a brand new, unapologetic diasporic identification, one that does not want validation from any cultural system. As Mukherjee herself argues in an interview: "I am interested in the transformation that happens when cultures collide... My characters are not victims; they are warriors of self-invention." (Mukherjee, "An Interview with Bharati Mukherjee" 89).

Debby is the warrior of self-invention, the star of her very own world. Debby DiMartino redefines heroism for the postcolonial, postmodern era. She does not conform to traditional narratives of cultural reconciliation, nor does she find solace in belonging. Rather, she embraces her liminality and constructs her very own global on her very own terms.

Her heroism is determined in her radical enterprise, her refusal to some other life she goes for a transformation over lifestyle. In doing so, Mukherjee gives a heroine who is not always just an exile or an orphan but a pioneer of her personal chosen self, her very own history, and her personal future.

Interpretation and Discussion

Bharati Mukherjee's *Leave It to Me* represents a powerful analysis of identity in the context of exile, cultural hybridity, and postcolonial displacement. The novel's narratives of self-discovery by portraying identification as a fluid, unstable, and transgressive assemble is evident from Debby's solo journey to know her own self. Debby DiMartino, the hero, embodies a postmodern, exilic self, but is unable to assert belonging to any single one. This discussion explores key troubles including the fluidity of identity, the mental components of exile, the position of gender, and the usage of violence as a manner of

self-reinvention, with references to postcolonial and diasporic principle.

1. The Exilic Self and the Fluidity of Identity

Mukherjee's portrayal of Debby interprets the understandings of identity by depicting it as a performative and evolving process as opposed to an inherent trait. Debby's life in-between cultures mirrors what Homi Bhabha describes as the "third area," a liminal region wherein identity is continuously reshaped. As Bhabha argues, "The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white" (The Location of Culture 4). Debby's cultural positioning aligns with this concept. She is neither completely American nor completely Indian, but as an alternative in an area where identification is in flux. In the novel, Debby displays on this uncertainty: "I wasn't Indian. I wasn't American. I was not anything anyone could name" (Mukherjee 147). This declaration underscores her ambiguous reputé as a diasporic concern who resists categorization. Mukherjee's work represents the concept that one should reclaim a lost native land or go back to cultural origins to reap selfhood. Alternatively, the novel suggests that identity is shaped by migration, historic trauma, and reinvention of self. Stuart Hall's cultural identity idea further helps this idea, arguing that identification is not a set essence however instead a positioning: "Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation" (Hall 225).

2. Exile as an Existential Condition

In *Leave It to Me*, exile is not simply a geographical separation however a psychological and existential nation. When Debby returns to India, she does now not find a sense of homecoming instead, her

adventure leads her to confront with a new world which changes her completely. Edward said, in *Reflections on Exile*, explains that “Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home” (173). Debby’s feelings of alienation mirror this sentiment. She recognizes that her search for origins is futile: “Even if I found my mother, even if I found the woman who had left me behind, I knew she wouldn’t be mine” (Mukherjee 189). This realization highlights the irreversibility of displacement and the impossibility of reclaiming an authentic identification. Mukherjee shows that one’s origin is not a fixed region but an imagined accumulate, which cannot be completely recovered. The novel also gives opinions of the Western notion of adoption as a form of cultural salvation. Debby’s Italian-American mother and father raise her with an experience of privilege, but they cannot erase her inner conflicts. Her adoptive mom, Celestina, represents the American tendency to impose identification onto others: “You should be grateful. We saved you from whatever life you might have had” (Mukherjee 93). Here, Mukherjee exposes the violence of cultural erasure, showing how adoption does no longer necessarily provide belonging. Debby remains emotionally exiled, caught among multiple, often conflicting, cultural narratives.

3. Gender, Power, and Agency in Diasporic Identity

Debby’s struggles are not only racial and cultural but also deeply gendered. In a world that seeks to outline and comprise her, she resists being categorized. In contrast to conservative lady protagonists in diaspora point of view, who regularly conflict to comply to identify cultural expectations. Debby asserts her corporation through defiance and self-invention.

Mukherjee’s feminist stance is clear in Debby’s

rejection of passive victimhood. Instead of searching for stability, she embraces transformation: “I will not be anyone’s orphan girl. I will be my own creation” (Mukherjee 206). This declaration challenges the patriarchal and colonialist belief that girls need to be described through their lineage, cultural or historic notions. Debby constructs her own identification on her personal terms, embodying an intensive form of transnational feminism. Chandra Mohanty’s theory on Third World feminism supports this mindset, arguing that ladies in postcolonial spaces need to reject imposed identities: “The production of the Third World woman as a singular monolithic subject is a discursive construct that erases the heterogeneity of the experiences of women in these countries” (Mohanty 55). Debby refuses to be an inactive recipient of identity and as a substitute asserts her proper to self-definition beyond cultural, racial, and gendered expectancies.

4. The Role of Violence in Identity Formation

Violence performs a vital role in Debby’s journey. In contrast to traditional narratives of self-discovery that emphasize reconciliation. *Leave It to Me* portrays identification formation as a violent agony. Debby’s transformation is marked by means of confrontations, revenge, and destruction, acts that reflect the stressful dismay of colonial records. Frantz Fanon, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, argues that violence is occasionally necessary for decolonized subjects to reclaim employer: “Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon. The colonial world is a world divided into compartments” (Fanon 3). Debby’s actions mirror this philosophy. She refuses to passively take her situations in a stable way but she becomes a rebel and takes immediate charge to reshape her own identification, even though it might represent conducting acts of riot. In a single scene, she acknowledges her transformation: “I had to burn it all down. I had to destroy the past to create myself

anew" (Mukherjee 211). This self-advent aligns with Mukherjee's broader critique of cultural determinism, identification, the radical shows, is not something one discovers however something one builds frequently through conflict, destruction, and reinvention. Debby embodies this ever-transforming identity, constantly redefining herself as she navigates exceptional spaces and histories. Thus, the title *Leave it to me* is a statement of an independent warrior Debby, a single-handed army who takes control of her own life and endures her journey of self-identity.

Conclusion

The novel portrays violence, trauma, and exile emphasizing identity formation in a turbulent manner, which is formed through personal struggle and historical legacies. By rejecting the adoptive and biological self, Debby ultimately asserts her self-reliant selfhood through conventional narratives of diasporic return and belonging. With the aid of hard painful notions of identification, Mukherjee presents Debby as an "exilic self," one whose life is formed by means of multiple cultural influences yet stays unsettled. Her transferring identification resonates with Homi Bhabha's concept of the "third space," in which diasporic subjects negotiate new methods of belonging on rigid cultural binaries. Mukherjee's novel in the end rejects the possibility of a solid, rooted self, as portraying identification as a continuously evolving procedure shaped personal choices, historic trauma, and the needs of global mobility. In conclusion, *Leave It to Me* gives a postmodern and postcolonial critique of

identification, portraying it as an ongoing, fluid system in preference to a static category. Mukherjee's novel expands the discourse on diasporic selfhood, migration, and cultural hybridity, creating a sizable contribution to present the take aways from the novel on transnational identification and exile in global scenario. Debby finally choses to build her own world being her own hero.

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QUEST FOR IDENTITY AND SENSE OF ALIENATION IN KIRAN DESAI'S *INHERITANCE OF LOSS*

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Abstract

Kiran Desai is an esteemed origin writer who gained international recognition with the Publication of her novel *Inheritance of Loss*. She followed the footsteps of her mother Anita Desai who is also a well-known writer. Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss* is a best example of a quest for identity and alienation. The plot revolves round five main characters-Biju, son of a cook, Sai, granddaughter Jemubhai Patel, who is a retired judge, Gyan, who is a tutor to Sai and a cook in their house. All these characters go through the quest for identity and a sense of alienation. Interesting thing is all these characters are interrelated to each other. They all belong to two or three families in the Himalayan range of Kalimpong. Biju is an illegal immigrant in America. Jemubhai Patel is a retired judge. Sai is an orphan who lost her parents in an accident at an early age. She is the daughter of Patel's daughter. Gyan and Sai fall in love with each other over the period of time. But there are cultural clashes and political issues which disturb their relationship. Sai leads a life of alienation due to the difference in her culture of her convent brought up, and her grandfather's anglicised attitude and her Indian roots.

Keywords: Illegitimacy, dislocation, quest for identity, alienation, loss.

Introduction

Inheritance of Loss is the second novel by Indian origin author Kiran Desai. It was first published in 2006. It won an a number of awards, including the Booker Prize that year, the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award in 2007, and the 2006 Vodafone Crossword Book Award. Kiran Desai an esteemed Indian origin writer gained international recognition with the Publication of her novel *The Inheritance of Loss* in 2007. Following the footsteps of her mother the renowned author Anita Desai, Kiran Desai curved her won literary niche showcasing her remarkable story-telling talent and insightful exploration of human experience in the Indian Himalayas a culturally diverse and historically significant region as the backdrop for *The Inheritance of Loss* which takes place in the mid in the myth 20th century.

The plot revolves around five main characters each grappling with their own cultural heritage and the profound impact of historical Political Cultural legacies on which the characters are influenced. Each of them is facing unique problems and struggles. The writing in the book is vivid and expressive, successfully portraying the essence of the characters' lives, providing readers with an insightful look into their joys, sorrows, aspirations, and difficulties. The central characters are Biju, the son of a cook, at the house of the judge JemuBhai Patel, Sai the granddaughter of the Judge and Gyan the tutor to Sai. Gyan is also fighting for the GNLF moment. In the novel, historical occurrences like British colonialism and the fight for Indian independence are depicted in a microcosm of how they affected the characters' lives. It explores the clash of cultural influences and draws attention to

the conflicts between traditional values and the intrusion of modernity and western ideals.

Biju, the illegal immigrant in the United States who once was employed as a cook in New York City, is one noteworthy individual who was severely impacted by British colonization. The exploitative connection between the British Empire and its colonies is strongly reflected in Biju's experiences. The Cook, Biju's father, embodied the submissive position that many Indians had under British rule as a cook while growing up in post-colonial India (Desai, 2007: 34). Biju confronts the brutal realities of labour exploitation and economic inequality in United States because of the weight of his family's history as colonial subjects. He keeps up a cycle of economic suffering and the effects of colonialism in his own life by working long hours for meagre pay and living in continual fear of being deported. This trauma of colonization can be passed down through generations, leaving the family trapped in a cycle of silence and unexpressed anger. This can manifest in dysfunctional relationships, distrust of institutions, and difficulty forming secure attachments.

Influence of Colonialism

The difficulties of British colonialism are also found in Gyan, a figure greatly affected by the political unrest surrounding the Gorkhaland independence struggle. Gyan joins the battle for freedom from British control as an Indian patriot. His experience does however highlight the long lasting effects of colonialism on kinship and identity.

Desai writes, "Gyan remembered the still stories of when citizens had risen up in their millions and demanded that the British leave" (Desai 2007:174). Gyan's internal conflicts showcase the enduring impacts of colonial rule on personal choices as individuals navigate their allegiances and grapple with the complexities of the post-colonial national building. Individual's experiences of the effects of British imperialism include economic exploitation,

polarization, politics and social injustice. These incidents demonstrate the impact of British colonialism on people which are for generations together. There is a need of understanding the culture and emphasizing the need of a thorough grasp of the historical period and its effects. An intense sense of humiliation and inadequacy is a reflection of the psychological damage caused by colonialism. Struggle to balance these nationalistic ideals with his deeply established faith in the British serves as an example of the long-lasting effects of colonialism on individual identity. The novel also highlights the economic ramifications of British colonialism through the character of Biju, who experiences as an undocumented immigrant in the United States working in Restaurants. This speaks about the journey of an innocent from the right of Himalayas to the immigrant quarters of New York. There is a comparison between the present-day exploitation of immigrants from the former colonies and the repressive labour practices of the colonial era.

Sai, The Judge's granddaughter, plays a significant role in another heartbreaking incident. Sai's colonial upbringing makes her aware of the harsh truths of British sentiments regarding the Indian populace. Sai is keenly aware of the racial prejudices that are collected around her. She struggles with her own identity and self-worth in a culture that devalues her cultural background, and as a result, she internalizes these biases, highlighting the psychological effects of colonialism. Moreover, Sai's relationships and decision-making reflect the effects of colonization. The internalized colonial power structures become more apparent when she falls in love with Gyan. Desai writes, "It was February of 1986. Sai was seventeen, and her romance with Gyan the mathematics tutor, was not even a year old." (Desai, 2007: 9). The legacy of colonialism shapes Sai's perception of herself and her place in the world, complicating her romantic

relationship and influencing her choices. Her British education at a convent school introduces her to Western ideals and perspectives, leading to a complex blend of cultural influences that she must navigate. Sai's romantic involvement with Gyan, a Nepali tutor, brings about cultural conflicts. Gyan is a member of the Gorkhaland movement, which seeks an independent state for the Gorkha people in India. Sai's Indian heritage and Gyan's Nepali background lead to tensions between them, reflecting the broader ethnic and political conflicts present in the region. Despite Sai's Indian heritage, her privileged upbringing sets her apart from the local population. Her family's connection to The Judge and their relative affluence create a social divide between her and the community. This divide becomes apparent as she becomes entangled in the local struggles and experiences both empathy and discomfort with her own privilege. Sai experiences loss due to the absence of her parents and her yearning for a deeper connection with her heritage. Her relationship with her grandfather, while loving, is marked by emotional distance, contributing to her feelings of loneliness and a longing for a sense of belonging. The legacy of British colonialism is a backdrop to Sai's life. Her British education and her grandfather's anglicised upbringing are emblematic of the enduring influence of colonial rule. This historical context adds Complexities to her cultural identity and interactions with others. Sai's character embodies the intricate interplay between personal experiences and broader socio-political contexts. Her journey showcases the challenges of reconciling cultural heritage, personal aspirations, and the demands of a changing world. The Judge, Jemubhai Patel, is a reclusive and educated man who received his education in England during the British colonial era. He grapples with the tension between his Indian roots and Western influences, haunted by a sense of loss and alienation. His relationships with the cook and the community around him reflect the

complexities of cultural assimilation and the enduring impact of historical events on personal lives. A. P. Abraham writes that since The Judge got ridiculed for his accent and appearance, he felt shame and dislike for his heritage, his culture, and the colour of his skin (Abraham, 2017: 2).

Gyan's intense sense of humiliation and inadequacy is a reflection of the psychological damage caused by colonialism. His struggle to balance his nationalistic ideals with his deeply established faith in British supremacy serves as an example of the long-lasting effects of colonialism on individual identity. The novel also highlights the economic ramifications of British colonialism through the character of Biju. Desai portrays Biju's experiences as an undocumented immigrant in the United States, working in harsh restaurant conditions. Desai writes, "It is vast in scope, from the peaks of the Himalayas to the immigrant quarters of New York" (Desai, 2007: 36). This comparison establishes a clear relationship between the present-day exploitation of immigrants from former colonies and the repressive labour practices of the colonial era. The hardships that Biju experienced highlight the cynical nature of exploitation and the ongoing economic inequalities left over from colonialism.

Loss Passing through the Generations

The long-lasting effects of preceding generation's flaws are found in many sections of the text. One such example may be seen in Sai's character, whose identity was significantly shaped by the colonial home she was nurtured in. Sai's relationship with her Indian background is strained as she adopts British norms and feels alienated in her nation. She lives with her grandfather who has adopted English customs. Desai writes, "Where is the tea? He woke and demanded of her. 'He is late' said The Judge, meaning the cook with the tea" (Desai, 2007: 2).

Living with a grandfather who has adopted English customs, such as “the five tea” eventually leads Sai to feel perplexed about her roots. Sai’s internal turmoil exemplifies the colonial legacy that continues to this day when people battle to balance their cultural history with the ideals and viewpoints of the colonizer. Gyan’s character struggles with how colonialism has affected his sense of belonging. Gyan’s internal struggle is evident when Desai writes, “Gyan had turned his back on the British but now could not help thinking that perhaps the British were right, that he was second-rate” (Desai, 2007: 209). Due to internalized ideas of British supremacy, Gyan struggles with emotions of inadequacy and self-doubt as a result of colonialism. In this process, his relationship with Sai becomes difficult.

The Inheritance Of Loss explores the struggle between conventional values and modernization and shows the difficulties that people must overcome while attempting to balance these opposing influences. The novel’s protagonists deal with the interaction of several cultural legacies which influence their identities and the character of Sai is a good example of how traditional beliefs and modernization collide. Sai who has been brought up in a traditional home since her birth is loaded with contemporary concepts and experiences. Desai writes, “Time should move on. She told her that doesn’t go in for a life where time doesn’t pass the way I did. That is the single biggest bit of advice I can give you” (Desai 2007:102)

Sai’s internal conflict is the example of conflict between traditional values and their allure of modernity as a struggle with their own aspirations and desires. Sai experiences a sense of loss because of the absence of her parents, and her yearning for a deeper connection with her heritage. Her relationship with her grandfather, while loving, is marked by emotional distance, contributing to her feelings of homeliness and a longing for a sense of belonging. The legacy of British colonialism is a

backdrop to Sai’s life. Her British education, grandfather’s Anglicized bringing up are emblematic of the enduring influence of colonial rule. The historical contexts add complexity to her cultural identity and interaction with others. Sai’s character embodies the intricate interplay between personal experiences and the broader socio-political context and journey showcases the challenges of reconciling cultural heritage, personal aspirations and the demands of a changing world.

Biju, a Central character in our “*Inheritance of Loss*”, experiences a profound sense of cultural conflict. Throughout the narrative there are cultural concrete arrays in his experiences through which he is trying to navigate the complexity of life in both in United States and India. He faces discrimination and stereotypes as an immigrant. While in India he is often perceived as a poor, and have changed due to his time spent abroad. His business background as the son of a cook places him in a specific social class in India, while he moves to the US, the challenge of being an undocumented worker in low-paying jobs, his interactions with the different sources classes in both countries highlight the dark economic disparities and insecurity of his status as an outsider. Biju grapples with the need to adapt to the cultural norms of the US while still holding onto the Indian identity. He navigates through unfamiliar environments, customs and language barriers, leading to feelings of isolation and alienation (dergipark.org).

Conclusion

The *Inheritance of Loss* explores colonial neurosis, multiculturalism, modernity, immigrants’ bitter experiences, insurgency and the game of possession, gender bias, racial discrimination, changing human relations, impact of globalization, delineation of North –East and the post-colonial chaos and despair- ethnic, social and historical

relationships between people from different cultures and backgrounds. The writer of this novel is deeply interested in diasporic issues of India in the 1980's. She observes everything through the lens of being Indian with a diasporic consciousness. she deals with the social, political and economic problems of the people of contemporary society in India and, on the other the social and psychological problems faced by Indian immigrants in America and England. As a gifted writer, Desai keenly observes the existing social values, political issues and ideologies and depicts them through the people of her fictional world with exceptional creative imagination and deep analytical insight. As an immigrant she is constantly in pulls and pressures and suffers a marginalized existence as she carries with herself, the 'cultural baggage' of her 'homeland', which exists only in the figment of her imagination, often a diaspora is as much a mental space as a geographical dimension. She acknowledges that she found it challenging to write about India. It was only when she began to write about the immigrant experiences in New York that she realized she would have to return to India. But she finds that India has changed, it belongs o inside Indian authors and the subjects belong to them. (Dhawan, R.K. Pp. 86-87). The novel which is an outcome of the writer's external Diaspora is a brilliant study of Indian culture, the culture in its transitional phase. Changes are brought by colonial neurosis. Craze for western valves, manners, language and glamorous lifestyle, indigenous which failed to sustain life are portrayed

brilliantly in this novel. Characters feel defeated by their Indian heritage confronted with colonialism, consequently they develop complexes which make their reciprocal relationships. Kiran Desai's novel is essentially a study of loss of cultural identity, human relations, emotional binding, human valves, rationality, peace and for many a sense of loss is an integral part of every character's life, they are secure and unmoved, struggling to survive in the modern world.

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STUDY OF ISOLATION IN FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY'S *A GENTLE CREATURE*

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Abstract

The research paper studies isolation in Dostoevsky's short story "A Gentle Creature". Isolation, "stresses detachment from others often involuntarily." According to social isolation theory, whenever the societal structure changes isolation is observed in individuals. To understand isolation, it is paramount to delve deep into the ideology of the author. He believed in two ideologies, the first being Utopian Socialism and the second, orthodox Christian beliefs. Like other Russian writers, he believed in the new ideas that were getting inculcated in Russia. There is a tussle between new and old ideas in his works which were published after he served his sentence in Siberia. There was a structural change in 19th-Century Russia that is, shift from serfdom to socialism, leading to chaos in the society. This chaos is represented in the literary works of Dostoevsky depicting characters which are isolated from the society. The short story "A Gentle Creature" (1876) depicts the author's lack of hope, in isolation typified by the narrator. To understand isolation, the theory of Encoding/Decoding given by Stuart Hall in Culture, Media, Language has been applied.

Keywords: dostoevsky, hall, encoding/decoding, isolation, "a gentle creature"

Introduction

Dostoevsky's works represent isolation. Isolation is detachment from others often involuntarily ("isolation"), and according to social isolation theory whenever the societal structure changes isolation is observed in individuals. There was transition from serfdom to socialism in 19th-Century Russia leading to chaos in the society. And this chaos is represented in the literary works of Dostoevsky. The characters in all his works try to find answers for their existence. He was torn between two ideologies. The first ideology was Utopian Socialism, and the second was orthodox Christian beliefs. Complementary to other Russian writers he believed in the new ideas that were getting inculcated in Russia (Morson). There is a tussle between new and old ideas in his works that were published after he served his sentence in Siberia.

"A Gentle Creature" (1876), represents author's lack of hope, in the isolation that is typified by the narrator. In Dostoevsky's later works "suffering and evil form a continuous chain, with the sufferer in turn inflicting suffering on others" (Rosen 261). This is evident in this short story.

To understand isolation, the theory of Encoding/Decoding given by Stuart Hall in the book *Culture, Media, Language* has been applied. According to this theory, for a discourse to function there are many dynamics at work, be it political, social or religious. All these dynamics together create an encoded discourse that the receiver decodes according to the effect these dynamics have on him (Hall 130). The work taken for this paper is also a discourse that is encoded by its author according to the dynamics that were dominant at the time of writing. By reading and

understanding the short story, its narrator's perspective, his asocial behavior, the effect of encoded structures and the period when Dostoevsky wrote it, this short story is decoded in this research paper.

The period when Dostoevsky wrote this short story was after his Siberian exile. His perspective had a drastic change, the characters represented in his works show isolation because of the shattered hope, the belief they had in the European ideas like the author himself. They try to exert their existence making them wrathful and vengeful, and the female being the target of their wrath. Feeling and understanding everything, still these characters strain themselves, and annihilate their reality. As if they are hiding from the truth, they know the darkness of it. This is aptly represented in the short story taken for the research paper.

"A Gentle Creature"

The encoded elements in the short story are decoded and their effect on the narrator are discussed below:

"Who I Was and Who She Was"

"*A Gentle Creature*" begins with the narrator sitting beside his wife's dead body. He starts narrating their first meeting. She was a girl of 16, dealing with poverty. She used to come to the narrator's shop to pawn things. He used to observe her which piqued his interest. He says but, "She was a fair-haired, delicate creature, medium tall; she was always ill at ease with me, awkward somehow" (Dostoevsky 61). She used to leave immediately after getting her money. She never argued or haggled with the narrator, took whatever he offered. This is what poverty does to you; you accept whatever you get. The narrator also tries to be spiteful with her, this is evident when he says:

Mozher wouldn't accept a thing like this.' I made a point of stressing the words 'it's you', giving them a special meaning. I was being spiteful.

She flared up on hearing 'it's you', but held her peace and took the money without flinging it back- that's what poverty does to you! But did she flare up! I knew I'd touched a nerve. After she had gone, I asked myself suddenly: was it really worth two roubles to triumph over her? Heh, heh, heh! I remember asking myself twice over: 'Was it worth it? Was it worth it?' And laughed as I answered my own question in the affirmative. (Dostoevsky 62)

He, being obsessed with the girl, bribed her servant Lukeriya to know about her. When he came to know how she is living, he says, "Those details are so horrifying that I simply don't understand how she could laugh as she had done just now" (Dostoevsky 66). Then it dawns on the narrator that she can bear a lot, this meant that she could be overpowered.

This is the basic characteristic of isolated individual in Dostoevsky's world. Dostoevsky's narrator wants to overpower the other individual to placate the effect of isolation. And for the most part the female is the victim of this isolation. Which either leads to her humiliation as with Liza in *Notes from the Underground* or suicide which is evident in "A Gentle Creature".

"A Proposal of Marriage"

As the narrator knew that she could be overpowered, so he sends her a marriage proposal. She being an orphan, and her aunts scheming to sell her to a fifty-year-old grocery owner, the narrator acts like her savior, she has no other choice than to accept his proposal. The narrator was happy as he got a subject who can be overpowered but a proud one, he says: "Proud, eh? Well, I thought, I'm fond of proud little girls. The proud ones are especially nice when ... well, when you're confident of your power over them, eh?" (Dostoevsky 69). What this cynicism represents in Dostoevsky's characters is that they have suppressed feelings of anger and rage that

they vent on oppressed and on themselves, being sadist and masochist at the same time (Marullo 83).

“The Noblest of Men, but I Don’t Believe that Myself”

In this section the narrator recounts the events of his betrothal. How in a sense he bought the meek one from her aunts. As she was a self-respecting individual, he never let her feel that she had been bought. But given her circumstances he was a sort of lesser evil to go with.

She was skeptical about his pawn business, but he made it a matter of pride. He wrote off her skepticism as a symptom of her youth. He believed that young people are narrowminded because of their impulsive and intolerant nature (Dostoevsky 72). He created a strict atmosphere in his home for the meek one so that she could not rebel as he wanted total control over her. As freedom is delusive it might lead to rebellion. And, “most of Dostoevsky’s character define it, is illusory. It begins with vicarious promise; it proceeds as confrontation; it ends in catastrophe” (Marullo 83). This is how he was slowly draining the meek one, snatching her freedom away from her and making her feel isolated, as an object that he cherishes.

“Plans and More Plans”

He tries to justify himself in this section. He was not at fault. She just has to keep her pledges and do everything according to what his discipline demanded. What this control did was it created a silence between them. This silence can also be seen as the silence before the storm. The narrator, to deal with his isolation, has overpowered her completely. The agony and suffering which he cedes on her is a typical characteristic of the isolated hero in the Dostoevsky’s works, “without any restraining influences from the past or present, the hero at once goes to extreme: he forges for himself a glistening sword of logic, a theory or philosophy which when

applied to life will mitigate suffering” (Rosen 261), which is his suffering whose effect he reduces by creating a philosophy of his own.

“The Gentle Creature Rebels”

She comes to know about his past in this section. That he was dismissed from the military on grounds of cowardice. But he explains that the duel was not necessary, because he did not feel insulted. After the surfacing of this incident of the narrator’s past, the power started to shift in her favor, “the gentle creature rebels.” He says, “I found myself embarked on a course of self-justification; and that was just what she wanted, this new humiliation of mine” (Dostoevsky 79). The isolation on the basis of gender is evident here as she tries to confront the narrator to fight the isolation which the narrator has made her feel. What the narrator has done, he has made her a character in his story having no control over her life that is, “in constant defense of his superior narrative position, of his ability to name his wife desires and give voice to her thoughts, Dostoevsky’s narrator simultaneously denies her a voice and a name of her own” (Dyne 456).

“A Dreadful Memory”

In this section, the meek one tries to kill the narrator, holding the gun at his temple as he is sleeping. He opens his eyes a bit, sees her and closes them again. She isn’t able to kill him. She saw that he knew she was going to kill him.

His resolve to accept death from her hands completely annihilates the meek one, at which he says, “I had ‘seen everything and knew everything’ and that there could no longer be any doubt. I left the revolver overnight on the table as usual. That night she got into the new bed without saying anything: the marriage was dissolved, she had been ‘vanquished but not forgiven’” (Dostoevsky 84). From here onwards there is deterioration in the

health of meek one, as if the life has been sucked out of her.

“A Dream of Pride”

After falling ill, he takes good care of the meek one. He says it is quite dreadful for him to see her in this condition. But at the same time, he is happy with the victory he has achieved over her. His past has been unfair to him, people have been unfair to him. He was dismissed from the military on the grounds of cowardice, but he is happy that she knew he was not a coward because of his resolve to accept death when she was holding the revolver. He says, “I saw her as being so defeated and humiliated, so crushed, that I sometimes felt agonizingly sorry for her, though at the same time I did occasionally relish the thought of her humiliation” (Dostoevsky 90).

Dostoevsky had deep doubts about human nature, which is evident in the isolation of the narrator, he is a “fractured man striving toward an unattainable ideal” (Jackson 32). This ideal being the love which he tries to find in the meek one, but ultimately his isolation due to his intellect and overpowering demeanor annihilates the meek one and makes her apathetic.

“The Scales Suddenly Fell”, “I Understood Only too Well”

The apathetic behavior of the meek one towards the narrator leads to his hysteric fit. He starts kissing her feet. He is doing this, because he knows that if the meek one leaves him, he will be in perpetual isolation. His intellect will lead to him being more isolated, because of the cognizance which it creates in him. Being scared of this perpetual isolation, he abandons his all-knowing facade and accepts that he was a coward. He never told her about the past, because he didn't want to seem ridiculous. He resolves to love the meek one like a husband and soothes himself by saying that everything will be alright now. But his honest love becomes too

overwhelming for the meek one. She was now used to living like an object. Accepting his love was tough for her, because she knew that in good conscience she couldn't return the love. “She kills herself precisely when the intentions of the pawnbroker are inspired by love and appear to be truly good” (Tigounstova 459). Here the narrator's philosophy disintegrates, he knew he was finally defeated by her. Having total control isolated his wife, which finally led to her suicide. She preferred death because, “The Meek One, with her stamina and rebelliousness cannot be moulded” (465), she knew that freedom and dignity lies in death only.

“Just Five Minutes too Late”

In this section the narrator laments that it was only five minutes. If he would not have been delayed by five minutes, she would have been alive. But she had decided to die, he thinks, at the moment when he told her that he would make everything right. “The Meek One does not kill herself out of desperation when she loses her parents, when she is tyrannized by her aunts” (Tigounstova 465). She kills herself after the narrator confesses his love to her. This is the effect of gender isolation which she faces, because being a female she had no control over her destiny. Everything from the start was controlled first by her aunts, then by the narrator. She had no choice in how she could live. But she had the choice of how and when she would die.

The narrator from the start has played with her psychology, his intellect which isolated him, became a medium to subjugate her. Subjugating her made him feel alive. But it drained the life from the meek one and made her feel apathetic and isolated which ultimately led to her suicide.

Conclusion

The decoding of this short story shows how Dostoevsky's characters are isolated because of their intellect. Their intellect makes them different

from the world. They are drawn towards suffering, having sadomasochistic tendencies. Dostoevsky has given the answer to this isolation in the understanding of Christian Brotherhood. The pawnbroker in "A Gentle Creature" is sadomasochist, he finds relief from his isolation by making his wife his subject which makes her feel isolated, leading to her suicide. In this short story we also see the wife being isolated because of her gender, that is why the title "A Gentle Creature". She is isolated and chooses to die rather than being in captivity of the pawnbroker. He knew her death was an act of vengeance because when he started depending on her, she chose to die. Females in Dostoevsky's world have always been represented as a hope for the narrator to redeem himself. But he is never able to attain it, the reason being his intellect, and sadomasochistic tendencies. He will remain isolated until he accepts the Russian character, that is, Christian Brotherhood. He has to suffer for the humanity but redemption can only be attained if he is not cynical about it. The problem is he will remain isolated because of his lack of acceptance of the truth.

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THE VOICE OF DRAUPADI IN PRATIBHA RAY'S YAJNASENI: A STUDY OF PROTEST AND SELF-ASSERTION

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Abstract

Pratibha Ray's novel *Yajnaseni* reimagines the life of Draupadi from the Mahabharata, presenting her as a multifaceted woman navigating the complexities of identity, agency, and societal expectations. Ray delves into Draupadi's internal struggles, portraying her as a woman endowed with learning and courage, yet ensnared by the patriarchal constructs of her time. The narrative explores her psychological turmoil as she confronts the decision imposed upon her to marry five men, a mandate she passively accepts despite her personal reservations. This portrayal invites readers to reflect on the contradictions within Draupadi's character; a woman who embodies feminist ideals yet conforms to traditional roles. Ray's work challenges the conventional depiction of Draupadi, urging a reevaluation of her legacy and prompting discourse on women's agency within patriarchal frameworks.

Introduction

Pratibha Ray's novel *Yajnaseni* offers a feminist reimagining of Draupadi's narrative from the Mahabharata, emphasizing themes of protest and self-assertion. Ray portrays Draupadi as a woman who, despite enduring silencing, suppression, and abuse, actively challenges patriarchal norms and redefines her identity beyond traditional roles. This depiction positions Draupadi as a symbol of resistance, highlighting her journey from victimhood to empowerment. By centering Draupadi's voice, Ray critiques societal constructs of dharma and gender, presenting a nuanced exploration of female agency in a patriarchal context.

Literary inspiration has always come from Indian mythology, where female characters frequently play intricate and multidimensional roles. The Mahabharata heroine Draupadi is a person whose life is characterized by hardship, selflessness, and tenacity [1]. However, she has frequently been reduced to a passive victim or a source of conflict in conventional narratives. In her

well-known book *Yajnaseni: The Story of Draupadi*, Pratibha Ray presents a novel feminist viewpoint, allowing Draupadi to voice her inner conflict, rebellion, and self-assertion [2].

Renowned Odia author and Jnanpith awardee Pratibha Ray is well-known for her provocative writings that tackle issues of gender, society, and religion. In addition to *Yajnaseni*, she is renowned for her works *Magnamati*, *Adibhumi*, *Maharani Putra*, and *Shilapadma*. Her profound interest in mythology, history, and social issues is evident in these books [3], which frequently emphasize the hardships and tenacity of women. By depicting Draupadi in *Yajnaseni* as a strong person who questions injustice and won't be silenced, Ray subverts the conventional portrayal of her as a simple victim. Through the first-person narrative of Draupadi, the work delves into topics of personal agency, moral quandaries, and gender discrimination. This essay will analyze how Ray reclaims Draupadi's story to give a more complex and strong portrayal of the mythical heroine, while

also looking at her voice as a tool of protest and self-assertion in Yajnaseni [4].

Reimagining Draupadi's Voice

By allowing Draupadi to tell her story, Pratibha Ray's Yajnaseni reinterprets her role and moves away from the male-dominated Mahabharata narratives. This first-person narrative transforms Draupadi into a thoughtful, conscious person who challenges the injustices that have been inflicted upon her [2]. Her voice is one of self-awareness, defiance, and resistance in addition to pain. In a poignant moment, Draupadi laments: *"Am I merely a wife to be shared among five husbands, a pawn in the hands of destiny? Do I not have an identity of my own?"* [5].

Her internal struggle and her declaration of herself against the strict rules of duty and dharma are encapsulated in this statement. She expresses her displeasure with her polyandrous marriage, her humiliation in the Kaurava court, and her husband's inability to defend her honor throughout the book. Her philosophical pursuit of fairness and liberty is frequently reflected in her interactions with Krishna [6]. In addition to being a tragic heroine, Ray's Draupadi is a woman who has the courage to challenge, rebel against, and rewrite her destiny. Yajnaseni is an essential feminist reworking of the epic because of this narrative shift, which portrays her as a symbol of female empowerment.

Draupadi as a Symbol of Protest

Pratibha Ray portrays Draupadi in Yajnaseni as a strong voice against social injustices, especially her forced polyandrous marriage, her public humiliation in the Kaurava court, and her ongoing battles for dignity [2]. Ray's Draupadi actively challenges and opposes the injustices that are inflicted upon her, in contrast to conventional representations that show her as a woman constrained by fate. She objects inwardly when Kunti unintentionally orders that Draupadi be divided among the five Pandavas:

"Am I an object to be distributed? Does my will, my desires, have no meaning in this patriarchal world?" She doubts the dharma that denies her autonomy as her silent anguish develops into an internal rebellion [7]. Her outburst peaks during the notorious disrobing scene when she confronts the Kuru elders and makes the following demands: *"If my husbands have lost themselves in a game of dice, how do they have the right to wager me?"*

She is concerned about the dharma that denies her autonomy as her silent anguish develops into an internal rebellion. Her outburst peaks during the notorious disrobing scene when she confronts the Kuru elders and makes the following demands:

Self-Assertion and Agency

Pratibha Ray confronts the traditional portrayal of Draupadi as a helpless victim of fate in Yajnaseni by showing her as a lady of great self-assertion and agency [8]. Ray's Draupadi forcefully proclaims her identity, desires, and moral convictions, in contrast to the Mahabharata, where her voice is sometimes drowned out by the activities of the men in her immediate vicinity.

Draupadi challenges the social conventions that are foisted upon her from the minute she is coerced into a polyandrous marriage [9]. She says this to show her defiance and anguish: *"Is a woman born only to sacrifice? Must she always suppress her will to fulfill the desires of others?"* Her opposition to the submissive role that patriarchal society expects women to play is summed up in this phrase. In her connections, especially with Krishna, whom she views as her true confidant, Draupadi asserts her agency [10]. His words give her strength when she's feeling hopeless, but she never gives in to fate mindlessly. Rather, she is an intelligent and sensitive woman who is always looking for answers. She aggressively challenges the legitimacy of her humiliation before the Kaurava court, one of the most defining moments of her self-assertion: *"I was*

not present when I was wagered." How can a self-destructive spouse have any authority over his wife? Her outrage-filled speech upends the elders' interpretation of dharma itself.

Draupadi refuses to suffer in silence, even while she is in exile. She makes sure that her suffering is not ignored by reminding her husbands of their responsibility. Ray portrays Draupadi in *Yajnaseni* as a woman who reclaims her story rather than merely as a victim, making her a timeless representation of fortitude, defiance, and self-determination [11].

Feminist Retelling of Mythology

Yajnaseni by Pratibha Ray is a powerful feminist reinterpretation of the Mahabharata in which Draupadi is portrayed as a tenacious woman, an independent thinker, and a woman of agency. Ray reinterprets Draupadi's journey through a female lens and challenges the male-dominated storytelling tradition by moving the story to her first-person point of view [12]. The book highlights Draupadi's hardships, feelings, and defiance of the restrictive social conventions placed upon her while exposing the epic's pervasive gender biases. *Yajnaseni* questions Draupadi's forced polyandry, which is frequently excused in the name of dharma. She objects: *"Why is it that a woman must always accept her fate without question, while a man has the privilege to choose?"*

Her resistance to the patriarchal systems that aim to dominate her body and wants is captured in this statement. Another instance in which Ray makes her feminist voice heard is when she is humiliated in the Kaurava court. Draupadi asks for accountability rather than putting up with injustice passively: *"Is a woman merely a possession, to be gambled away at a man's will?"* [13]. Her outrage questions the fundamental basis of masculine privilege and reveals the gendered power dynamics of the day. Draupadi's emotional and

intellectual depth is further explored in Ray's *Yajnaseni*, which allows her to express love, rage, and grief however she sees fit. She is a woman who thinks, feels, and resists; she is not just a loyal wife or a catalyst for conflict. Ray reclaims the tale from the patriarchal framework of the epic by narrating Draupadi's story in her own words, turning *Yajnaseni* into an important feminist literary work that speaks to current debates about gender, justice, and women's autonomy [2].

Inner Conflict and Emotional Depth

A very reflective depiction of Draupadi is provided by Pratibha Ray's *Yajnaseni*, which emphasizes her inner conflicts, emotional hardships, and spiritual pursuits. Ray examines Draupadi's deep inner conflicts, including her yearning for love, the agony of forced polyandry, and her quest for self-worth in a society that frequently views her as an object rather than a unique person, in contrast to conventional portrayals that concentrate on her roles as a queen and bride [14]. One of her most intense conflicts is her forced marriage to five husbands, a fate she never desired. She questions:

"Can a woman's heart, like a lamp, burn equally for five wicks? If my soul belongs to one, how do I offer my body to five?" Her intense suffering and defiance of social conventions that require her blind compliance are expressed in this passage. Her feelings are further complicated by Draupadi's love for Arjuna. Despite her continued devotion to all the Pandavas, she laments in silence the lack of exclusive affection. She asks herself, *"Did I ever truly belong to anyone, or was I just a responsibility passed from one hand to another?"* [15] Her sole comfort is from Krishna, who can empathize with her pain despite social norms. *"Why must a woman's virtue always be weighed by the world, while a man's is never questioned?"* she begs him in desperation. *Yajnaseni* is not only a tale of pain but also of resiliency, knowledge, and self-discovery

because of this spiritual connection, which aids her in resolving the conflicts inside her soul.

Pratibha Ray's Contribution to Literature

A well-known author, Pratibha Ray's writings cut across social conventions, time, and culture. One of the most significant voices in modern Indian literature, her works are firmly anchored in issues of gender, social justice, mythology, and human psychology [1]. Although her most well-known work is still *Yajnaseni*, her literary achievements go well beyond that, as she uses compelling storytelling to examine a variety of social topics. Ray raises issues regarding tyranny and tradition in *Shilapadma* by depicting the hardships faced by women in a firmly patriarchal culture. Her dedication to feminist philosophy is evident in the novel's strong female characters who defy expectations [17]. She writes "*A woman is not merely an ornament of the household; she is the soul that gives life to it. But why must she always remain unseen, unheard?*" Ray's recurrent theme-women's search for acknowledgment and identity is embodied in this sentence.

Her book *Maharani Putra* explores political and historical issues while offering a scathing indictment of regal legacies and power structures. Ray demonstrates her ability to combine historical context with profound psychological understanding in this piece, which conveys the complexity of human ambition and morality [17]. She gives voice to those who are disenfranchised by examining tribal life and the exploitation of Indigenous communities in *Adibhumi*. "The land does not belong to man; it is man who belongs to the land. Yet, the ones who love it the most are always the first to be displaced." Her concern for social justice and the rights of the underprivileged is evident in her stirring remark. Ray's ability to combine mythology, history, and modern reality to produce stories that subvert social conventions is what makes her a literary legend [18].

Like *Yajnaseni*, her writings continue to spark conversations on justice, gender, and human dignity, solidifying her status as an Indian literary pioneer.

Conclusion

Yajnaseni, a revolutionary feminist reworking of the *Mahabharata* by Pratibha Ray, restores Draupadi's voice and turns her from a misinterpreted legendary character into a representation of tenacity, self-confidence, and resistance. Ray questions the male-centric historical and mythological traditions by offering Draupadi's point of view, illuminating topics like gender inequality, individuality, and societal expectations that are still pertinent today. *Yajnaseni* connects ancient mythology with modern feminist discourse through themes of protest, emotional depth, inner turmoil, and self-empowerment. The hardships faced by Draupadi; her forced polyandry, her public humiliation, and her pursuit of dignity reflect those of innumerable women throughout history. Her audacious claim, the general question of women's agency and equality is "*Am I merely a pawn in the hands of men, or do I have the right to shape my destiny?*"

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POST-COLONIAL LITERATURE

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Abstract

Post-colonial literature throws light on the impact of the British colonialism on the lives of Indians. It reflects the drastic influence of colonialism on language, culture and psychology of the Indians. The struggle, imbalance and complexities are explored in the post-colonial literature. The post-colonial writers used the literature as a powerful tool to restore India's rich culture and heritage. The writers chose the themes close to Indian lives specially the marginalised sections of an Indian society. The restoration of India's socio-political and economic fields forms a key aspect in their writings. Their works challenge the atrocities of the colonialism. It is a voice for liberation to form a modern society free from the oppression. The western thoughts and ideologies brought a transformation among the Indians. The intellectual drive forms a crucial part of their writings. The writers conveyed their ideas through English, a global language.

Keywords: colonialism, post-colonialism, marginalised, atrocities

Introduction

British colonialism diverted India's cultural, political, and linguistic landscapes. Post-colonial literature emerged as a call to re-establish the glory of India. The post-colonial writers reconstructed the country's great culture by breaking the shackles of colonial oppression. The writings focus on regaining the nation's identity and enhancing individual's identity. The writings curbed the regional differences and promoted harmony among all Indians.

Materials and Methods

The study involves the textual analysis to examine the works of the prominent postcolonial Indian writers. The sources are primary and secondary.

Primary Sources (Books by Indian authors and postcolonial texts)

- Tagore, Rabindranath – *Gitanjali* and *Selected Poems and Essays*
- Rushdie, Salman – *Midnight's Children*
- Roy, Arundhati – *The God of Small Things*
- Anand, Mulk Raj – *Untouchable*
- Narayan, R.K. – *The Guide*

- Ghosh, Amitav – *The Shadow Lines* and *Sea of Poppies*
- Tharoor, Shashi – *The Great Indian Novel*

Secondary Sources (Theoretical works and literary criticism)

- Chaudhuri, Rosinka – *Literary Activism: Perspectives on Contemporary Indian Literature* Discusses postcolonial literary developments and their relation to Indian cultural identity.
- Nandy, Ashis – *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* Explores the psychological and cultural impact of colonialism on Indian identity.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi – *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English* Analyzes how Indian English literature has evolved in a postcolonial context.
- Chakravarti, Uma – *Gendering Caste Through a Feminist Lens* Explores the intersection of caste, gender, and identity in Indian society and literature.
- Tharu, Susie, and K. Lalita – *Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the Present* An anthology and critical analysis of Indian

women's writings, highlighting resistance and identity formation.

- **Ghosh, Amitav** – *The Imam and the Indian: Prose Pieces* A collection of essays discussing India's postcolonial experiences through literature and history.

The above sources provide both creative and theoretical perspectives on postcolonial identity and literature.

Postcolonial Indian Literature

Postcolonial Indian literature developed in response to the challenges and transformations resulting from colonization and the subsequent struggle for independence. Indian writers, working in both English and regional languages, delve into the socio-political and cultural repercussions of colonial rule. These works reveal the efforts to reclaim identity, resist historical oppression, and articulate the nation's evolving aspirations.

Through their narratives, postcolonial authors address key concerns such as hybrid identities, the trauma of colonization, and ongoing cultural negotiation. Their literature contributes to a larger global discourse that critiques colonial ideologies and highlights the resilience of colonized communities.

Significant Authors and their Contributions

i) Rabindranath Tagore

Tagore's works, *Gitanjali* and *The Home and the World*, explore the themes of spirituality, nationalism, and humanism. He critiques both colonial oppression and rigid nationalist ideologies, envisioning a more inclusive society.

ii) Mulk Raj Anand

Anand's social realist novels, such as *Untouchable*, expose the dehumanizing effects of caste discrimination. His works are powerful

critiques of both colonial and indigenous forms of oppression.

iii) R.K. Narayan

Through his *Malgudi Days*, Narayan portrays the complexities of everyday life in India, often blending humour and subtle social commentary. Novels like *The Guide* reflect the tension between tradition and modernity.

iv) Salman Rushdie

Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* is a seminal text in postcolonial literature. Using magical realism, he allegorically explores India's transition from colonial rule to independence, highlighting the fragmentation of identity.

v) Amitav Ghosh

Ghosh's historical novels, including *The Shadow Lines* focus on interconnected histories across India. His works examine migration, trade, and cultural transformation.

vi) Arundhati Roy

Roy's *The God of Small Things* tackles themes of caste, gender, and trauma through a non-linear narrative structure. Her work challenges traditional storytelling and foregrounds the voices of marginalized characters.

Findings and Results

- The colonialism created the tension between multiple cultural frameworks.
- The writers reclaim the rich culture and heritage with their writings.
- Marginalized groups such as lower castes, tribal communities and women forms the themes of their writings.
- English language helped the writers to communicate their ideas globally.

- v) An urge for nationalism and unity paved way for their significant literary contributions. The writings explore various issues like rigid norms, patriarchal supremacy, caste discrimination, untouchability, social evils, political instability, exploitation and gender inequality.
- vi) The works deals with the issues of colonialism, modernity, and cultural identity.
- vii) It emphasizes on intellectual discourse through indigenous perspectives and philosophies.

Interpretation and Discussion

Writers like Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, and Arundhati Roy depict the characters who struggle for their identity. They challenge the struggles of the post-colonialism. The effort was made to reclaim the lost identities from different perspectives. Their works highlights the importance of giving voice to marginalized groups and depicts the struggles of the oppressed communities. Anand's *Untouchable* and Roy's *The God of Small Things* confront issues of caste, gender, and social injustice. Indian writers embraced English language to reach the global audience and communicate their ideas globally.

Conclusion

Post-colonial literature plays a crucial role in reshaping India's glory. The writers plead for reclaiming their national identity. They voice the characters and deal with the contemporary issues. The attempt to reach the global audience made the writers to adopt English language. The issues are universal in nature and appealed the readers globally.

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STOCKHOLM SYNDROME REFLECTED IN OCTAVIA BUTLER'S *WILD SEED*

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Abstract

Stockholm Syndrome is one of the stock psychological themes in the analysis of novels centred around Slavery. Many researches have been done on the emotional development that develops over time between the victim and the victimizer. African American novelist Octavia Estelle Butler's novels are all centred around the themes of Afrofuturism where the connection to the events of Slavery is direct. The novel taken for analysis is Butler's Wild Seed that tells the story of two immortals Anyanwu and Doro. Anyanwu is the perfect slave of Doro but she is unable to leave him nor hate him. The aim of this paper is to show the reflection of Stockholm Syndrome in Anyanwu's relationship with Doro which is a combination of love and hate in equal parts.

Keywords: wild seed, stockholm syndrome, octavia butler

Stockholm Syndrome was originally defined by psychiatrist Frank Ochberg to aid the management of hostage situations (Ochberg 5). The term came into existence after a failed bank robbery performed by one of the ex-convicts who came out on parole in Stockholm, Sweden. He was negotiating for the release of another inmate, who became his friend during his time in prison. The ex-convict held the members of the bank as hostages for six days. When the hostages were released finally, none of them identified their captor in the court. This was extensively covered in the article "Stockholm Syndrome As Vernacular Resource". Still many people in the psychological field argue about the usage of word 'syndrome' while describing the situation where a hostage feels an emotional connection with their captor. Stockholm syndrome is a "contested illness" due to doubt about the legitimacy of the condition. (Singh 354). It is also known by many names such as 'captor syndrome' and 'the Norrmalmstorg syndrome' where the failed robbery took place. It spirals out even to the form of

love between the captor and the hostage. Anna Freud talked about the Stockholm Syndrome as a kind of defense mechanism where one assumes the identity of another person, becoming a threatening one to mark their own fear. Not only to the kidnapper-hostage situations, psychologists have extended the context of Stockholm Syndrome to the other walks of life such as home, professional space, and even included prostitution.

Components of SHS: SHS is paradoxical because the sympathetic sentiments that captive feel towards their captors. The key Components of SHS: (i) A hostage's development of positive feelings towards the captor and Sympathy for their captors' beliefs and behaviors (ii) No previous relationship between hostage and captor (iii) A refusal by hostages to cooperate with police and other government authorities (iv) Negative feelings toward police or other authority figures (v) A hostage's belief in the humanity of the captor, ceasing to perceive them as a threat, when the

victim holds the same values as the aggressor. (Kumar 3)

M. Namnyak's article, "Stockholm syndrome: Psychiatric diagnosis or urban myth" (2010), C. Jameson's article "The short strip: from love to hypnosis; A reconsideration of the Stockholm syndrome" (2010) examine the credibility of the syndrome in detail. I. McKenzie's paper titled "The Stockholm syndrome revisited: Hostages, Relationships, Prediction, Control and Psychological Science" (2004) and A. Ahmad's paper "Intimate partner violence and psychological distress: Mediating the role of Stockholm syndrome" (2018) extends the milieu to normal situations also. "Stockholm syndrome has never been included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual or DSM mainly due to lack of consistent body of academic research" (Kackar and Juneja 229). Many research have been done to determine the authenticity of Stockholm Syndrome.

Octavia Butler's *Wild Seed* can be analysed through many critical perspectives such as posthumanism, afrofuturism, feminism, gender studies, postcolonialism and critical race theories. One cannot miss the underlying theme of Slavery in the novel. It is a science fiction novel that shows the origin of the immortals of Butler's world. It is a part of the Patternist Series. The novel tells the story of two immortals-Anyanwu and Doro-and their power dynamics. Doro is a spirit, an immortal who has been wandering for about four hundred centuries before meeting Anyanwu. In a scientific term, he is a mutant possessing the ability of transmigration. He takes men's bodies by transferring his soul from one body to another. His ambition is to create a race of immortals; he goes in search of people different like him, whom he calls 'seed' and creates seed villages. His people worship him like their god and are willing to sacrifice their life for him. Few have tried to escape his dictatorship, for he is a cruel master too but that did not end well for them. When he meets

Anyanwu, another immortal who is a shape shifter and a healer, he expects her to treat him the same like others do. Butler portrays the relationship between Doro and Anyanwu as a love-hate relationship.

Anyanwu feels discomfort from the very first moment she meets Doro. "Everything about him made her uneasy" (WS 6). Anyanwu has been living her days off as an Oracle in her village. People fear and respect her. She is also a healer and a shapeshifter. There have been attempts to kill her since people regarded her different and dangerous. But she has come out of it all with her abilities. All that confidence get lost the moment she meets Doro. When a discussion about slavery comes up, Anyanwu recounts to Doro that she herself has escaped being a slave by using her powers. She says, "It is better to be a master than to be a slave" (WS 9).

The only reason that she agrees to accompany Doro is for her children. But later in the novel, she allows Doro to use her children too. This seems to be a contradiction in Anyanwu's behaviour. "She could not recall ever having been threatened so gently-or so effectively" (WS 14). Another reason is her fear of death. After Doro has demonstrated his power in front of her, Anyanwu realises that she is literally a hostage to him. "She followed him dumbly. He could turn from two casual murders and speak to her as though nothing had happened. He was clearly annoyed that he had had to a kill the young man, but annoyance seemed to be all he felt" (WS 38). Even in the ship during their journey, Doro treats her like his partner. When Okoye, Anyanwu's descendant, reconnects with her, he questions about the relationship between her and Doro. She merely answers him that she is "His wife" (WS 57). She suddenly feels loneliness during the long journey; at one point she is ready to end her life but she stops when she hears Doro: "Perhaps no other words could have stopped her. Perhaps no other

voice could have driven away her need to end the terrible solitude so quickly. Perhaps only her own language could have overwhelmed the call of the distant shore" (WS 66). Whenever she questions about her future, her life with him, Doro does not give direct answers at all, but she believes him. "How was it she always believed him?" (WS 34).

Anyanwu at times wonders whether Doro actually likes her. When she gets underwater to explore Dolphins, Isaac, the favourite son of Doro, is the one who gets worried. "His attitude puzzled her. He was not even annoyed. He did not even seem to be as concerned for her as Isaac was, and yet he said he valued her" (WS 89). There are several instances in the novel that shows Doro's disregard for Anyanwu. He treats her like his property, his slave knowing well that she cannot escape anywhere since she has left her native and come with him to a new land.

"You are a powerful woman. You could live in any place I chose" (WS 103). Had Anyanwu suffered same treatment with any of her previous husbands, her reaction would be very different; she would have silenced them with a little show of her power. But with Doro, she is the one who is submissive. She finds herself not to hate him at all. "Yet she made herself womanly for him at night. He never had to ask her to do this. She did it because she wanted to, because in spite of her doubts and fears, he pleased her very much" (WS 32).

When Doro asks her to marry her Isaac, Anyanwu refuses. "You have left your village, Anyanwu, and your town and your land and your people. You are here where I rule. Here, there is only one abomination: disobedience. You will obey" (WS 130). Silently she accepts her fate. She realizes that she has to get away from Doro but she does not know how. "She did not need to be reminded of how dangerous and how demanding Doro could be. Reminders awakened her fear of him, her fear of a future with him. Reminders made her want to forget

the welfare of her children whose freedom she had bought with her servitude. Forget and run!" (WS 111). But the only thing is she is not able to run away from Doro; not that easily. The reason behind her staying with Doro is not only the fear of her death but Anyanwu is also aware that she could not get any other partner like Doro for sure. She has a sort of love-hate relationship with him till the very end of the novel. Isaac acts as a mediator between her and Doro. "She had made herself the nearest thing he had to an enemy. She obeyed. She was civil. But she could hold a grudge as no one Doro had ever known. She was alive because of Isaac" (WS 149).

Nweke, one of his daughters with Anyanwu, is attracted to Doro. This kind of incest is not uncommon in Doro's families since he has not fathered his children in a traditional way. But so far, Doro has kept a safe distance with Anyanwu's daughters. Once he wishes to overstep that boundary and with Nweke literally vying for Doro's attention, it becomes hard on him to avoid her. When Nweke makes move on him: "To his disgust, Doro found himself thinking about Anyanwu. He had always resisted the advances of her daughter before. It had become a habit. Nweke was the last child Doro had coerced Anyanwu into bearing, but Doro had gone on respecting superstitions-not that Anyanwu appreciated the kindness" (WS 161)

Though she is married to Isaac, Anyanwu has never denied Doro's orders of getting a child for him. She is not able to do that and she herself is ashamed about this. At the same time, she is well aware of the fact that Doro is keeping her alive because there is no one like her and he treats her better because she is the only person who could help him achieve his aim.

Certainly, he did not love her. He did not love anyone except perhaps Isaac and a very few of his other children. Yet he wanted Anyanwu to be like his many other women and treat him like

a god in human form, competing for his attention no matter how repugnant his latest body nor even whether he might be looking for a new body. (WS 170)

Anyanwu hates Doro once when she comes to know this; but soon after this a tragedy happens in which both Isaac and Nweke die. Anyanwu finally makes a bold decision and escapes from Doro.

Anyanwu is able to evade Doro for nearly two centuries. Doro is strangely pulled towards Louisiana and that is when he realises that it is the same kind of telepathic pull that he felt when he met Anyanwu the first time. He finds Anyanwu as Edward Warrick, the White plantation owner with his own secrets and strikes a deal with her again. The conditions are the same - she will help him in the creation of his immortal race and he will spare her life. The only difference is, this time when Doro sees her, he does not treat her like a threat. Even Anyanwu is confused by this treatment.

Doro had been glad to see her. He had marveled over the fact that she seemed unchanged - as though he was only now beginning to realize that she was only slightly more likely to die than he was, and not likely at all to grow decrepit with age. As though her immortality had been emotionally unreal to him until now, a fact that he had accepted with only half his mind. (WS 237)

When Anyanwu tries to reason with him, Doro places his argument. He promises her that he will change for her. "You will teach me. . . You seem to have learned a great deal since I saw you last. I've been breeding people nearly all my life and I still don't know why some things work and others don't, or why a thing will work only some of the time even with the same couple. You will teach me" (WS 240). The reason behind Anyanwu's attachment with Doro is revealed when she explains Doro why she needs a family. "Why should I have so many except that I want them and love them? If they were burdens too

heavy for me, they would not be here. You would not be here" (WS 258).

It can be understood that Anyanwu's attachment towards Doro is a reflection of her repressed desires. With other normal humans, Anyanwu hides her real self but with Doro she feels no need to hide what she is. Though she resents obeying Doro's orders to give him what he wants, she realizes that there could be no other possibility for him. If they decide, they can be two immortals who have their existence to while away without any worries. But they both want more-to have children who will be immortals like them. This is the only thing that unites them both and makes Anyanwu view Doro in a different light. The only thing that bothers her is Doro's unwanted killings.

...even when I hated you, I believed in what you were trying to do. I believed that we should have people more like ourselves, that we should not be alone. You had much less trouble with me than you could have because I believed that. I learned to turn my head and ignore the things you did to people. But, Doro, I could not ignore everything. You kill your best servants, people who obey you even when it means suffering for them. Killing gives you too much pleasure. Far too much. (WS 293)

She gets tired at one point and decides to end her life. But when Doro promises to change, she gives him one last chance out of love for him. Anyanwu moves to California with her family during the times of Civil War; she changes her name and begins a new life there. Both she and Doro know that they cannot stay away from each other and that they would always love each other. Thus by the above analysis of the novel, it is understood that Anyanwu is a victim of Stockholm Syndrome in her relationship with Doro.

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CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND EDUCATION

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Abstract

Critical pedagogy is an educational philosophy that emerged from critical theory, primarily associated with Paulo Freire. It emphasizes the need for students and teachers to challenge power structures and societal norms, fostering a more equitable and socially just learning environment. This concept refers to the process of developing a critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action. It highlights the need to address issues of inequality, discrimination, and injustice, especially for marginalized groups. Education in Critical Pedagogy is viewed as a dialogical process where teachers and students engage in mutual learning, fostering respect and understanding. Critical pedagogy aims to empower students by enabling them to recognize and challenge dominant power structures and injustices in society. It provides students with the anatomy of education, where they have the power to choose topics and projects. Classrooms should be structured to promote student voice and choice, fostering a sense of agency and responsibility among learners. This hierarchical nature of the traditional Indian classroom can be reformed through Critical Pedagogy. The dialogic approach, where teachers and students engage as co-learners, will help to break down rigid teacher-student power imbalances. In implementing Critical Pedagogy in India, the main goal is to train teachers to encourage students to question and challenge dominant narratives and ideologies. Critical Pedagogy breaks down barriers to education and provides historically underserved students with opportunities to succeed.

Keywords: *critical pedagogy, paulo freire, traditional education vs. critical pedagogy, empowerment, participatory learning, curriculum reform, dialogical approach, critical consciousness*

Introduction

Critical Pedagogy is an educational philosophy designed to challenge and transform conventional power dynamics in the classroom. This approach emphasizes social justice, equity, and the cultivation of critical thinking skills among students. Paulo Freire, a Brazilian Educator and Philosopher paved the way to the idea the Critical Pedagogy. According to him, his idea encourages students to question and analyze the world around them, rather than passively receiving information, including social, cultural, and political structures.

History of Critical Pedagogy

Paulo Freire is widely regarded as the father of Critical Pedagogy. His ideas from the book Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) which he authored challenged traditional methods of teaching and learning. His innovative ideas called for a shift in

how education operates. His ideas brought a significant change to the power dynamics. Freire's experience working with poor, rural communities in Brazil, teaching literacy to adults made him realize that teaching effectively, doesn't mean simply teaching people to read and write; rather, education had to be deeply connected to their experiences and needs.

Teaching adults in Brazil led Freire to question the conventional educational systems. He recognized that the meaning of 'education' in these communities extended beyond merely imparting knowledge. The most needed was 'empowering individuals to critically engage with the world'. He found that through 'dialogue and active engagement' in the classroom, students could reflect on their personal and collective experiences; comprehend the social and political forces impacting their lives, and take action to improve their circumstances.

Freire's initial pedagogical approach was rooted in Marxist concepts, particularly those centered on social justice and liberation from oppression. However, his later ideas took shape by his commitment to humanism and the belief in the inherent dignity of individuals. In the journey of creating the Critical Pedagogy, he was also inspired by the works of other philosophers and educators, like Antonio Gramsci and John Dewey. Yet, his own experiences working with disenfranchised populations provided him with a unique perspective on the transformative power of education.

Freire's concept of Critical Pedagogy was considered revolutionary because it redefined the roles of teachers and students. Instead of the teacher being the sole authority and the student being a passive recipient of knowledge, Critical Pedagogy views both as co-creators in the learning process. By promoting dialogue, fostering critical reflection, and addressing issues of power and social justice in the classroom, Freire believed education could become a crucial tool for the liberation and empowerment of individuals and communities.

Key Ideas of Freire's Critical Pedagogy

Freire's Critical Pedagogy has five key ideas. The Banking Model of Education, Problem-Posing Education, Consciousness-Raising (Conscientização), Dialogue and Humanization, Liberation, and Social Justice.

Criticizing the conventional educational systems Freire states that the Banking Model of Education works like teachers depositing the information and students remain passive while receiving the information. Freire always believed that education should be dynamic, interactive, and focused on real-world issues that impact students' lives. He advocated teachers follow Problem-Posing Education where both the teacher and student engage in a dialogue analyzing the work around

them. Another core concept in Freire's pedagogy Consciousness-Raising enables students to develop a deeper understanding of reality ultimately leading to empowerment and social change.

Freire constantly highlights the importance of dialogue in education. He believed that the process of dialogue is central to humanizing education. His idea of Dialogue and Humanization stresses even more on making students an active subject of knowledge rather than mere objects of instruction. Another idea he firmly believed in was education should be a tool for liberation. In his idea of Liberation and Social Justice, he emphasizes engaging students in critical thinking and reflection.

Key principles of Critical Pedagogy

Empowerment: By empowering the students to become active participants in the learning process, they are introduced to tools that challenge existing systems and norms.

Dialogic Learning: Education can be a two-way conversation rather than a one-way transmission of knowledge. Teachers and students engage in dialogue, sharing knowledge, experiences, and perspectives.

Social Justice: Critical Pedagogy highlights the need to address issues of inequality, discrimination, and injustice, especially for marginalized groups.

Critical Thinking: Students are encouraged to question dominant narratives, critically evaluate information, and understand the complexities of issues, rather than simply memorizing facts.

Transformation: It aims not only to educate but to empower individuals to act and bring about social change in their communities and beyond.

Simple and initial ways to incorporate Critical Pedagogy into Teaching

Initial Steps for Implementation:

By making small modifications in the curriculum by integrating local, social justice-oriented content and promoting discussions on social issues in the classroom. Training teachers in the approach of slowly letting go of conventional methods of teaching and taking up a new method that is much more student-oriented. Students should be encouraged in decision-making about classroom topics, projects, and learning goals. More in-depth ways include,

1. Foster Dialogue, Not Lectures

Moving away from one-way communication teachers encourage conversation and interaction in the classroom. Creating space for open discussions where everyone's voice is valued.

Using open-ended questions invokes the ability to think critically in students and share their own perspectives.

Example: Questions like, "What do you think about this issue?" or "How does this relate to your own experiences?"

2. Make Learning Relevant

Connecting lessons to students' lived experiences. Bringing in real-world issues, problems, and current events that might matter to them. This makes learning more meaningful and empowers them to see how education relates to the world.

Example: In history class, instead of focusing only on dates, explore how historical events impact students' communities today.

3. Encourage Critical Thinking

Challenging students to question information. Encouraging them to analyze, critique, and look beyond surface-level facts. Asking them to consider different viewpoints and power structures.

Example: After presenting a text or media, ask, "Who is telling this story? What perspectives are missing?"

4. Create a Safe and Inclusive Space

Acknowledging diverse voices and experiences. Making sure all students feel valued and heard, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. Promoting an atmosphere of respect, where students can express their opinions without fear of judgment.

Example: Be mindful of diverse viewpoints, and encourage students to share their unique perspectives.

5. Collaborative Learning

Encouraging group work and collaboration rather than individual tasks, where students can learn from each other and collectively solve problems.

Example: Have students work together on group projects.

6. Use Problem-Posing Techniques

Encouraging students to think about problems rather than just memorize facts. Instead of straight answers, presenting students with a problem or situation to analyze and solve.

Example: Pose a scenario or dilemma and ask students to discuss how they would address it.

7. Empower Student Choice and Voice

Anatomy

Example: Let students choose a research topic related to social justice or issues in their community that they care about.

8. Reflect and Self-Assess

Providing opportunities for self-assessment and group reflection on what they have learned and how they can apply it in their lives.

Example: Ask students to write a reflective journal or participate in group discussions about what they've learned and how it connects to their personal experiences.

9. Incorporate Diverse Perspectives

Ensuring that materials and resources reflect a range of voices and perspectives. Choose texts, media, and resources that highlight marginalized groups, social justice movements, and alternative viewpoints.

Example: Include authors, artists, and historical figures from diverse backgrounds in the materials you assign, particularly those who have challenged oppressive systems.

There might be some challenges while trying to change the conventional teaching methods because resistance to change from traditional educational practices may be deeply entrenched, and there might be resistance from administrators, teachers, or even parents. Critical Pedagogy will come with a huge challenge to the Indian educational system because of large sized classes. In some areas, there may be insufficient resources to fully implement the ideas of Critical Pedagogy, particularly in underfunded schools.

Implementation of Critical Pedagogy in the Indian Educational System

1. Challenging Traditional Power Dynamics

Indian Educational Systems strictly follow the traditional classroom method to teach students. Often the teacher takes up the sole authority and students are passive recipients of knowledge. This hierarchical nature of the traditional Indian classroom can be reformed through Critical Pedagogy. The dialogic approach, where teachers and students engage as co-learners, will help break down rigid teacher-student power imbalances. This is particularly important in a society where many

students have not been encouraged to voice their opinions or question authority.

2. Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity

India is a diverse country with a wide range of languages, religions, cultures, and traditions. Critical Pedagogy's focus can help students understand diversity and foster respect for different communities. Teachers can use Critical Pedagogy to bring attention to issues like caste discrimination, gender inequality, and religious intolerance, helping students see the structural forces at play in society.

3. Encouraging Language and Cultural Relevance

India's educational system has been dominated by English. Even though many students' first language may be a regional language, English plays a very critical role in education. Critical Pedagogy stresses localizing education using culturally relevant materials. This can make education more accessible for a wider range of students. Bringing indigenous knowledge systems, folk traditions, local histories, and community-based learning, will help students connect better with the content.

4. Empowering Teachers and Students

In India, teachers are often put under a lot of pressure to follow rigid curriculums. Critical Pedagogy promotes the idea that teachers should also be learners. Teachers are encouraged to reflect critically on their teaching methods and adapt to students' needs. This approach encourages teacher autonomy and creativity thus setting up a lively learning experience. It also challenges students to take responsibility for their own learning, moving away from rote memorization of texts.

5. Global Relevance in the Age of Globalization

As India becomes more integrated into the global economy, Critical Pedagogy can help students

critically assess global issues. Critical Pedagogy will help students learn more about capitalism, global inequality, and the impact of technology on society. Aim of Critical Pedagogy is encouraging students to think more globally while remaining grounded in their local context, fostering global citizenship without losing sight of local struggles.

Training teachers to incorporate Critical Pedagogy in teaching

The main goal of training teachers to understand how Critical Pedagogy works is to allow teachers to experience the learning process from a student's perspective, deepening their understanding of Critical Pedagogy.

1. Workshops on Critical Pedagogy Concepts

Introduction to the Basics: Short, focused workshops that explain the core ideas of Critical Pedagogy- dialogic learning, social justice, and empowering students. Encouraging teachers to discuss their thoughts and experiences in the workshop.

Interactive and Student-Centered Training: Using teaching methods that reflect the principles of Critical Pedagogy - interactive discussions, problem-solving activities, and group projects.

Discussing Real-World Problems: Discussing real-world scenarios in training exercises. Encouraging teachers to solve problems and discuss issues that align with social justice or community-based challenges.

Provide Practical Tools and Resources: Lesson plans, teaching guides, and literature that aligns with Critical Pedagogy.

Online Resources: Creating platforms or forums where teachers can discuss Critical Pedagogy, share ideas, and find resources. Platforms like social media groups, blogs, or online workshops.

2. Modeling Critical Pedagogy in Action

Demonstration: Organizing demonstration lessons where experienced trainers or peer teachers model the use of Critical Pedagogy techniques in real teaching scenarios. Highlighting and discussing how to engage students in dialogue, facilitate group discussions, and foster critical thinking.

Reflective Teaching: At the end of the demonstration, engage teachers in a reflective discussion about what worked well and how they can use similar methods in their own classrooms.

3. Create a Safe and Reflective Space for Teachers

Creating opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice regularly, either through journals or group discussions. Reflection helps in identifying what is working, where they need improvement, and how they can adapt their teaching to be more critical and inclusive. Just as Critical Pedagogy emphasizes dialogue in the classroom, the same can be applied to teacher training. Encourage open dialogue between teachers to share insights, challenges, and successes.

4. Student Feedback

Teachers can regularly gather feedback from their students about the learning experience via anonymous surveys, class discussions, or reflection journals. Teachers can use this feedback to assess whether students feel heard, empowered, and engaged in the learning process.

5. Focus on Practical Challenges and Support

Addressing Real Challenges: large class sizes, rigid curriculums, and/or time constraints. Try practical solutions or alternative strategies that can work within these limitations. Offer ongoing mentorship and support to teachers as they begin implementing Critical Pedagogy. This could involve regular check-

ins, additional training sessions, or a peer support system.

6. Small, Manageable Steps

Encouraging teachers to start with one or two elements of Critical Pedagogy, for example introducing more student-centered activities or incorporating a critical thinking question into each lesson. Once they become comfortable, they can expand and deepen their use of Critical Pedagogy. Recognition and celebrating teachers' efforts and successes in applying Critical Pedagogy can help teachers build momentum and encourage continued growth.

Gain from Critical Pedagogy

As discussed earlier Critical Pedagogy benefits both students and teachers. May be more beneficial to students in the following ways:

- Critical Pedagogy benefits students from marginalized backgrounds. Students who get caught within the lower socio-economic statuses, caste minorities, indigenous communities, and those facing discrimination based on gender, religion, or disability recognize and challenge systemic inequalities, analyze their social and political realities, and find their voice to advocate for social change.
- Critical Pedagogy breaks down barriers to education and provides historically underserved students with opportunities to succeed.
- Critical Pedagogy addresses the unengaging feeling many students might develop under traditional education, by emphasizing dialogue and student-centered learning. This approach is particularly beneficial for creative, non-traditional learners who may struggle in environments focused on memorization and one-way instruction.
- Critical Pedagogy equips students with the tools to understand power dynamics, recognize

injustice and oppression, and develop critical thinking skills to challenge oppressive systems in areas like politics, media, and the workplace.

- Critical Pedagogy promotes understanding and appreciation of diversity by validating students' cultural identities and experiences, ensuring everyone feels represented. This approach helps students gain a broader understanding of the world while developing empathy and cross-cultural skills.
- Critical Pedagogy benefits society by producing active graduates, and informed citizens motivated to address social issues and injustice. Over time, increased exposure to Critical Pedagogy can lead to greater social cohesion, reduced inequality, and a more engaged citizenry.

Lastly, teachers also benefit from Critical Pedagogy by reflecting on their own practices, and roles in perpetuating inequalities. It encourages them to adopt student-centered, inclusive teaching methods that engage all learners to greater job satisfaction as they see their students become empowered. The approach also inspires teachers to be more creative and reflective, fostering stronger connections with their students.

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PATHOS OF THE JEWS IN *BABI YAR*

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Abstract

Mykola Bazhan wrote a poem called *Babi Yar* in the year 1943. Bazhan was nominated for the 1970 Nobel Prize in Literature. The communist party forced him to decline the nomination. In 1961, Yevgeny Yevtushenko published his poem *Babi Yar* in a leading Russian periodical in part to protest the Soviet Union's refusal to recognize *Babi Yar* as a Holocaust site. The anniversary of the massacre had been observed in the context of the Great Patriotic War throughout 1950's and 1960's; the code of silence about what it meant for the Jews was broken only in 1961, with the publication of Yevtushenko's *Babi Yar*. (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org>). This poem highlights the inarticulate pathos of the Jewish victims.

Introduction

He traces the impassivity to what he believed *Babi Yar* really stood for essentially a site for racial genocide of an anti-semitic carnage. Yevtushenko clearly implies that the indifference was as endemic to Soviet Union Society as it had been to pre-revolutionary Russia (<https://the.wire.in/history>). Nearly 33,000 Jews were murdered by the Nazis. Adolf Hitler who was the ruler of Germany in 1933, formed the Nazi party. The Nazi regime deported and exterminated millions of Jews and others considered undesirable.

In modern criticism investigation of a writer's social origins and of the effect which social factors had on his work, has been at least as common as psychological studies of a writer's state of mind, and the two have often gone together. In each case a generic approach is involved, a consideration of the work in terms of its origins, whether individual or social or both. (David, Daiches, 351).

Analysis

A sociologist is a non-specialist humanist, and as such is concerned with relating the specialized studies of the sociologist to man's status and needs as man. He may for example interpret sociological data ethically and approve of those social institutions which turn aggressive instincts into other channels

or which help to increase the sense of responsibility shown by members of a community to each other while disapproving of institutions serving a contrary function. (p.351)

Racism is prejudice or hostility towards a person's race, colour, language, nationality or national or ethnic origin. While some communities are particularly vulnerable, any ethnic group can be a target of racism. (www.google.co.in). According to the Racial classification made by Carleton. S. Coon in 1962, the world population can be divided into four major races namely White/Caucasian. Mongoloid/ Asian, Negroid or Black and Australoid. Human races are mere social constructs based on the physical traits.

For centuries Jews were persecuted as a religious minority. In the modern era, anti-semitism has emerged as a political ideology that claims Jews control the world and are to be blamed and its collaborators for phenomena such as capitalism and Communism. Anti-semitism including the belief that Jews are racially inferior was the driving force behind holocaust (<https://hatecrime.osce.org>). Adolf Hitler, the ruler of Germany had an animosity towards Jews to such an extent that he wanted to wipe them out completely. The term 'holocaust' in Hebrew language meant genocide of the European Jews during the Second World War.

Yevtushenko was only eight years old when the massacre at Babi Yaar happened. Nazi party and its collaborators murdered nearly 6 million Jews across German occupied Europe and two-thirds of European's Jewish population. A shock awaited the whole world while Russia stood a silent witness for the massacre of nearly 36000 Jews during a 36 hours period on September 29 and September 30 on 1943. The killing was so cruel and it was called concentration camps when a poisonous gas nearly evacuated all the Jews. Babi Yar became the symbol of Holocaust. It also remained a site of execution for Soviet prisoners of War.

Even after 25 years of execution Soviet Union barely acknowledged Babi Yar. No Memorials were constructed on the behalf of the deceased victims. Hence the poet gives a clarion call to the government of Soviet Union to build a memorial. One may consider this useless but monuments serve as tangible reminders of historical events and figures helping to preserve our cultural heritage for our future generation. "Monuments have the power to inspire us, to remind us of our shared humanity and the values that bind us together as a society. Monuments are also designed to convey historical or political potency. They can be used for reinforcement". (<https://whiteneymonument.com>)

The very first line of the poem announces:

"No monument stands over Babi Yar
Only coarse earth heaped roughly
On the gush"

This very line makes the readers to understand the importance of the memorial.

His national feelings as a true Russian offends him. He really feels bad that his country had become a witness "O Russia of my heart, I know that you are international by inner nature. But often those whose hands are steeped in filth abused your purest name in the name of hatred". He was really angered by the reluctance of the authorities to build a memorial for the victims at Babi Yar. The poem was widely

acknowledged as a criticism of anti-semitism and against all kinds of violence in the cover of racism.

"I feel my hair changing shade to grey"-This particular line in the poem highlights the sheer indifference of Soviet Union towards the genocide. Many Ukrainian citizens were made to witness the holocaust through the pressure of the politics. Even the children were the live witness according to Yevgeny Yevtushenko as they too watched this banal genocide through their attic windows. "Wild grasses rustle over Babi Yar"-This line indicates that everyone except the wild grasses were silenced. The grasses expressed their agony through the rustling sound wrote Yevtushenko. "The trees look sternly as if passing judgement..."-The trees are supposed to meant a symbol of growth and progress had become a witness of this genocide and is ready to pass its judgement against the Nazis. One cannot escape the witness of Nature.

"It seems to me I am Anna Frank, transparent as the thinnest branch in April"-Anne Frank wrote a diary during the second world war about the people's threat over their lives and their struggle to escape. Yevtushenko identifies his own self with Anne Frank. He also records the genocide so many years later. His writings are very transparent that nothing could hide his feelings of empathy towards the suffering of Jews. "I'm in love, and have no need of phrases, but only that we gaze into each other's eyes". He visualizes himself as one of the victims whose love satisfied with their gazes and embrace without a word to be talked.

The association of the poet with the sufferings of Jews is applaudable. He associates himself with Alfred Dreyfus, a 35 years old French artillery officer of Jewish descent was wrongfully convicted of treason for communicating French military secrets to the German Embassy in Paris. He was prosecuted. Thereafter the term 'Dreyfus Affair' came to be in use to symbolize modern injustice in the Francophone world (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>). He

also associates himself with the group of immigrants from Greece known for their biblical conflict with the peoples of the Israelites. They were suppressed by other groups and they were no longer a distinct group in Israel. But the term Philistine is a derogatory remark that they are boorish and barbarian.

Yevtushenko highlights that Jews were illtreated in the history. "Squealing, dainty ladies in flounced Brussels lace stick their parasols into my face"-the line emphasizes the authority of the rich ladies belonging to the superior race. Parasols are umbrellas with sharp edges and the edges are hit against the Jews.

"A boot kicks me aside, helpless.

In vain I plead with these pogrom bullies.

While they jeer and shout,

Beat the Yids, Save Russia

Some grain-marketer beats up my mother"

Pogroms were the concentration camps of the Nazis. They murdered the Jews in a cruel manner. Their racial animosity did not consider the age and the gender of the Jewish victims. Yevtushenko considers himself a victim. He associates himself with the every child and every old man who are voiceless of their suffering. Only he could give a

soundless scream against the thousands and thousands of people who were buried in Babi Yar. He feels ashamed how Russia can proudly call itself a Union of the Russian people when they showed a ray of indifference to the massacre of Jews.

He admits that he is a true Russian and there is no element of Jewish blood in him. "In their callous rage, all anti Semites must hate me now as a Jew". He also readily accepts the criticism that can put forth against him as he had extended a full hand support to the Jewish race and have voiced out the holocaust and the need for a memorial for the deceased victims. This poem reverberates in the minds of the readers to empathize the suffering on the basis of racism and ethnicity.

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TRADITION AND CULTURE IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH: MAMANG DAI'S *THE LEGENDS OF PENSAM*

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Abstract

North-East India is a region rich in cultural heritage, inhabited by diverse ethnic groups, each with unique traditions and customs. The breathtaking landscape of this region adds to its mystique, making it a subject of fascination for contemporary writers. These writers aim to provide a broader perspective beyond the commonly perceived cultural narratives, offering insights into the intricate cultural memory, craftsmanship, and lifestyle of the indigenous communities. In her novel, *The Legends of Pensam*, Mamang Dai offers a profound exploration of the ecology, traditions, and history of Arunachal Pradesh, often referred to as the land of dawn-lit mountains. The term 'Pensam' in the title signifies 'in-between', suggesting the hidden, unexplored aspects of life and the human heart. It symbolizes a world where the ordinary and the extraordinary coexist, where possibilities remain open, and where life flows seamlessly between the known and the unknown. Rooted in animistic faith, the tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh believe in a harmonious existence with nature, acknowledging the presence of spirits in their forests and rivers. This paper seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cultural dynamics of the Arunachali people, with a special focus on *The Legends of Pensam* by Mamang Dai, highlighting how tradition and modernity intersect in their everyday lives.

Keywords: ecology, peasant, cultural memory, modernity, ethnic channel.

Northeast India is a region of breathtaking landscapes, home to diverse ethnic communities with rich cultural heritage. Despite its complex political climate and the convergence of various indigenous groups, the region has emerged with a distinct literary voice that sets it apart from the rest of India. More than just a geographical entity, Northeast India represents a dynamic cultural and linguistic landscape diverse, vibrant, and multifaceted. Its integrated mix of ethnic and religious communities follows unique beliefs and customs, contributing to the region's rich cultural tapestry. Arunachal Pradesh, with its towering mountains, mist-covered slopes, and silent rivers

weaving through the valleys, is a land rich in legends, sacred spirits, and cultural heritage. The landscape, infused with mystery and grace, creates an atmosphere both captivating and intense. Mamang Dai, a prominent voice from Arunachal Pradesh, provides a rare and intimate glimpse into the region's ecology, traditions, and tribal life. Through her novel *The Legends of Pensam*, she weaves together history, myth, and personal narratives, capturing the essence of The Land of the Dawn-Lit Mountains with remarkable depth and sensitivity.

Mamang Dai's literary world is a tapestry woven with the myths, landscapes, and cultural memories

of Arunachal Pradesh. Her deep-rooted connection to her homeland is reflected in her evocative storytelling, where rivers, mountains, forests, and villages become living entities (Sanjoy 32). Born in Pasighat, East Siang District, she stands as a proud representative of her people, bringing their traditions and histories to the forefront of contemporary literature. As one of the most influential feminist writers of recent times, her language is rich with imagination and poetic intensity. Through her work, she not only preserves the essence of her land but also portrays the depth of human emotions, love, and the enduring power of myth and memory. Mamang Dai's works are marked by originality in both content and style, establishing her as an internationally renowned poet, short story writer, and novelist. She holds the distinction of being the first woman from Arunachal Pradesh to be selected for the Indian Administrative Service. However, she chose to leave behind a prestigious career to dedicate herself to writing and art, forging a path few dared to take. In 2011, she became the first from Arunachal Pradesh to receive the Padma Shri Award for Literature and Education, a recognition that has helped foster a thriving literary culture in the state.

Tradition and sacred customs hold deep significance for the people of Arunachal Pradesh, shaping their way of life and spiritual beliefs. They honour these age-old practices, believing that abandoning them would disrupt their faith and identity. Among the Apa Tani community, a once-prevalent custom involved intricate facial markings and the placement of bamboo-root ornaments in the nose. For many tribes, body art symbolizes bravery and aesthetic appeal, carrying a strong connection to ancestral myths. It is believed that these markings serve as identifiers, allowing individuals to reunite with their loved ones in the afterlife (Dai 43). In Arunachal Pradesh, women take immense pride in the tradition of tattooing and

wearing bamboo-root nose plugs, viewing these practices as both a cultural ritual and a customary form of beauty. The tribes are governed by a highly organized village council, which oversees social relations, moral standards, kinship, and group activities. This council, composed of respected elders, acts as a tribunal, resolving disputes according to customary laws. Women play a crucial role in these councils, chosen for their knowledge, integrity, and oratory skills. Each discussion is treated with great care, with every word carefully considered and weighed. Justice is pursued through the thoughtful power of speech. However, modern legal systems have brought changes to the tribes' social and political frameworks. A core cultural value in Arunachal Pradesh is the deep reverence for ancestors, which shapes their traditions, rituals, and sense of identity. "The spirits of our ancestors who dwelt in these high and sacred places fell with the trees. They were homeless and so they went away, and everything had changed since then. The canopy of shelter and tradition had fallen. The wind and the sun burned our faces" (Legends 42). This reflects the deep cultural connection between the people and their ancestors, who are believed to reside in sacred natural places. The fall of the trees symbolizes a loss of spiritual and cultural shelter, as traditional ways are disrupted. The harshness of the wind and sun suggests the painful consequences of this disconnection, highlighting the struggle and displacement that arises when ancestral ties and the natural world are threatened.

Mamang Dai's *The Legends of Pensam* weaves a complex tapestry of stories that delve into the hidden dimensions of life, blending myth, history, tribal beliefs, and customs of the Adis, also known as the Hill People. The term 'Pensam' in the title signifies both 'in-between' and the concealed spaces of the heart. The Adis, one of the twenty-six major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, formerly known as NEFA, inhabit the foothills of the Himalayas and

share borders with Bhutan, China, and Myanmar. Rooted in animistic beliefs, the Adis view their existence as intertwined with the natural world, where the spirit flows through the forests, rivers, and valleys, guiding their path. In *The Legends of Pensam*, Mamang Dai presents 'pensam' as a space between myth and reality, shaping the Adis' lives and symbolizing a shift from traditional to modern lifestyles. She implies that within this world of beliefs, the boundaries of possibility are fluid, and all experiences are within reach. The novel opens with the tale of Hoxo, a boy who descends from the sky and is carried by a Luter to his village, setting the stage for a narrative where the mystical and the real coexist seamlessly. Luter and his companion had been recruited for a large road construction project by the migluns (the British), across the Siang Valley. After three years, they return, bringing with them a basket containing the child. Luter's friend informs the villagers about the mysterious arrival of the child. "...a blazing sun that spun earthwards and exploded in a bust of red fire, blinding him with blood and ash, and that was why he thought maybe his eyes had been shut tight, as though he preferred the darkness so that terrifying light" (Legends 7). The blinding sensation of blood and ash causes the character to feel as though his eyes are closed, possibly as a way to escape the terrifying brightness, choosing darkness over the overwhelming light. It conveys a sense of fear and helplessness in the face of something uncontrollable.

The narrative weaves together a variety of themes, including tribal customs, folk beliefs, the relationship between humans and spirits, the clash between tradition and modernity, and the interplay of memory and truth. Through different tales, the author amplifies the voices of marginalized individuals often overlooked in society. Living amidst the heat and moisture of the Siang Valley, the Adis embrace their circumstances without resistance. In

Hoxo's village, a man named Togum faces a crisis when his son, Kepi, falls ill with a mysterious disease. In response, the village elders gather to speak with Togum, urging him to carry out a special ritual to heal his child.

On the advice of relatives, many rituals were performed...The child did not move during all his time, but he cried yet and slept with his small torso twisted stiff and unmoving. They carried him everywhere. Then someone said that they could think about performing a special ceremony rarely performed these days, in case it was the spirit of a snake that had coiled around the body of their son (Legends 21).

This part reflects the Adi people's belief in the influence of spirits on health. The child's illness leads the family to consider a rare ritual, rooted in the idea that a snake spirit could be causing his condition. This reflects the community's animistic faith, where spiritual forces are thought to affect the physical world, and rituals are vital for healing and restoring balance.

The novel recounts the historical changes in tribal areas with the arrival of the British. Rakut's father, Luter, along with many others, worked under the migrants, who manipulated the elders, making them feel inferior and suppressing their spirit and resolve. "... the White Sahibs were not strangers in the region by then. Since the Arbor Expedition of 1912 after the Komsing Incident, the whole of the Siang Valley had been opened up for exploration and the numerous villages of the frontier hills had been brought under British administrative control" (Legends 90). Following the Komsing Incident, the British solidified their presence, exploring the region and bringing frontier villages under their administrative control, reducing tribal autonomy. The early 20th century was a period of significant turmoil, marked by the killing of Noel Williamson in 1911 by an enraged Adi, highlighting a communication gap between the two groups. This led to many deaths,

and after the Arbor Expedition of 1912, the British administration took control of the entire Siang Valley. One such instance is an elderly man from the Migu clan, who slaughters two women, while another disturbing scene shows Kamur killing his own children, seemingly under some form of trance or spell. These moments emphasize the dark and tragic consequences of the intense emotional and spiritual turmoil experienced by the characters. In one part of the novel, a character named Arsi says, "In my next life I shall be born a bird" (Legends75). It suggests that the character yearns to escape the limitations and struggles of human life, seeking a form of existence that symbolizes liberation, movement, and perhaps a closer connection to nature. This line might also hint at a belief in reincarnation or the idea of life beyond the current one. The severe weather has severely impacted their lives, while their culture has held them captive to these hardships.

The weather torments the people of this region, yet they accept it with resignation. Every peasant feels cursed by the unpredictable weather. In response, Arsi, a character from Dai's narrative, voices her frustration with the anguish of living in a land that seems devoid of destiny. The grief, which is glorified by the elders, reflects the struggles of a land chosen by their ancestors. This land, with its slippery slopes, muddy puddles, constant rain, and moss-covered ground, is where the living remains, exiled from any hope of escape. The tribes in this region feel like outcasts in their own land, burdened by the relentless rain and the constant threat of landslides and floods. Yet, they accept their existence, viewing nature's harshness as an unavoidable reality to endure. "It was a deceptive and deranging season" (Legends 79). The season was unpredictable and unsettling, creating a false sense of stability before sudden changes disrupted daily life. The term deceptive suggests unexpected shifts in weather, while deranging reflects the

confusion and hardship it caused. This period of uncertainty deeply affected both the land and its people. The tribal people place great importance on nature, culture, and relationships, valuing their deep connection to the environment and their traditions.

The relationship between Nenum, a tribal girl, and British Captain David presents an intriguing dynamic. Despite the stark differences in their backgrounds, cultures, and the circumstances of their meeting in the remote hills, they are inexplicably drawn to one another. This connection seems almost impossible, yet it blossoms in an environment far removed from their respective worlds. When they part ways, Nenum reflects on the complexity of their bond, recognizing the deep, unspoken emotions and the mysteries of their connection, suggesting that love can transcend boundaries and defy reason. Nenum said to herself, "No one dies of love. I loved him, and now I am enough of my own" (Legends109). This line reflects a sense of personal strength and independence. Nenum acknowledges her love for Captain David, but she also recognizes that love, while deep and meaningful, does not define or destroy a person. The statement about not dying of love suggests that while love can be intense, it does not consume someone entirely. By saying that she is enough of her own, Nenum emphasizes her resilience and ability to stand alone, highlighting her emotional growth and self-sufficiency despite the complexities of love.

Nenum cherished her land above all else and could not bring herself to leave it for a new world, which led her to sacrifice her love for David. Years later, she accepted her fate and married Kao. The village headman ensured that all the rites were performed according to custom, staying awake day and night to make sure nothing was overlooked, as missing any ritual was believed to bring misfortune. According to Hoxo, "She was like the river, constant, nurturing, self-possessed. Like the river, she was the

soul of our land" (Legends121). This comparison highlights the depth and strength of Nenum's character. Her connection to the land is profound, and she embodies its soul, sustaining and giving life to the people and the culture around her. The river metaphor suggests her vital presence, symbolizing a source of life and continuity in her community. Nenum had once dreamed of building a family and living among her people. She gave birth to Losi, which brought her closer to Kao, and in doing so, she let go of the life she had imagined. However, years later, after a devastating earthquake claimed many lives and destroyed property in the village, Nenum went to bathe in the river. Feeling dizzy, she sat down, gazing at the shimmering trees, and peacefully passed away. "...when a loved one dies, those who mourn should not soil the passage of the soul from one world into another with tears. Those who remember say that it was the village that mourned Nenum's death more than Kao" (Legends128). This passage reflects the cultural belief that the passage of the soul from one world to another should be respected and unhindered by sorrowful emotions like tears. Mourning is seen as a necessary process, but it should not disturb the spiritual journey of the departed. The statement that the village mourned Nenum's death more than Kao suggests that Nenum's connection to her community was so profound that her loss was felt deeply by everyone, and perhaps Kao, as her husband, was more reserved in his grief. Nenum's death affected the entire village, as she was a central figure in their lives, embodying the strength and nurturing spirit of their land.

As the narrative unfolds, a clash arises between the old ways and the new. The arrival of modernity brings challenges like theft and violence, making homes insecure. Stolen resources, including land and electricity, disrupt the community's peace. The

sacredness of the past and the joy that once filled the village seem to be vanishing. Towards the end, Hoxo's friend Rakut says, "We are peripheral people. We are not politicians, scientists, or builders of empires. Not even the well-known citizen or the outrageous one. Just peripheral people, thinking out our thoughts" (Legends190). This passage highlights the sense of being on the margins of society, neither holding power nor recognition. The speaker acknowledges that they are not leaders, innovators, or famous figures but rather ordinary individuals living quietly, observing, and reflecting on life. It emphasizes a humble existence, where their significance lies not in influence or status but in their thoughts and connection to their world.

Mamang Dai, in her novel, weaves history into the cultural fabric of her people, giving them a voice that reaches beyond borders. Writers from Arunachal Pradesh have successfully overcome linguistic barriers to establish a distinct literary identity. Many authors from smaller ethnic communities in Northeast India, whose native languages lack a script or are spoken by only a few, have embraced English as their primary medium of expression.

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IMMIGRANT LIFE AND IDENTITY CRISIS OF ASHIMA GANGULI IN JHUMPA LAHIRI'S *THE NAMESAKE*

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Abstract

In The Namesake, a novel of uncommon elegance and poise, hits many familiar themes; the uneasy status of the immigrant, the tension between family tradition and individual freedom. Jhumpa Lahiri, one of the second generation immigrants in the U.S.A, acknowledged as one of the women writers in Indian English literature for her Indian themes, is a recent new wave literary artist. In her novel, Ashima feels upset and homesick, spatially and emotionally dislocated from her ancestral home. She tends to regard the past with nostalgia and the present American experience as an alienating woman. She is always alone in her house and spends the leisure time in reading Bengali poems, stories and articles. Ashima is always in the memory of her relatives in India. Ashima suffer from a severe identity crisis right from the time she arrives in the U.S. The crisis is further deepened after her childbirth and lonely life with a newborn child. For Ashima the challenges of exile in America, the loneliness, the contrast sense of alienation and longing for a lost world in India are more explicit. She meets the challenges of her disorientation and homesickness by developing ties with Bengalis migrates to America. The Bengali foods create a nostalgic longing for a lost world especially to Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli. Ashima faces Ashoke' death with enormous fortitude. Gogol realises his mistake after losing his father and comes back to his mother understanding her significance before it gets too late. Ashima decides to spend six months in America dividing her time among her son, daughter and her close Bengali friends and the other six months of a year in India staying with her brother. Ashima carves out her own identity which is neither uniquely Indian nor uniquely American but wrongly human making her voyage between the two worlds. True to her name, Ashima will now be without borders, a resident of everywhere and nowhere. Ashima like many first generation Bengali immigrant women is not culturally immunised by American's multicultural milieu.

Jhumpa Lahiri, one of the second generation immigrants in the U.S.A, acknowledged as one of the women writers in Indian English literature for her Indian themes, is a recent new wave literary artist. She has authored the Pulitzer Prize winning collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies: Stories of Bengal, Boston and Beyond* (1999) and the novel,

The Namesake (2003). Being herself an immigrant, she feels the significance of family and how it ties man to his homeland. As a diasporic writer, she deals with multi-cultural society, partly

from 'inside' and partly from 'outside'. Lahiri strives for her nature identity and simultaneously endeavours to evolve a new identity in an adopted Anglo-American cultural landscape.

Lahiri's characters conceive of existence only by grasping their own immediate experiences. In *The Namesake*, a novel of uncommon elegance and poise, hits many familiar themes; the uneasy status of the immigrant, the tension between family tradition and individual freedom. A modest attempt is made in this paper to bring out the conflicts and challenges of Ashima Ganguli

between her Bengali culture and the western tradition. She struggles in an alienated life with her nostalgic memories. *The Namesake* narrates the saga of Ganguli family in Calcutta and Boston. The Gangulis as educated, cultured and elite Calcuttans are the lovers of Russian and English literatures. Ashoke Ganguli is a doctoral candidate in Electrical Engineering at MIT, USA where he is engaged in "earning a Ph.D. in Boston, researching in the field of fibre optics." (NS, 9). The saga of Ganguli family began in the imperial times of pre-independence era. Ashoke's grandfather, former professor of European literature at Calcutta University, used to say, "*Ganguli is a legacy of the British, an anglicized way of pronouncing his real surname, Gangopadhyay*" (NS, 67). Ashoke's career in America made him a prospective groom in Calcutta where the Bhaduri family got attracted to this ambitious Ganguli as "*he was slightly plump, scholarly looking but still youthful with black thick-framed glasses and a sharp, prominent nose. A neatly trimmed mustache connected to a beard that covered only his chin lent him an elegant, vaguely aristocratic air*" (NS, 8).

Ashima Bhaduri is a nineteen year old girl studying in a college to get a degree. She is forced to marry Ashoke Ganguli. She moves eight thousand miles from Calcutta to Cambridge trying to please her husband by cooking his favourites and adjusting with the new life. She is a traditional Bengali woman and her immigrant experience and non-acceptance of the American society are very well projected by Lahiri.

By now she has learnt that her husband likes his food on the salty side, that his favourite thing about the lamb curry is the potatoes and that he likes to finish his dinner with a small helping of ghee and dal. (NS, 10)

In Boston Ashima spent her days in nostalgia

in an apartment because, Ashoke remained busy in his research. Ashima feels upset and homesick, spatially and emotionally dislocated from her ancestral home. She tends to regard the past with nostalgia and the present American experience as an alienating woman. She is always alone in her house and spends the leisure time in reading Bengali poems, stories and articles. Pregnancy was a hard time for her for there was no one to soothe her. Motherhood is a glorious experience for a woman but fear Ashima as an immigrant in a foreign land, loneliness and strange surroundings nearly kill such feelings. Her eighteen months life is in complete alienation.

During the difficult hours of her pregnancy she becomes more isolated. Ashima wishes to talk to the other America women, but she understands.

In spite of their public declaration of affection in public, in spite of their miniskirts and bikinis in spite of their handholding on the street and lying on top of each other on Cambridge common prefer their privacy, (NS, 3)

And if she was in Calcutta, she would have been surrounded by all elderly women to help her out. In Cambridge, she is admitted to Auburn hospital, Cambridge for her first delivery, 'her motherhood in an alien land'. Ashima feels restless being the only Indian in the hospital with three other American women in an adjoining room. She "*is terrified to raise a child in a country where she is related to no one, where she knows so little, where life seems so tentative and spare*" (NS, 6). She realizes that Americans prefer their privacy to public declarations of affections.

Ashima is always in the memory of her relatives in India. After her son's birth, she says to Ashoke, "*I'm saying I don't want to raise Gogol alone in this country. It's not right. I want to go back*" (NS, 33) when Ashoke realizes her agony, he himself feels guilty for bringing Ashima into an alien country. Ashima suffers from a sleep

deprivation in the silent house with a newborn child (Gogol) in the absence of her husband (Ashoke) and visits the supermarket of Cambridge where all Americas are perfect strangers to her. At home, Ashima is disappointed for not receiving mails from Calcutta, and often recalls her paralysed grandmother. Ashima becomes more depressed when he missed India and wants to go back to India after Ashoke's doctorate, but it never happens.

He looks at Ashima, her face leaner, her features shaper than before, as a wife has already taken a toll he has come home from University to find her morose, in bed, rereading her sense that she is quietly crying...but can think of nothing to say. (NS, 33)

Ashima suffer from a severe identity crisis right from the time she arrives in the U.S. The crisis is further deepened after her childbirth and lonely life with a newborn child. The memory of her days in Calcutta creates a terrible sense of rootlessness and loneliness in her. For Ashima, America can never become her 'home' at any point. It is Ashima's life showcases the visible and invisible crevices that exist between the land and culture of her heritage and the social environment of her life in the U.S. Lahiri tried to portray Ashima's 'double consciousness', a consciousness of being an outside in her adopted home and a consciousness which informs her of her uprootedness from her 'homeland'

After six weeks trip to homeland due to the tragic death of Ashima's father caused by heart attack, the family returns to Boston. Ashoke has been hired as an assistant professor at the university; they migrate to a university town outside Boston, a historic district with colonial architecture. For Ashima, this migration is drastic and distressing. Her reaction is very poignant. For Ashima the challenges of exile in America, the

loneliness, the contrast sense of alienation and longing for a lost world in India are more explicit. She meets the challenges of her disorientation and homesickness by developing ties with Bengalis migrates to America.

Ashima tries to create a mini Calcutta in America with the help of her Bengali friends.

During Durga Puja they become nostalgic for Calcutta. On Puja and marriage occasion's women wear Banarasi silk sati, gold jewellery and men wear dhoti and topor, pyjamas.

Ashima trained her son, Gogol to call the elders 'Dada', 'Dadu', 'Mamu' and learns to recognise the photographs of his grandparents and relatives in India. As Ashima is a first generation Bengali immigrant make her children Gogol and Sonia learn Bengali language, literature and history by sending them to special Bengali classes. They are taught about their family lineage, religious customs, rites, beliefs, food mannerisms. Ashima feels fine when her children memories Tagore's poems, names of Hindu deities like Ganesha, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Durga during the puja.

The Bengali foods create a nostalgic longing for a lost world especially to Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli. They cherish their Bengali food as a source of familial happiness and comfort; because, it connects them with their past. Lahiri has paid great attention to the importance of this spicy Indian food in the diasporic scenario. Ashima is living in a new country with no relatives or friends. To make herself feel at home, she prepares food adding spices that makes her feel comfortable. In her new life, in America, where everything is foreign, this food brings her closer to India and lake her feel at home. Ashima keeps herself busy with cooking to fight with her loneliness. The flavour of Indian dishes help her to survive in an alien and hostile environment. Ahima prepares a Bengali snack, Jhalmuri: "*Rice crispies*

and planters peanuts and chopped red onions in a bowl. She adds salt, lemon juice, thin slices of green chilli, pepper, wishing there were mustard oil to pour into the mix.” (NS, 1). The absence of ‘mustard oil’ reminds her of Calcutta where it was easy to find it. The art of cooking, with different variety of spices give birth to multiculturalism. It gives happiness, comfort and solace to the alienated immigrant woman like Ashima by reducing her sense of loss.

Lahiri successfully shows the cultural rift between India and America and suggests the means to bridge this gap through various elements, especially through the conductive mixing of spices and Indian ingredients. In *The Namesake* Ashima uses Ricotta cheese in place of yogurt, while making the popular Bengali sweet, Sandesh. These sorts of experiences haunt Ashima about her homeland. Some five years later Ashima becomes mother of a daughter, Sonia. Ashima tried to adapt many things from American way of life for the sake of her children. Gogol and Sonia. Ashima learns to roast turkey in American style, nails a wreath on the door for Christmas and celebrate it with her children etc. She is a dedicated and loving mother who undergoes severe conflicts of assimilation in adapting the American culture for keeping her children happy.

Gradually with the years going by, Ashima becomes a helpless mother with her children taking different paths in spite of her attempts to give the best upbringing she could afford them. Instead of being crushed down by the change in her children, Ashima emerges out stoically. Ashima faces Ashoke's death with enormous fortitude. Gogol realises his mistake after losing his father and comes back to his mother understanding her significance before it gets too late. Ashima tries to settle her son's marriage with a Bengali immigrant in America, but collapses within a year for no fault of his own. Ashima's daughter, Sonia is of

different cast. Sonia stays with her mother and works as a paralegal, hoping to apply to law schools nearby. She takes care of her widowed mother. Sonia, like Ashima has a sense of duty. Like the traditional Indian woman, Sonia marries her boyfriend—a half Chinese boy, Ben and is happy in their shared world. Ashima is happy with Sonia.

Fortunately they have not considered it their duty to stay married as Bengali. They are not willing to accept, to adjust, to settle for something less than their ideal for happiness. (NS, 276)

Ashima reaches to her equation of spending her life. The flat at Pemberton road is sold and Ashima decides to spend six months in America dividing her time among her son, daughter and her close Bengali friends and the other six months of a year in India staying with her brother. True to her name, Ashima will now be without borders, a resident of everywhere and nowhere. Her ideal world is shattered into pieces: “*Ashima feels lonely suddenly, horribly, permanently alone*” (NS, 278) and sobs for her husband, Ashoke. She missed her life in India for thirty-three years and now she will miss the country in which she had loved her husband. That's why she wants to spend half of the years in U.S, and the next half in India. Ashima decides to move away desperately after the last celebration of Christmas together with her children.

Ashima like many first generation Bengali immigrant women is not culturally immunised by America's multicultural milieu. On the contrary an old-world sentimentality begins deep attachment towards her family, parents and culture of India. What sets Ashima Ganguli apart from the rest of her gender throughout the world is her ability to combine the traditional concept of the divine feminine with the challenges of the western life she faces in America. Basically her struggle in the

alien land begins with first of all trying to get accustomed in the new space rather than the struggle of the other women for power worldwide. Ashima is considered as the embodiment of 'shakthi' which does not mean power but capacity to do the thing well in the destiny's chosen niche for her. After her marriage with Ashoke, Ashima leaves Calcutta to settle in Cambridge, Massachusetts to live with her husband. She feels the pangs of dislocation and the pain of building a new life in a different world. Ashima carves out her own identity which is neither uniquely Indian nor uniquely American but wrongly human making her voyage between the two worlds. Finally an epitome of the new woman, Ashima reaches in reality towards the true meaning of her name 'Ashima' when she decides to be without borders a resident everywhere as well as nowhere according to her choice.

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Abbreviation used in the paper

NS – *The Namesake*

FROM THE MIRAGE OF PROSPERITY TO STARK REALITY: AN EXISTENTIAL READING OF HERNAN DIAZ'S *IN THE DISTANCE*

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Abstract

The existential approach to literature has gained significance in the twentieth century and most particularly in the aftermath of World Wars. The theory encompasses a wide range of concepts such as religion, individual over the law, the Western and alienation. Hernan Diaz, an Argentine- American writer, in his novel In the Distance, talks about the difficulties and hardships faced by people in their day-to-day existence and that too in a new land of America. The hopes and dreams built by the immigrants vanish once the bare reality is faced. This paper studies the existential crises the migrants face in America and how they learn to exist at last.

Keywords: existential, life, freedom, laws,

Migrant

The origin of existentialism is not credited to a particular period of time, as the concepts in it are wide and hence, the difficulty in defining. As early as the nineteenth century, traces of the theory were found scattered in the writings of Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche. In the words of Sartre, a twentieth century proponent of the theory, "man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world and defines himself afterwards. If man, as the existentialists see him, is not definable, it is because he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself" (*Existentialism is a Humanism* 290). The existence of an individual is characterized by his own choice, freedom, responsibility and morality, earning him a self-created identity. It is inevitable that a man's existence is influenced by his life circumstances and day-to-day encounters.

In the Distance by Hernan Diaz narrates the existential struggles of a Swedish emigrant Hakan Soderstorm. The promising and glossy picture of the flourishing West is shattered completely when Hakan, the protagonist, encounters the unforgiving reality. Born in Argentina, Diaz himself is an immigrant in America. He writes the novel to give his voice for the silenced. He himself has admitted that the novel, to some extent, is Western. The term refers to the great western push that America creates due to its evolving as a new and promising nation to all fortune seekers. To Hakan and his brother Linus "the city they were headed for was an abstract talisman to them: 'Nujark'" (17). They believed that life in the city of New York would be better and happy. After missing his brother, Hakan travels many years in search of him towards the East. He is the only person who moves eastwards in

contrary to all the people who travels to the west of America in the pursuit of wealth.

The concept of Western favours the individual over the law in analogy to the existential approach. Diaz's Western is existential. The novel's narration is from Hakan's view point and he as an individual is prioritized. Though he is given the freewill and choice to lead his own life, he feels helpless in the strange land. Diaz reprimands the rotten society that emerges out of volatile human laws. The exorbitant rates fixed by the salesman based on circumstances, exchange of gold for basic amenities such as food are instances to it. Diaz comments, "And yet, despite the corruption and the decay, the miasma brought a sense of life" (140). Diaz also condemns the Western idea that glorifies violence inspite of its well established laws. He remarks, "Most Westerns treat violence with indifference and brash frivolity" (*The Paris Review*). Dominance of the Western regions by cowboys, outlaws, sheriffs pose serious threat to travellers and immigrants.

Hakan has never wilfully defied human laws, but is forced by his circumstances to act to save his life or people's lives. "He recalled a new part of his conscience coming into existence... but what remained most vividly in his mind was the feeling of sorrow and senselessness that came with act: those worth defending were already dead, each of his killings made his struggle for self-preservation less justifiable" (174). He is also charged unwarranted for uncommitted offences. The guilt is unbearable.

The theory of Existentialism is also studied from religious perspective. In the novel, Diaz has made many references to the religious faith of people. The laws of Bible are questioned throughout. Sartre, an atheistic existentialist, insists that 'existence precedes essence' and man's morality is evolved out of his personal experiences rather than any written laws. "The Bible burnt to let fire" (158) is one incident where the ardent followers of Christianity dare to do it to save the life of a child. Human life is

prioritized over the sanctity of the Bible. The Biblical allusion of comparing David's attack on Goliath to the Sheriff arresting Hakan discloses the hypocrisy of how religion is misused to collect money in the name of offerings to God.

The state of being alienated is another notion of existentialism. There were short stints of encounters, otherwise the protagonist continues to be in solitude for the most part of his life. Solitude is a decision made out of choice to stay away for personal reflection or inner peace, whereas alienation is a state where one is pushed to being alone or feels estranged even in a crowd. In the early stages of his life Hakan was alienated but in the later stages, he choose to be solitary. "...he stayed clear of trails and every sign of human presence, but this time it was exhaustion, rather than fear, that moved him. Questions, accusations, threats, verdicts. Talk. He wanted no talk. Without a clear destination and having no purpose other than solitude, it was easier to elude everyone" (268). Humans lose track of time in alienation. As Diaz observed, "A year and an instant are equivalent in a monotonous life" (270). Hakan does not know his age. But his physical changes such as loss of a teeth, informs him of his aging. Once when he sees a mirror, he feels ashamed of his changed looks but later finds it soothing as his old self helps him hide his young life.

In existentialism, travel is seen as a willful choice of the individual to escape from the mundane aspects of lives. It also paves way for self-discovery of the individual. A new term of 'existential migration' coined by Greg Madison in the year 2006 is about the migrants whose choose to travel not just for upward economic and social mobility but because of the individual's choice to leave homeland and become a foreigner.

Hakan travels ceaselessly. Like all migrants, he travels along with his brother from Sweden to seek a better life but later traverses the plains, deserts of western America in search of his lost brother, the

only person he loved and trusted without condition. Even after the passing of years, in the perpetual journey towards the East, he remains the same individual he is. His physical appearances only change due to aging and the exposition of his body to changing climatic conditions. However he comes across different people who shaped his consciousness at various levels. The naturalist Lorimer who gives a new perspective to the science of origin comments "Our highest task is to make out the words to better partake in the ecstasy of existence" (82). Asa, a kind hearted man, risked his own life to save Hakan. Otherwise his journeys are filled with hollowness for most of the time.

There were simply no goals or destinations any more. Not even the desire to die that he had experienced after the most crushing tragedies in his life. He was just something that kept going. Not because it wanted to, but because that was the way it had been built. To keep going with the bare minimum was the line of least resistance. (273)

The purpose of life as far as existentialists are concerned, is to lead an authentic life by proper usage of freedom. In contrary, the notion of absurdity talks about the meaninglessness of life.

The monotony of human lives poses a challenge to evolve a meaning. Choice is seen as a condemnation when the individual does not know what to choose. Life situations make human indecisive that he wants to escape from freedom. Hakan is one such victim. It is because he chooses to be in a comfort zone away from human accusations, interrogations and interruptions. It is only after the death of his love Helen, for the first time in his life, Hakan chooses to decide, to leave Jarvis. Till then he travels with people whoever ask him to be with them. It is towards the end that he decides to travel west to his native Sweden, in the quest for an authentic and peaceful life. Existentialism is about existing the hopeless life situations in a way that is morally and personally definable only by the individual. The study gives a positive view of learning to cope up with the reality.

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THE MAGNIFICENCE OF EMPATHY IN MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL *THE THOUSAND FACES NIGHT* BY GITHA HARIHARAN

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Abstract

This article offers a critical analysis of Githa Hariharan's painting, *The Thousand Faces of Night*, which depicts mother-daughter interactions. The book skilfully explores these exchanges within the larger context of patriarchal Indian society, recognising that empathy can be paradoxical even though it is a powerful and important force. Character development, emotional ties, and cultural transfer are all impacted by the use of empathy in storytelling. Hariharan employs the personas of Devi, her mother Sita, and her grandmother to illustrate the conflict between tradition and modernity. She also demonstrates the intricacy of empathy and how it can bring people together or drive them apart. This article aims to show the different ways empathy occurs in mother-daughter interactions across different cultural contexts by contrasting and comparing Hariharan's portrayal of empathy with other literary works, such as Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. Additionally, the study examines how feminist mythology is reinterpreted in the work, demonstrating how the characters' empathy enables them to meaningfully and powerfully engage with cultural traditions. Furthermore, the detrimental impacts of a lack of empathy are brought to light by Mayamma, a character in the work who represents society's contempt for underprivileged women. The essay explores the broader effects of empathy in female-to-female relationships, emphasising how it serves both to perpetuate entrenched patriarchal ideas and to foster harmony. Ultimately, this article argues that Hariharan's nuanced portrayal of empathy in *The Thousand Faces of Night* compels readers to reconsider the significance of empathy in interpersonal relationships and societal norms, thereby offering a profound analysis of the intricacies of human connection.

Keywords: empathy, mother-daughter relationship, feminist literary analysis, cultural transmission, patriarchal society

Introduction

Githa Hariharan's novel *The Thousand Faces of Night* explores the mother-daughter relationship in great detail while placing it within the larger context of patriarchal Indian society. The novel delves into the complexities of these relationships, highlighting how empathy is a powerful, if sometimes paradoxical, force. Empathy promotes the growth of identity, cultural transmission, and emotional ties, as the book illustrates. This article critically analyses the role of empathy in mother-daughter interactions in *The Thousand Faces of Night* using feminist literary theories and observations from other writers who have written about relevant issues. This

analysis aims to provide insight into the intricate dynamics of empathy in female relationships and its significance within a broader social and cultural framework.

Empathy, a central concept in *The Thousand Faces of Night*, is essential to the emotional and psychological depths of the work. The relationships Devi, the main character, has with her mother Sita and grandmother have a big influence on her. These exchanges are influenced by the norms and expectations of patriarchal culture, yet the characters' empathy allows them to deftly navigate these expectations. Their different experiences and worldviews have led to strained interactions between

Devi and her mother. Sita stands in for the traditional Indian feminine ideals, which emphasise duty, selflessness, and societal compliance. Throughout her time in America, Devi has encountered a variety of cultural perspectives, which has caused her to battle with her mother's expectations. They value empathy greatly as a pair, despite their disagreement. As a woman who has also been compelled to conform to social norms, Sita shows a subtle empathy for Devi's struggles despite her frequent rigidity.

Empathy is a literary element used by Githa Hariharan to delve into the inner lives of her characters. Sita's subtle attempts to support her daughter in overcoming life's challenges reveal her empathy for Devi. However, this empathy is also constrained by Sita's internalised beliefs about the roles that women should play. Sita's sensitivity reflects the tension between tradition and modernity that permeates the entire book and serves to both unite and separate the characters.

The Thousand Faces of Night draws a compelling link between empathy and cultural transmission. Devi's grandmother in particular, who is older than she is, plays a significant role in passing on traditions and cultural values. These values are frequently communicated through stories, especially fables having moral and cultural significance. Through her grandmother's stories, Devi is given cultural identity and moral guidance. The stories are full of references to Hindu gods, goddesses, and customs.

Empathy is a vital element in this cultural transmission process. Given the way the grandmother modifies her stories to suit Devi's circumstances and struggles, it is clear that she loves Devi. These stories are not merely educational tools; they are imbued with the grandmother's own experiences and emotional nuance. Despite her own challenges with her contemporary identity, Devi is

able to forge a better bond with her cultural past through her empathetic narration.

Author Adrienne Rich addresses "matrophobia," or the dread of becoming like one's mother, in her ground-breaking book *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. This concern is often a product of the daughter's struggle to forge her own identity in a patriarchal setting. This issue is illustrated in Hariharan's novel by the way that empathy plays a double-edged role in Devi's connections with her mother and grandmother. She feels more linked to her cultural heritage, even though it highlights the tension between individual independence and social conventions.

The idea of identity exploration is a recurring theme in *The Thousand Faces of Night*, and empathy is crucial to this process. Devi's journey of self-discovery is characterised by her struggles to strike a balance between her own aspirations and aims and her empathy for her mother and grandmother. This internal conflict is a reflection of the difficulties women have in identifying their identities in a patriarchal culture. Sita's empathy for Devi is shaped by the fact that she has successfully navigated the responsibilities of marriage and motherhood. But Sita's ability to empathise is also limited by her belief that traditional roles provide women with the greatest protection. Devi's search for her own identity outside of these traditional roles often creates friction with this idea, even though it originates from Sita's desire to keep Devi safe.

Devi's struggle for recognition can be seen as an attempt to negotiate her mother's empathy. Because of her empathy, she is unable to completely reject her mother's values, which leads to an internal conflict where she must balance her need for autonomy with her love and respect for her mother. This conflict makes me think of Carol Gilligan's theories in *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, where she argues that women's moral assessments

are often influenced by a caring ethic that prioritises relationships and obligations over individual liberty. The way empathy shapes Devi's decisions and sense of self in Hariharan's novel serves as an example of this caring ethic.

By comparing Hariharan's narrative to other literary works that address similar issues, one can better understand the empathy in mother-daughter relationships that the story illustrates. One novel that addresses the complex and often painful bond between mothers and daughters is Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. According to *Beloved*, empathy has the capacity to create connections as well as cause them to break down. Because of her intense empathy for her daughter Beloved, Sethe kills her in order to shield her from the horrors of slavery. Because of this act, which was driven by a distorted sense of empathy, Sethe and her surviving daughter, Denver, will experience severe psychological and emotional consequences.

Morrison and Hariharan depict empathy in rather different ways. *Beloved* calls attention to the potentially harmful effects of empathy when it is driven by fear or pain, even if both pieces highlight the strong emotional bonds between mothers and daughters. In *The Thousand Faces of Night*, on the other hand, empathy is examined as a more ambiguous force that, depending on the situation, can both empower and confine.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan, which examines the connections between Chinese-American daughters and their immigrant mothers, is another work that might be likened. Like Hariharan's novel, *The Joy Luck Club* explores how empathy helps mothers and daughters cross cultural and generational differences. Tan stresses how empathy may foster understanding and healing despite obvious cultural differences in her portrayal of the trait. Though Tan's story tends to be more about acceptance and reconciliation, Hariharan's novel dives further into a more complex and frequently

unresolved confrontation between tradition and modernity. Both stories rely largely on empathy in the negotiation of identity and the transfer of cultural values.

The comparative analysis of these works highlights the diverse ways that empathy acts in mother-daughter interactions across different cultural contexts. These tales are connected by the theme of empathy as a means of connection, conflict, and cultural transmission-despite the fact that the protagonists' individual struggles may differ.

One of the most compelling aspects of *The Thousand Faces of Night* is how it examines and reframes mother-daughter relationships through the lens of mythology. Hariharan draws a great deal of inspiration from Indian mythology, particularly stories about goddesses and heroines, and incorporates these intricate cultural references into the decisions and lives of her characters. Empathy is crucial in this mythological retelling because it allows the characters to connect with these ancient stories on a deeply intimate level.

The grandmother not only imparts moral lessons but also helps Devi overcome her personal struggles by telling stories about goddesses like Parvathi and Sita. This demonstrates compassion for Devi. Devi sees these mythological figures as role models because they are strong, resilient, and selfless. However, the grandmother's own experiences and the limitations imposed by her cultural background also shape this empathy. As a result, the tales she tells usually reinforce gender stereotypes while simultaneously giving Devi distinct forms of empowerment.

There is a link between the greater feminist project of recovering and rewriting heritage stories and Hariharan's feminist retelling of mythology. In *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*, Mary Daly discusses this subject and points out that rewriting myth and history is a necessary first step in overthrowing patriarchal

structures and creating new, women-empowering narratives. Empathy is the medium via which these new narratives are produced in *The Thousand Faces of Night*, allowing the characters to perceive themselves as active producers of their own stories instead of as passive objects of societal convention.

Devi is a perfect example of this rewriting of mythology through empathy; she uses the stories of legendary characters to help her through her own identity crisis. Because these personalities arouse empathy in her, she is able to overcome the limitations imposed upon her by her cultural heritage while still finding strength in it. The greater feminist movement's efforts to reclaim and reinterpret traditional myths in a way that grants women agency and gives voice to their experiences are reflected in this relationship.

While empathy is often seen as a positive trait in *The Thousand Faces of Night*, Hariharan also examines the drawbacks of having less empathy. The awful outcome of a life devoid of empathy is personified by Mayamma, a servant who has suffered years of abuse and contempt. Mayamma has a young marriage, is mistreated by her spouse and in-laws, and receives no support from her own family. Her story is a sobering reminder of how empathy, or the absence of it, may shape a person's fate.

Devi and Mayamma had quite diverse experiences from each other. Devi is fortunate to have understanding, if not perfect, support from her mother and grandma. Mayamma lacks empathy for other people, which leaves her alone and trapped in a painful cycle that she cannot escape. Her persona serves as a critique of the social structures that disregard the most vulnerable people of society, particularly women from lower social classes.

Hariharan's portrayal of Mayamma's life highlights the connections between empathy and issues of class, gender, and race. Mayamma's lack of empathy is not only a personal weakness; it is a

reflection of broader societal inequities that marginalise and dehumanise specific groups. This narrative emphasises the value of empathy as a fundamental human connection that extends beyond close friendships and ties into more general social concepts.

In *The Thousand Faces of Night*, Hariharan examines empathy in the interactions between women in the novel as a whole, as well as in mother-daughter relationships. The complex female relationships in the book are impacted by resentment, empathy, rivalry, and solidarity. These partnerships serve as a realistic depiction of the more significant societal constraints that women face in patriarchal settings, where they are usually pitted against one another in the struggle for respect and limited resources.

The interactions between Devi, Sita, and the other women in the book are characterised by both conflict and empathy. These women fight internalised patriarchal values, which can lead to jealousy and rivalry, even if they are aware of the challenges they face on a daily basis as women. The complex nature of Devi's connection is highlighted by the power dynamics between her mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law, which frequently overshadow empathy in their relationship.

But Hariharan also highlights how empathy could promote female unity and support networks. One example of how empathy may transcend social and cultural barriers is the bond between Devi and Mayamma. Devi and Mayamma have different backgrounds and experiences in life, but they have a strong emotional link that allows them to support one another when things are tough. The need for empathy in creating and preserving female unity against patriarchal oppression is powerfully brought to light by this link.

The complex female interactions in the book mirror a broader feminist discussion about the value of empathy in women's lives. Feminist scholars like

Bell Hooks have argued that empathy is a crucial component of feminist praxis because it helps women to relate to and assist one another in their liberation struggles. Hooks does, however, warn against the dangers of using empathy to impose conformity or suppress originality. In order to resolve this paradox, Hariharan presents empathy as a two-edged tool in *The Thousand Faces of Night* that may both empower and enclose a given scenario.

Githa Hariharan offers a unique examination of the mother-daughter bond in *The Thousand Faces of Night* when viewed through the empathy lens. The individuals' identities are influenced by empathy, which emerges as a powerful yet complex force that influences cultural transmission and symbolises greater struggles in society between modernity and tradition. Because of its subtle portrayal of empathy, the narrative invites readers to consider the complicated nature of interpersonal relationships and the ways that empathy can both empower and constrain people.

By drawing comparisons between Hariharan's writing and other literary analyses-such as those by Amy Tan and Toni Morrison- of empathy in mother-daughter relationships, we can gain a deeper understanding of the universal and culturally specific factors at play. Empathy is not a definitive or indisputable positive force, as depicted in *The Thousand Faces of Night*. It's a dynamic and often contradictory feature that connects and unites the characters instead, serving as an example of the challenges of balancing identity, tradition, and autonomy in a patriarchal society.

The novel's use of mythology and feminist retelling of cultural traditions enhances its examination of empathy and provides fresh perspectives on these well-worn tales. *The Thousand Faces of Night* ultimately pushes readers to reconsider the place of empathy in both their personal lives and in the larger cultural

narratives that influence how we see relationships, identity, and social values.

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CUSTODY BATTLE IN MANJU KAPUR'S *CUSTODY*

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Abstract

Manju Kapur's Custody, as the title itself presents the repercussions of the custody battle that the parents fight against each other. It becomes a long-drawn-on battle and the children are tossed in between two parents bring legal waves which do not end. The court itself separates the brother and sister legally and makes them to live under the custody of single parenting. The novelist realistically portrays the Indian domestic panorama of divorce and the custody battles. However, the custody brings an everlasting repercussion in the life of the people involved in it. In Custody Raman the hero files the custody case over the two children, Arjun and Roohi. When his wife, Shagun presses for divorce, Raman presses for the custody of the two children kidnapped by her. Both the parents undergo a lot of trials and are mentally torn to pieces. The children themselves are bereft of the parental love and are tortured with legal rehearsals. In spite of a tough battle, the court takes a neutral stand and awards Roohi to Raman and Arjun to Shagun. The battle is over but the mental conflicts continue to reverberate. She portrays the consequences of these issues and presents them realistically with human touch. Kapur makes the legal battle really complicating, emotional, thrilling but with amicable settlement.

Keywords: divorce, visitation rights, custody manju kapur is a contemporary novelist of the indian writing in english.

She has authored six novels. She emerges as a champion of the causes of women and portrays them with pity. They suffer and emerge to lead a life of their choice either through personal or judicial decisions. The central women characters are married and are torn apart in their conjugal and domestic life. Her world of fiction moves around sexual abuse, the politics of arranged marriages, infertility and its stigma, adoption, divorce, infidelity, sexual dysfunction, and custody battles. Her novel *Custody* was published in 2011, discusses the contemporary issues that emerge from conjugal and domestic life leading to custody battle.

I have chosen Manju Kapur's *Custody* to make a study on the legal conflicts arise from the domestic disharmony and child parenting. *Custody* presents the domestic life of Raman and Shagun who live

with two children Arjun and Roohi. When Shagun gets a chance to befriend her husband's boss Ashok Khanna, she is a prey to his bewitching way of life and showy manners. With a view to winning her heart, Ashok encourages her to act in the advertisement for which both the husband and wife agree. Ashok frequently deposes Raman to undertake long trips to other states in connection with the company business. Shagun's intimacy with Ashok effects a great change in her personal life. Raman suspects the strange behaviour of his wife and appoints a detective agency to confirm it. To his great shock it is proved. The domestic bliss that they had enjoyed for nearly twelve years was gone forever. She has left Raman and children and lives with her mother. Soon, she serves a legal notice to Raman for divorce. However, the two children are

under the custody of their father, Raman. Shagun phones to Raman for the divorce by mutual consent with visitation rights. He refuses to give divorce and so she kidnaps her children. Arjun's study is not encouraging due to the parental conflicts. Deciding to seek legal remedies, Raman files a suit for the custody of his children. Ashok suggests Shagun to send Arjun to a boarding school. The court permits Arjun to go to the boarding school. Raman is awarded the visitation rights in every weekend from Friday six to Sunday six. Again, half of the school holidays, the children can spend with their father. Soon, Ashok gets a transfer to the US and Shagun wants to speed up the process of divorce and custody of the children.

Raman accepts to give her divorce and wants the custody of his two children which Shagun also has accepted. Shagun files divorce petition and Raman files custody petition. They appear in the court and swear it is not possible for them to live together. Six months later they should repeat the same thing and then the divorce will be granted for them. Shagun also gives up her ownership of their joint assets and the legal guardianship of the children and demands only visitation rights in the holidays. Kapur describes the scene as, "Divorce by mutual consent was initiated. The couple appeared in court, swore that it was impossible for them to live together and that they were not acting under duress" (*Cust.* 234).

Shagun's absolute faith in Ashok makes her leave Raman. She also says Ashok feels equally responsible for her kids. After his parents' divorce, Arjun spends his first vacation with Raman. Raman understands that he likes the school and it is good for him to be away from his home. When the children have spent half of the vacation with their father, they are back to their mother's home. Arjun returns to school and Roohi with Shagun's mother, Raman learns that the second divorce petition will be signed in a few more weeks. Shagun decides

that if he refuses to give divorce, she plans to turn her children against him and does not allow them to meet their father. She is very much happy and satisfied in her extramarital relation. She wishes to regain her identity in her new affair. Srilatha affirms her attitude as, "This affair gives her delight and teaches her to be self-reliant, confident, powerful and resourceful" (82).

A week before the final signing of the divorce, Shagun expresses her inability to take Roohi with her and leaves her under the custody of her father. As per their mutual agreement the transaction of Roohi to her father is initiated. The rest of the day Shagun becomes calm and filled with sadness, and now she gets the status as part-time mother. A week later she gets the divorce decree and then she marries Ashok and leaves for New York. As per the visitation rights, Arjun and Roohi leave for New York to spend their half of the vacation with their mother. When they return from their mother, Raman finds a lot of changes in Arjun. His behaviour is unpredictable and his daughter also finds it difficult to adopt the situation.

After Raman's divorce his mother wishes to make Ishita, the divorcee and former wife of Suryakanta as her daughter-in-law. Though Ishita is very eager to meet Raman's son Arjun, she loves his daughter Roohi very much. As she is barren, she finds happiness being with Roohi. She develops a strong bond between herself and Roohi. Her joy in the company of Roohi is unambiguous also Roohi too loves Ishita very much. Srilatha presents her mental condition as, "Ishita's motherly instincts are fulfilled as she enjoys an intimate emotional bonding with Roohi" (82). Soon, Raman and Ishita get married without the consent of the family members. Ishita starts her new life as a step mother and she introduces many extracurricular activities to Roohi and nurses her well without any prejudice.

When Shagun informs Raman to drop her children at her mother's house, for the first time he

does not want to send Roohi. Raman thinks that earlier he is alone to look after her and after his marriage with Ishita, Roohi has two loving parents who devote themselves unintentionally for her. They decide to inform Shagun about Roohi's school admission and so they get an excuse not to send Roohi to her. Ishita also realizes that Arjun is the son of Shagun, and so it is quite natural to be loyal to his biological mother. He always tells Roohi that Shagun is their mother. Raman observes Ishita, that she is extremely caring Roohi but she totally ignores Arjun.

Even though it is a part of their agreement to share the vacation of their children, Raman and Ishita refuse to send Roohi to her mother. In this regard Bajpai states, "The mother should have same and equal (and not inferior) rights vis-à-vis father" (Child Rights in India, 128). She adds that Roohi is turning five years old and if she goes between herself and her biological mother, probably Shagun will try to keep her daughter with her. Raman advises her that the court itself decides and it is the best for the children and ignoring the court verdict leads to contempt of court.

Raman's lawyer Nandan also accepts if Shagun keeps Roohi with her, it is not possible to get her back. He adds that the contempt of court is a serious matter and is decided quickly by the court so they can delay sending Roohi to her mother. "All you can do is delay. That's the best I can offer. ... Contempt cases are decided quickly. You can delay sending the child for one reason or another" (Cust. 342).

Ishita never likes Arjun as she believes that he may influence Roohi and tell her that Ishita is not her mother. For Ishita, every day with Arjun is like a year and also, she fears about his home coming. She begins to devote herself towards the welfare of both of them. Singh K.K. rightly observes her as, "Ishita showed great calmness and good concern to win the hearts of both children. Even Raman was fascinated by her approach and attitude" (133). She becomes

more religious and believes in astrology and numerology for the sake of Roohi.

Ishita is physically and emotionally very close to Roohi so she cannot leave her. She never thinks about the contempt of court but she keeps on thinking the possibilities to keep Roohi with her. At the same time, she is not able to cope with the behaviour of Arjun who always poses himself as his mother's son. Singh K.K. rightly observes, "Ishita did not see any concern for Arjun who was always hostile to her. She loved Roohi but did not want the presence of Arjun in the house" (134).

Shagun phones to Raman and enquires about the reason for not allowing Roohi to her. Raman rejects her request and accuses that she leaves her daughter when she is a small baby. Shagun calls him again and threatens to file a contempt-of-court case, and if he does not send Roohi to her, she never gives any chance to meet his son and there is no brother-sister relationship. Shagun states angrily, "You want connection, you send her here. Anyway I am going to win my case. I am just trying to spare us both the hassles of the legal system" (Cust. 370-371).

Raman begins to understand that claiming the custody of both the children is not possible as they do not send Roohi to Shagun curtailing motherly rights. He is caught in a distressing mood and is unable to decide the matters even with his new wife. Though Raman denies to send Roohi to Shagun, she does not take any action or file a contempt of court against him. Her delay in action weakens her position. She fails in all her attempts with requests and threats. At the same time, Raman too comes to know that as his son is going to reach fifteen, the filing of custody has no meaning. Arjun can take decision on his own whether to meet his father or not.

Shagun continuously pleads with him to send Roohi to her. She wants to see her because she has not seen her for three years. Kapur presents

Shagun's pleadings as, "Raman, please. She is my daughter, I have rights. You can be there the whole time" (*Cust.* 377). They accuse each other of turning the children against them, and Raman never allows any contact between the mother and the daughter. His words are very decisive, "And this is Roohi's choice—she wants to stay in the only home she has known, she wants to be with the mother who has looked after her devotedly every day for the last four years—even longer—before we were married" (*Cust.* 378). The children have become pitiable objects. They painfully unconsciously experience rootlessness in their tender life. Maji describes their pathetic condition as, "The two adorable children—young teenager Arjun who looks just like Shagun and three year old Roohi who looks just like Raman are 'torn between two mothers, two homes, two countries'" (3).

Nandan recommends Raman to file another case to get Roohi by her own choice. He informs him that the judge will probably enquire the child about her option to meet her birth mother. He doubts that whether it is morally acceptable, introducing his daughter to court to speak in favour of another person. "Introduce her to courtrooms, biological versus actual mothers, make her renounce one in favour of another in front of a judge—why should he have to put Roohi through this?". In his petition he states that, the separation of Roohi from Ishita will ruin the mental health of the child. Ishita persuades Roohi and to be very stern in stating that her real parents are Raman and Ishita. She asks her to state her mother's name as, "Ishita. You have to take my name, and say Ishita" (*Cust.* 382, 384). She keeps on insisting Roohi to what she must tell before the judge. As Roohi nods positively she becomes calm.

Soon, Raman finds that Shagun files contempt petition, demanding the custody of both the children. She also accuses that the medical certificates mentioning Roohi is sick are falsely prepared to avoid Roohi meeting her mother. Though it is late

she is convinced of the possibility of the girl children awarded to their mothers. Shagun gets the date of the hearing when both the parties must assemble before the judge's chamber to decide the custody of both the children.

On the appointed date Raman, Ishita and Roohi appear in the court. It has been the pathetic practice in India that the children are often tortured in their tender life as witnesses. Bajpai in this context states, "Children in India can come in direct contact with the courts and the legal system in various contexts, for example, as offenders and witness to crimes. Also, family matters like divorce, separation, adoption, guardianship, etc., can bring a child to the courts" (*Child Rights in India*, 24). Ishita notices Shagun from the crowd and finds that she is approaching towards them. As Ishita poisons Roohi against Shagun, Roohi ignores her birth mother and fixes her eyes on the floor. Shagun pleads, "I have missed you so much, my darling. I think of you every day. I have been wanting to see you for ever, but they told me you kept falling sick. Is that true?" (*Cust.* 391). As Roohi keeps silent, Raman and Ishita take Roohi away from Shagun.

When the Additional District Judge calls them before her chamber, Raman, Ishita, Shagun and Roohi assemble before her. Shagun begins to accuse Raman in spite of the legal agreement he has not allowed her to see her daughter. The judge asks Shagun why does she wait so long to file a contempt of court against him. Shagun tells the court that she wants to keep their legal agreement, as the first two times Roohi visits her, she returns her to her father safely. Shagun requests the custody of both her children especially her girl child.

The judge enquires Shagun, about her handing the custody of her daughter up to Raman. She explains that her marriage is broken due to marital disputes as he demands the custody of his two children, to get her the divorce. Shagun states, "My marriage to this man had broken down due to

irreconcilable differences, and he would only give me a divorce if I gave him custody". The judge goes through the case file and learns that the boy Arjun is in the boarding school and he shares his holidays with both the parents. She informs them that the boy is sixteen years old, and hence he can decide his option. "At that age he is old enough to decide which parent he wants to stay with" (*Cust.* 392,393).

Ishita informs the court that Roohi does not want to leave her and hence it is not possible to send her to her birth mother. She states, "Ever since my marriage I have put her welfare above everything. I think of her as my flesh and blood" (*Cust.* 393). Though she has devoted herself completely to the rearing of Roohi, she is torn apart with the fear of losing her. She is often reminded of her position as she is not the biological mother of Roohi.

The judge begins to question the little Roohi, and asks why she does not visit her mother. Roohi does not answer her. Again, she asks Roohi whether she visit her mother twice and she really likes the visits. She tells her brother visits their mother regularly and so she must visit too. The judge understands the situation of Roohi, as a child of sole custody, and she wants to speak to the child alone. The judgement is based on the best interest of the child as Bajpai in her "Custody and Guardianship of Children in India," reiterated, "The family court is a specialized court, and when confronted with questions related to the custody and maintenance of children, the family court is required to base its decision on the best interest of the child" (446). The three of them leave the little girl with the judge in her chamber and move outside the room.

The judge, after hearing the child, allows the custody of Roohi to Raman and Arjun to Shagun. The order of Roohi to Ishita is very much substantiated by Bajpai as, "The welfare of the child being the sole consideration or paramount consideration is the principle found at present only in

the substantive laws on custody and guardianship" (*Child Rights in India*, 128). Roohi emerges from the chamber after twenty minutes and Raman insists on Ishita to take Roohi to his house. Raman and Shagun wait in the chamber of the judge to listen to the order and complete the legal formalities. When Ishita asks what did the judge ask her, Roohi says, "She asked didn't I want to go with my brother to meet my mother?" 'I said Ishita is my mother. I want to stay with her'" (*Cust.* 395).

The judge awards Roohi to Raman and Arjun to Shagun with the permission for the children to meet their parents if they want. Kapur writes, "The judge had given Roohi to them and Arjun to Shagun. If the children wanted there would be visiting but not otherwise" (*Cust.* 395). Bajpai correlates the judgement and the situation as, "Where both the father and mother have remarried, the court may determine whether to entrust the guardianship and/or custody to the father, the mother, the grandparents, depending on what the court considers to be conducive to the maximum welfare of the minor in the light of the facts of each case" (*Child Rights in India*, 129).

Thus, the long-time pending custody dispute between Raman and Shagun that ends with an amicable situation. Neither Raman nor Shagun is the loser. The children also, in spite of their separation exhibit a satisfactory state of mind. The judge, on the other hand, delivers the verdict from a humanistic point of view. With a strong belief in the unique attachment of mother and son which corresponds with father and daughter. The case is a unique one and the verdict itself also is unique. From the sociological point of view a mother prefers to opt her daughter to be with her and her father vice versa. From the legal point of view this issue substantiates the societal settlement. But legally the judge has taken a different stand sanctioning the daughter to her father and son to his mother. Being a lady judge who is familiar with the psychology of

the children, the judge has pronounced the judgement from the interest of the children.

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INTERPRETATION OF ELEMENTS OF MAGICAL REALISM IN FAIRY TALE CINDERELLA

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Abstract

Magical Realism describes a work of fiction where fantasy slips into everyday life. However, the focus is not on the fantastical elements of the story, so much as on what those elements mean for the characters. It is a genre of literature that depicts the real world as having an undercurrent of magic or fantasy. Within a work of magical realism, the world is still grounded in the real world, but fantastical elements are considered normal in this world. A fairy tale is a story with magical elements, showing idealized or extremely happy endings. Though a fabricated story, and at times with intentions not true, it is close cousin of myth, legend, romance, fantasy, fable and fiction. In spite of their tiny nature, many a good number of fairy tales have survived thousands of years, inspiring kids of all centuries. Though initially designed for kids, the fairy tales serve the purpose of being didactic in their objective. The instructive stories have always helped in making the younger minds think of good morals and the elder minds to relish and dream of perfect little Utopian lives. The phrases "Once upon a time", "Long long ago" and "Happily ever after" are still power packed in reviving the spirits of story lovers, in spite of the age and gender. The term fairy tale simply does not imply the meaning of light winged tales which are mighty enough to carry away the readers to worlds of perfection.

Keywords: *magical realism, fairy tales, fantasy*

Introduction

Every fairy tale has been an echo of magical events in the life of pious and humble protagonist, usually the female gender. These magical incidents are introduced in the realistic life of the protagonist and the reasons for introducing these elements remain unexplained by the conventions of writing. A normal human life is suddenly taken up by the magical elements which change the flow of incidents, within fractions of seconds. These magical elements have always spiced up the sequence of events in these tales, that the readers too advocate or support the changes instead of questioning the logical flow of the story or the intrusion of anomalous happenings. Though the linear flow of the story line seems to be disturbed or deviated, readers, both young and old, have an everlasting appetite for such incidents, owing to the Utopian life they make the readers visualize or reimagine. This is where Samuel Taylor Coleridge success as a critic, because the readers are

entrapped in accordance to his phrase "willing suspension of disbelief". The myriad visions created by these tiny tales have a deep impact on normal human psyche, because they produce a world where every normal human being would love to flee to, in order to escape from the normal mundane life.

The origin of these fairy tales is quite interesting. Beginning with an objective of being a folklore, explaining the traditional beliefs that several communities have shared in common, they have a history tracing back to the transformation of legendary tales. Moreover, the tradition of story-telling has occasionally clubbed events from history into fairy tales and vice versa. They, once, displayed an array of supernatural creatures or entities like dwarfs, dragons, elves, fairies, giants, gnomes, goblins, and griffins, mermaids, talking beasts, trolls, unicorns and witches.

The genre has its etymology rooted in the French language. The word originates from the French word

“conte de fees”, which meant fairy tales, and was first used by Madame d’ Aulnoy. This dates back to the 17th century. Records also say that the title of the genre is a derivative of the German word “Marchen”, which means wonder tale. The name shows that the tales are attributed in presenting wonders and magic. The present paper aims to trace the elements of magic and magical realism in select fairy tales.

Elements of Magical Realism in “Cinderella” Transformation and Enchantment

The transformation of Cinderella’s rags into a beautiful gown and her pumpkin into a coach are prime examples of magical realism. As the story goes, *“With the touch of the fairy godmother’s wand, Cinderella’s rags were transformed into a stunning gown of gold and silver.”*

The Fairy Godmother

The fairy godmother represents the supernatural intervention in Cinderella’s life. Her appearance and the magical aid she provides are crucial to the plot, blending the magical with the protagonist’s ordinary existence. *“A kind fairy appeared and with a wave of her hand, she made all of Cinderella’s dreams come true”*

The Timelessness of Magic

The story’s setting and events are timeless, allowing the magical elements to transcend specific historical or cultural contexts. This timeless quality enhances the universality of the tale and its themes. The narratives states, *“Once upon a time, in a land far, far away, there lived a girl named Cinderella”*

Themes Explored Through Magical Realism Hope and Transformation

The magical elements symbolize hope and the possibility of change. Cinderella’s transformation from a downtrodden servant to a beloved princess embodies the idea that magic can bring about personal and social transformation. *“In an instant.*

Cinderella was no longer a servant, but a vision of beauty, ready to attend the ball”.

Justice and Reward

The story emphasizes the moral lesson that kindness and perseverance are rewarded. The magical interventions in Cinderella’s life serve to rectify the injustice she has faced and restore balance. The story concludes, *“And so, Cinderella who had always remained kind and gentle, found her happiness and was united with the prince”.*

The Power of Belief

The acceptance of magical elements by the characters reflects a deep-seated belief in the possibility of the extraordinary. This belief underscores the importance of faith and imagination in overcoming adversity. *“Cinderella never gave up hope, believing in her heart that her life could change.”*

Conclusion

Cinderella masterfully employs magical realism to create a narrative that is both enchanting and meaningful. By integrating magical elements into a realistic setting, the story explores themes of transformation, justice, and belief. Through the lens of magical realism, *Cinderella* continues to captivate readers and impart timeless lesson. The tale’s enduring appeal lies in its ability to transcend cultural and historical boundaries, making it a quintessential example of magical realism. By accepting the miraculous as an intrinsic part of everyday life,

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BREAKING BARRIERS: NAVIGATING MARGINALIZATION, DISPARITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY IN LAXMI NARAYAN TRIPATHI'S *ME HIJRA, ME LAXMI*

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Abstract

The paper entitled "Breaking Barriers: Navigating Marginalization, Disparity and Intersectionality in Laxmi Narayan Tripathi's *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi*" explores the obstacles, marginalization and the disparities faced by the hijra community in India and meanwhile it also focus on their resilience and empowerment. *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi* by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi is a powerful autobiographical novel which shows the social injustice, intersectional challenges and the marginalization in which the hijra community faces. This paper highlights the economic and the political disparities that has faced by hijras and also how the gender, caste and class provides a great impact on their lives. This paper additionally explores how the hijras are seen and treated historically and culturally in India by demonstrating their existence as being ostracized in real life and praised in mythology. Furthermore it also examines how the author's life journey from being marginalized to activism questions traditional ideas of the gender identity and promotes the rights of transgender community. It examines how the social acceptance, legal acceptance and education can break down all the barriers and promote empowerment. This paper uses intersectionality theory to make reform which is necessary to remove the systems of marginalization. It results the necessity of inclusive policies, changes in law and social acceptance to confirm their equality and dignity. This paper highlights the significance of visibility, representation and collective engagement in changing the socio-political environment for transgender people in India through a thorough analysis of *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi*.

Keywords: marginalization, gender, community, disparity.

Introduction

Laxmi is an influential person in promoting the rights of the transgender communities in India. She is an activist, writer, dancer and motivational speaker. Laxmi was born in Thane in 1979. She has faced numerous struggles due to the gender norms as she has been assigned male at birth. She is one of the first transgender people to gain popularity in the Indian society. She has battled against all the barriers in politics and media. She is a great supporter of gender diversity and she has

represented her transgender community at the UN and also in many national forums. The tenacity can be seen in her character and she has the ability to make space for the transgender community in a society where they are frequently gets marginalized. She has spoke about the struggles of the sexual minorities at the UN in 2008. In addition her to activism she has also made many literary contributions and the most notable work is her autobiography *Me Hijra Me Laxmi*. At first it is published in Marathi and then translated into

English. Her life journey which includes the sufferings with her gender identity, the pain of marginalization, her gradual acceptance into the *hijra* community and her fame as she advocates for the rights of the transgender community. In the society where the transgender community have been historically marginalized she has used her fame to clear out the myths and promote the transgender rights. The urge related to social justice, gender fluidity and inclusive society are so much visible in her life and through her work.

Me Hijra, Me Laxmi novel by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi is a famous autobiographical story which showcases the hardships, prejudice and the tenacity of the *hijra* community in India. In India *hijras* face extreme marginalization, inequality from the mainstream social and economic system despite their long and great history in the Indian society. Through this, the paper investigates how the life story of Tripathi fights hard for the transgender rights in India, for their autonomy and questions the social conventions.

Reverence and Ostracization

In the Indian culture, historically transgender people have occupied a special social religious place and frequently being praised in the traditional customs and writings. But the persecution resulted from the colonial law criminalized their existence such as the Criminal Tribal Act of 1871. Such things are visible in Tripathi's story when the basic rights of the *hijras* are denied even though they are been invited to offer blessings. By sharing her personal hardships, Tripathi draws the attention to the hypocrisy of how the society treats the transgender community by excluding them from the education system, public places and also in the work space. Williams and Nida in the article states that "Ostracism signals social separation, isolation, and loss, and response vary across time. Ostracism episodes as short as 2 min result in physiological pain responses, need

threat, and emotional distress". Laxmi's early life are influenced by her struggles to express her true gender identity in a culture which did not accept her. She has been born and brought up in the middle-class Brahmin household and have faced sufferings emotionally and psychologically due to her gender identity. She has experienced bullying, mockery and also rejection within her family and also from the society due to her nonconformity. Even though she is a great student and a dancer, she has faced prejudice. She has been also denied opportunities as the other people has took it for granted due to the strict binary thoughts which did not accommodate the transgender community. She has been forced to seek safety in the *hijra* group after struggling to obtain work and recognition in mainstream society, as the story explains. Laxmi experienced sexual violence and exploitation, like many transgender people. A candid and agonizing description of the abuse she experienced is showed in the novel, by highlighting the vulnerability of transgender people in a culture that frequently views them as objects of desire or mockery rather than as sentient beings with respect. Because of her legal invisibility, Laxmi also experienced systemic ostracization. Prior to the Supreme Court's 2014 ruling that acknowledged transgender individuals as a third gender, *hijras* were not legally recognized, depriving them of fundamental rights like work, healthcare and education. Laxmi and others like her were forced to rely on begging, sex work or ceremonial blessings in order to survive as a result of this exclusion. Mugloo and Rafiq in an article says that "Around 80% of transgender people in India are either engaged in sex work or begging, and a large number of them face gender-based abuse and violence". In Indian culture, *hijras* have a special place despite their marginalization, particularly in religious and traditional rituals. *Hijras* are asked to bless newborns and couples, signifying their spiritual strength and ties to supernatural energies, according

to Laxmi. However, social isolation coexists with this adoration, giving hijras a strange position in Indian society. Laxmi gradually turned her personal hardships into a broader transgender rights movement. She has also questioned the social conventions and fought for the rights of under-represented groups thanks to this recognition. Laxmi's involvement in public events, interviews and reality shows contributed to a change in how the general public views hijras. In addition to documenting her hardships, she has encouraged many others to proudly accept their identities by sharing her experience on *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi*.

Social Disparities

The economic and social marginalization which the *hijras* experience is one of the most needed topics covered in *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi*. Many hijras are compelled to engage in sex work and begging in order to survive since they are denied access to traditional career possibilities. Karen and Meghan in an article states that "compared to cisgender adults, binary and non-binary transgender adults experience elevated health, economic and social disparities". Tripathi's journey from rejection to financial independence serves as a great example of the obstacles that transgender people must get beyond in order to advance in society. Their difficulties are made worse by the absence of housing, healthcare facilities and legal recognition, which leaves them open to abuse, exploitation and institutional. "We immersed ourself in welfare work, aimed at empowering the *hijra* community and educating society. To us, the *hijras* were the ultimate subaltern, deprived of fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. We were slaves, non-persons. We had been suffering injustice for centuries" (Tripathi 91). Laxmi during her initial days has endured difficulties as a child after realizing she could not fit the mold of conventional gender norms. Assigned male at birth, she is expected to act in a "masculine" way, but her feminine attitude made her

the object of mockery. Her identity expression has frequently resulted in her being shamed. She had to constantly fight for acceptance because Indian society's strict gender binary did not allow for people like her. The frequency of sexual abuse against *hijras* is one of the most brutal facts that Laxmi reveals in *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi*. Both inside and outside of the *hijra* community, transgender people are frequently the victims of sexual assault. Economic desperation forces many into sex work, where they endure exploitation, unsafe living conditions and police abuse. Laxmi talks about experiences she and other members of her community have with sexual harassment and violence. Because of the stigma and inequality in the judicial system, victims frequently lack legal remedy despite these injustices. A.Revathi who is a well known transgender writer in her novel has also wrote about all the cruel hardships faced by the transgender community. In the novel once she has vividly expressed the sufferings she endured in the hands of the policeman. It clearly showcases the imbalance of the power system in which the transgender communities are easily been discriminated.

I screamed that I did not want to go into the cell. I fell at the policeman's feet. He kicked me with his boots. He then asked me to take my clothes off right there, while the prisoner was watching. I pleaded with him and wept, but he forcibly stripped me. When I was standing naked, he stuck his lathi where I'd had my operation and demanded that I stand with my legs apart, like a woman would. He repeatedly struck at that part with his lathi and said, So, can it go in there? Or is it a field one can't enter?

How do you have sex then? (Revathi 206).

Intersectionality

The idea of intersectionality clearly describes how the various facts of an individual's social and political identity such as gender, colour, class, sexual orientation, disability and caste intersect and react to

produce distinct experiences of privilege and oppression. Bridie Taylor says that "Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and we must consider everything and anything that can marginalize people". Black feminist legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw first used the word in 1989 to emphasize how discriminatory systems are interrelated and have a complicated impact on people's daily lives. Linda and Torrain in an article states that "Transgender populations face significant inequalities in violence and mental health concerns. In the United States compared with non-transgender people, transgender people had disproportionately higher prevalence of suicide attempts and substance use with even higher rates among transgender people of color and transgender people with disabilities". Intersectionality is important when discussing transgender people since a variety of variables contribute to their experiences of exclusion and prejudice. Transgender individuals from affluent socioeconomic backgrounds may face distinct chances and obstacles in contrast to those from underprivileged castes or rural communities. Tripathi's life story demonstrates the ways in which caste and social discrimination interact with gender identity. She recognizes the advantages she enjoyed in terms of family support and schooling, which many *hijras* from lower castes are denied, as a transgender woman from an upper caste. The degree of marginalization experienced by *hijras* is further determined by the intersectionality of these identities, since transgender people from lower castes frequently endure more severe prejudice and financial hardship.

Empowerment

Tripathi's endless support for the transgender rights has been essential in raising awareness of *hijra* issues. She pushed for the third gender's legal recognition in India and was the first transgender person to represent Asia Pacific at the UN. Monojit

Garai in an article states that "For a very long time, then transgender community in India has lived at the fringes of society. It was only after the landmark ruling by the Supreme Court in 2014, popularly known as the Nalsa judgement, that transgender persons were legally recognized as the 'third gender'". The Supreme Court of India agrees *hijras* fundamental rights and acknowledged them as a third gender in 2014. But social acceptance is still difficult to achieve in spite of these legislative changes. Tripathi's advocacy shows that in order to achieve true inclusion, policy changes must be complemented by societal awareness and attitudinal adjustments.

Findings

Breaking down barriers showcases a multifaceted strategy which includes social inclusion, legislative reforms and economic prospects for *hijras*, as demonstrated by an analysis of the novel *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi*. Legal recognition is still insufficient. Even though the government accepted the transgender community as the third gender, many *hijras* still do not have access to basic rights because of its poor implementation. Opportunities for education and employment are essential. Through that the *hijra* community might attain social integration and financial independence by establishing comprehensive employment and educational possibilities. And also through the help of media representation, the social perception over *hijras* can be demolished. Accurate depictions of *hijras* in literature and the media can dispel prejudices and promote compassion and understanding. This can be strengthened by providing *hijra* community the tools they need to fight for their rights results in long-lasting social transformation.

Conclusion

Laxmi Narayan Tripathi's autobiographical novel *Me hijra, Me Laxmi* is a great tribute to the courage and

self-determination of the Indian *hijras*. It emphasizes that how its important to reject the structural and social injustices and to create a society that is more inclusive. Even while legislative changes have made the recognition possible but the struggle for respect, financial stability and social acceptance is still ongoing. Yatirajula, Giri and Maulik in an article says that "They face rejection from their families, and are subjected to ridicule, discrimination, and exploitation due to their gender variant behavior and roles. And finally her art pushes the readers to envision a society in which everyone are given the respect and rights they deserve irrespective of the gender and caste.

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THE DISRUPTED HOMELAND: A STUDY OF IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE EXPERIENCES IN KHUSHWANT SINGH'S *TRAIN TO PAKISTAN*

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Abstract

This thesis examines Khushwant Singh's "Train to Pakistan" through the lens of Immigration and Refugee Studies, analyzing the novel's depiction of the 1947 Partition of India as a case study of forced migration. It explores the historical context, the struggles faced by displaced populations, and the theoretical frameworks that illuminate these experiences. By focusing on the village of Mano Majra, the study highlights the abrupt disruption of communal harmony and the devastating consequences of politically driven displacement. The analysis demonstrates how Singh's narrative transcends a mere historical account, becoming a powerful commentary on the universal experiences of refugees and immigrants, including loss, trauma, and the search for identity and belonging. This thesis aims to establish Train to Pakistan as a literary foundation for understanding the complex dynamics of forced migration and its enduring impact on individuals and communities, arguing for its relevance in contemporary discussions on refugee crises.

Keywords: trauma, identity, displacement, belonging

Introduction

Khushwant Singh's *"Train to Pakistan"* offers a raw and unflinching portrayal of the human cost of forced migration, specifically in the context of the 1947 Partition of India. This thesis will examine the novel through the framework of Immigration and Refugee Studies, investigating the historical background, the challenges faced by displaced individuals, and the theoretical perspectives that shed light on these experiences. Set against the backdrop of the village of *Mano Majra*, the novel vividly captures the abrupt disintegration of communal harmony and the

catastrophic outcomes of politically induced displacement. Singh's narrative extends beyond a simple historical record, transforming into a compelling exploration of the universal experiences of refugees and immigrants, encompassing themes of loss, trauma, and the quest for identity and belonging. By analyzing these themes, this thesis argues that *Train to Pakistan* provides a crucial literary foundation for comprehending the intricate dynamics of forced migration and its lasting impact on both individuals and communities.

Immigration and Refugee Studies emerged as a distinct academic field in the mid-20th century, largely in response to the massive displacements caused by World War II and subsequent global conflicts. Historically, migration has been a constant feature of human existence, driven by factors such as economic opportunity, political persecution, and environmental change. However, the scale and nature of displacement in the 20th century necessitated a more systematic and interdisciplinary approach. Early studies focused on the legal and political aspects of refugee protection, gradually expanding to include sociological, anthropological, and psychological perspectives.

The establishment of international organizations like the UNHCR and the development of international legal instruments, such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, marked crucial milestones. The field has evolved to encompass diverse forms of migration, including economic migration, internal displacement, and climate-induced migration. It also addresses the complexities of integration, identity, and the long-term consequences of displacement. The study of historical events like the Partition of India provides crucial insights into the enduring patterns and challenges of forced migration.

Countries experiencing large-scale immigration and refugee influxes face numerous challenges. These include the strain on resources, such as housing, healthcare, and education, as well as the need for effective integration policies. Host nations grapple with the delicate balance between humanitarian obligations and national security concerns. Economic integration can be hindered by language barriers, lack of recognition of foreign qualifications, and discrimination. Social integration is often complicated by cultural differences and the potential for xenophobia. Refugee camps, often intended as temporary solutions, can become protracted situations, leading to dependency and despair. The psychological trauma experienced by

refugees, including PTSD and depression, requires specialized mental health services. Political instability and conflict in source countries can further complicate the situation, making repatriation difficult or impossible. International cooperation is essential for addressing these challenges, but it is often hampered by political disagreements and funding constraints. The struggle to provide dignified and sustainable solutions for refugees and immigrants remains a pressing global issue.

Reclaiming Identity and Community Connectedness in “Train to Pakistan”

“Train to Pakistan” serves as a powerful literary representation of the core issues addressed in Immigration and Refugee Studies. The novel meticulously depicts the sudden and violent displacement of *Mano Majra*’s residents, a microcosm of the larger upheaval during the Partition. Singh portrays the characters’ forced abandonment of their homes and livelihoods, mirroring the experiences of millions who lost everything. The psychological impact of trauma is vividly illustrated through the characters’ fear, confusion, and despair, reflecting the widespread mental anguish experienced by refugees. The novel underscores the arbitrary nature of displacement, as individuals are forced to flee based on religious identity, rather than personal actions or culpability. The narrative meticulously traces the breakdown of social cohesion, showing how long-standing communal bonds are shattered by politically fueled hatred. The rise of communal violence and the erosion of trust highlight the fragility of peace and the devastating consequences of political manipulation. Furthermore, the novel explores the challenges of integration, as survivors grapple with rebuilding their lives in unfamiliar and often hostile environments. The experience of the Sikh’s and Muslim’s leaving *Mano Majra*, and the following trauma those left behind faced, gives a clear image

of the sudden disruption of normal life. The lack of preparation for such a massive movement of people is shown in the lack of support and the resulting chaos.

The novel's focus on the human cost of displacement, the loss of cultural heritage, and the struggle to maintain identity in the face of overwhelming adversity provides a poignant and enduring testament to the experiences of refugees and immigrants worldwide. The novel also shows the internal displacement of people within their own mind, as the trauma they faced reshapes their view of the world.

Several theoretical frameworks within Immigration and Refugee Studies illuminate the experiences depicted in *Train to Pakistan*. The push-pull theory explains the forced migration from *Mano Majra*, with violence and fear pushing residents out and the promise of safety pulling them towards new destinations. The concept of social disintegration is evident in the breakdown of the village's communal harmony, as religious identities become weaponized. Postcolonial theory helps to understand the impact of British colonial policies on the Partition and the resulting displacement. Trauma theory is crucial for analyzing the psychological scars borne by the characters, with many exhibiting symptoms of PTSD. The theory of liminality captures the characters' state of being in-between, as they are neither fully rooted in their past nor fully integrated into their uncertain future. The concept of "forced assimilation" can be seen in the desire for some to force others to change religions. The idea of "cultural shock" is very prevalent as the people of *Mano Majra* who are left, or return, must deal with a new reality.

Conclusion

"*Train to Pakistan*" remains a profoundly relevant work, offering critical insights into the human experience of forced migration. By analyzing the novel through the lens of Immigration and Refugee Studies, we gain a deeper understanding of the historical, social, and psychological dimensions of displacement. The novel's portrayal of the Partition of India serves as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of political violence and the enduring impact of trauma. The experiences of the characters in *Mano Majra* resonate with the experiences of refugees and immigrants worldwide, underscoring the universal nature of displacement and the shared human desire for safety, belonging, and dignity. By bridging literature and academic theory, this thesis demonstrates the enduring relevance of *Train to Pakistan* as a tool for understanding and addressing the challenges of forced migration in the 21st century. The lessons learned from the novel underscore the importance of empathy, understanding, and international cooperation in providing humane and sustainable solutions for refugees and immigrants.

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BREAKING FREE FROM THE CHAINS OF TORMENT IN PREETI SHENOY'S *LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT*

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Abstract

This current paper underscores the aspect of breaking free from the chains of Torment. Life is What You Make It by Preeti Shenoy is a thought provoking novel that explores the difficulty of life, love and mental health. The story follows Ankita, a young girl who is in her adulthood and has some issues from the past which haunts her. She depressed and tries to commit suicide and then diagnosed with bipolar disorder and admitted in the mental hospital. After few months, Ankita is able to recover from her depression. The present paper aims to study the importance of mental health awareness, the power of resilience. It is also a story about having faith, having hope, as well as about creating your destiny.

Keywords: bipolar disorder, mental illness, resilience, torment.

Preeti Shenoy's *Life is What You Make It* is the story of Ankita Sharma. She was affected by bipolar disorder. It is one kind of mental illness. In the beginning of the novel, Ankita was writing a letter to Vaibhav who is her boyfriend. They both studied together in school days and love each other. In that letter she talks about her college life.

Ankita studied in St. Agnes College. In that college she got three friends Suvi, Janie and Charu. After few days there is a election in her college. "We have already filled up the forms and given your name for Arts Club Secretary." (17). Her friends suggests her name for Arts Club Secretary. Ankita's friends encouraged her to join the election. She joined and selected as the Arts Club Secretary. A few days later, the management school at Cochin University conducted annual cultural festival. There they invite St. Agnes College to participate. Every year St. Agnes College won the championship. At that event she met Abhishek for the first time. He

was also called as Abhi. Because of her talent he started to love her. At first she rejected his proposal later on she accepted his love.

Ankita's father got transfer from Cochin to Bombay. So Ankita was also accompanied with him. But Abhishek did not accept this. Abhi ask to Ankita let us get married before you go. Ankita was shocked. Ankita reject his words. So that they both separated. After a few days, she got the news that Abhishek had died. Ankita was now broken down. She called Abhishek's grandfather. He attended the call. Molle, he said his voice full of anguish. "I know he loved you. I don't know what happened between you two, but I have only one thing to say. You are young, you are pretty. Please remember molle, sneham mathram puchikaruthu." (78). These words broke her heart. She feels very guilty because of the death of Abhi. She was not able to overcome the situation. She was faced with a lot of torment in her life.

In this generation people are making wrong decision in their lives. They think suicide is the solution for their problem. Suicide is a big problem around the world. Many young people are thinking about hurting themselves. This is very sad and serious issue. According to World Health Organization, Suicide is the second leading cause of death among the youngsters. In India alone nearly ten thousand students died by suicide in the last year. There are many reasons like depression social isolation, relationship problem etc. In this novel Abhi also took the wrong decision in his life. It heartbreaking to see someone we care about, like Abhi, struggling with difficult emotions and feeling overwhelmed. When Abhi makes a wrong decision, it is essential to address the underlying issues and offer support. Suicide is never the solution, and there are always alternative ways to cope with challenges.

Ankita was overcome by her thoughts about the death of Abhi. She started to concentrate on her studies, to make elaborate notes about everything, read more books. Her Verbal ability was one of her strength, which had helped her clear the entrance exam. Her parents happy to see their daughter concentrating on her studies. She goes jogging in every morning. Her mother told "I think you should stop this jogging of yours. Look at you! You have become so thin. You look like someone who has escaped from a concentration camp." (87). But she continued her jogging. Suddenly she remembered Abhi's grandfathers' words.

"The pain I was now feeling was almost physical. It felt like there was somebody inside my heart digging out little bits of it with a scalpel and throwing it away, a sense of emptiness quickly filling up the dugout bits. I was aching for Abhi. It was a longing which I had not allowed myself to feel. I did not know what to do, as I made my way home." (102)

Ankita did not say anything about the death of Abhi, and their relation to her parents. One day her mother cleaned her room and in that room she got more letters that were written by Abhishek and Vaibhav. "What the hell is this?" Her father asked Ankita. She did not reply anything so her parents burn the letter. "How many guys will you trap with your wily charms, you stupid little tramp?" My mother almost spat out. Her words cut deep, scooping out my deepest feelings of apprehensions and exposing it threadbare. (117)

The hurting words of her parents and the hurting memories of the past are disturbing her mind. In this world some people wear masks, that shows they were always happy in their lives, but in reality they faced many torment in their lives. In Ankita's life she was the brilliant student in her school and college, but she faced a lot of torment in her life. This is the reason that, Ankita was affected by bipolar disorder.

"I feel down and depressed. I feel worthless. I don't know what is happening to me and why I am feeling this way. There is really no reason I have tried to make these thoughts go away. I have failed. I don't want to do this MBA anymore. I can't bear the thought of looking at Joseph, Chaya and Jigna again. The thought of seeing my classmates' faces make me sick." (133)

Torment filled Ankita's life. She did not talk to anyone. She discontinued her MBA. When ever she tried come out from the house, she had one kind of fear in her mind. Because of that she could not able to sleep properly and she had a guilt about the death of Abhi. So she was not able to concentrate on anything. So she decided to commit suicide, each time her father save her life. He gives more advice to her.

Bipolar disorder is a serious brain disorder that affects dramatic shifts in moods, energy levels, attitudes and ability to carry out daily tasks. It

develops in late adolescence or adulthood. People with this disorder experience an intense emotional states which alternate between a high episodes, called manic and followed by a low episode called depressive. During a manic period, the person feels happy with high energy levels and low state, there is a feelings of worthlessness or emptiness. That person thinks of death and of suicide. So Ankita also suffered a lot in this Bipolar disorder.

Ankita's parents take her to the best mental hospital in India. Dr. Madhusudan is the best doctor for mental illness. Her parents have hope because of the words of the doctor. "Ankita your body and mind both need rest. If you don't take the medicine, how will you get better? This is only temporary. Now be a good girl and take it." (142). When she was in the hospital she recalls her past. She was the young star of St. Agnes, but now she was in the mental hospital. Ankita was admitted to the mental hospital and she please her parents not to leave her alone in the hospital. "Please dad, take me back home. I promise I will not do anything like that again," (157). She started to cry loudly like a child but her parents leave her and moved from the hospital. So she decided that she will never face her parents again in her life.

"I hate the world. I hated my parents. I hated life. I hated everything. I was filled with a loathing so dark, so deep and so impenetrable that it was hard to see anything else. All that was going on inside my head was that I was now admitted in a mental hospital and I was alone." (159)

Dr. Madhusudan's words changed her life. little by little she started to recover from bipolar disorder. Then she shifted to the other side of the campus. Which is named as an occupational therapy wing it was popularly called the O.T. Wing. At that block the patients was doing their work like gardening, sports and crafting etc. Ankita started to draw pictures. Then Dr. Madhusudan give some books to read.

Ankita read a book Masha Nikiforova's *Days*. This is a book about Masha Nikiforova's life. She was an Ukrainian women who lived during the Russian Revolution. She writes about her time as a anarchist, her relationships and her struggles. Masha faced many challenges including poverty, hunger and violence. It is a story about being brave and staying true to yourself.

Good atmosphere and friendly relationships has given a hope to Ankita's life. New friends of Ankita are Sagar and Anuj. In the O.T. Wing floor she met Sagar and Anuj. She did not know about them and they also did not know about Ankita. But they share more love to Ankita. They always talk about movies. They gave hope to Ankita and they encourage her to draw more pictures. The mental health care centre give a way for the patience to get away from the mental illness.

Ankita's achievements, her personal development and ability to overcome difficulties have all been attributed to her confidence. Ankita started by setting small achievable goals that gradually pushed her out of her comfort zone. One of the most significant turning points in Ankita's life was when she faced a career setback. Ankita's confidence is shaken by her struggles with bipolar disorder. She feels helpless uncertain about her future. However, as she seeks professional help develops a support system and discovers her passion. Ankita begins to build confidence. Ankita's Journey also taught her that confidence is not about being perfect or never making mistakes. It is about trusting yourself. Today Ankita is proud because of her confident. She knows that does not happen overnight. She inspires other to believe in themselves and take risks because like her they can do great things when they are confident in their skills.

Ankita's journey in *Life is What You Make It* serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative impact of confidence on one's life.

This novel also tries to spread awareness about bipolar disorder. As navigates the challenges of bipolar disorder, relationships and career, she learns to cultivate confidence through self-reflection, support systems and perseverance. Her growth and confident inspire us to stay confident in our life.

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THE GOLDEN UNRAVELING: IDENTITY AND DIASPORA IN DONNA TARTT'S *THE GOLDFINCH*

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Abstract

This paper seeks to investigate how identity formation is influenced by the diaspora, where inequality arises, and how views toward social, mental, and physical aspects of life impact and mold identity. Personal identities and relationships with one's home country have changed significantly in the last several decades. It is no longer stable, and immigrants are blending in with civilization all across the world. Not all of the characters in Donna Tarrt's The Goldfinch are successful in their attempts to establish strong roots in faraway countries. She is an American novelist that uses a lot of immersion in her writing process. In this novel, she presented her personal experience of being diasporic in a lovely way. The main individuals in the book attempt to carve out a niche for themselves in the host nation, but each one achieves it in their own unique way. The experiences of those who have been displaced from their familiar surroundings and compelled to adjust to new situations and cultures are examined in the book. It discusses the challenges of assimilating and the experiences of foreign born people. It talks about unconscious thoughts and repressed desires. This study emphasizes identity crises and the desire for identity. It skillfully looks at how immigrants view their new nation and its culture. The true meaning of the title is revealed by Theo's character. It illustrates the desire for an affluent lifestyle, the need for identity, and nostalgia. It is the pinnacle of insecurity for immigrants living abroad.

Keywords: reconciliation, migration, displacement, diaspora, and alienation

The Goldfinch explores the life of its protagonist, Theo Decker, who is thrown into a world of crime, grief, and displacement after surviving a terrorist attack at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The story is deep and complex. The novel explores topics of identity, belonging, and cultural hybridity while taking readers on a cross-continental journey.

This paper looks at how characters deal with the difficulties of cultural identification, displacement, and the need for a sense of belonging by analyzing the diasporic aspects of the book that illuminate the intricacies of these experiences. Further, the idea of the gilded diaspora is introduced and examined in

connection with the novel's examination of privilege, riches, and the effects of a damaged sense of self.

The experiences of characters who are wrenched from their familiar surroundings and cultural contexts are reflected in *The Goldfinch's* major themes of diaspora and displacement. Through the prisms of cultural identity, belonging, and the effects of relocation on people and communities, the book illustrates the complexity of diaspora. The protagonists' mental and physical experiences demonstrate how diaspora may be transforming as they deal with issues of heritage and cultural connection while navigating unfamiliar surroundings. Character development in the

narrative is significantly influenced by diasporic aspects. Throughout the book, the protagonist, Theo Decker, has a significant metamorphosis that reflects the complexity of diasporic life. The sad incident at the museum causes his first dislocation, emotionally severing his ties to a sense of normalcy and physically separating him from his family.

Theo's experiences with many cultures and people as he progresses through life from his turbulent childhood to his adult years highlight the complex nature of diaspora. The diasporic concept is best illustrated via Theo's relationships, especially those with his pals Boris and Hobart. Boris, a Ukrainian-born character in Australia, plays a significant role in Theo's life. As evidence of the universality of the diasporic experience and the ties forged in the face of mutual displacement, their relationship transcends countries and cultures. Boris's cultural chameleon serves as a moving representation of diaspora. The mobility of identity for those juggling several worlds is shown in his capacity to fit in with other cultures, languages, and social customs with ease. Through Boris's experiences, which shaped his Australian upbringing and Ukrainian heritage, the novel explores the benefits and drawbacks of being a cultural chameleon. Tarrt asks readers to consider the flexibility of cultural identity in the face of exile through Boris.

Tarrt examines the deep sense of alienation and dislocation that can come from trauma, loss, and the quest for identity via the experiences of Theo Decker, the main character, and a number of other characters. Theo Decker's experience of displacement, which serves as the catalyst for his mother's tragic death in a terrorist attack at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is at the center of the book. Theo experiences severe emotional and psychological turmoil as a result of this turning point, struggling to cope with the death of his mother and

to make sense of a world that feels suddenly chaotic and unclear.

Theo's internal conflicts with grief, guilt, and survivor's regret exacerbate his sense of alienation. He bears the burden of his mother's passing with him at all times, troubled by the thought that he bears some responsibility for her demise. His emotions of alienation and self-loathing are fueled by this ingrained sense of guilt, which pushes him to turn to drugs and harmful activities in an attempt to dull the agony of his loss.

As Theo's journey progresses, he meets a wide range of people who are also dealing with their own displacement. Boris Pavlikovsky, a Ukrainian immigrant who becomes Theo's best friend, is one such figure. Similar to Theo, Boris has experienced trauma since he and his father left their native Russia to avoid the unrest and bloodshed in post-soviet Russia. Because of his immigration status and his difficulties assimilating into American society, Boris is acutely conscious of his own displacement. Because of their mutual sense of alienation and otherness, he develops a close relationship with Theo.

Theo's ties with the Barbour family, a wealthy and affluent clan that takes him in after his mother passes away, further explore the issue of displacement. Theo never feels completely comfortable in their world, even though they make an attempt to give him a secure home and a sense of belonging. He finds it difficult to balance his own individuality with the standards and ideals of their social environment since he is well aware of the stark contrast between his own lowly beginnings and the Barbours' lavish existence. Theo's experience of dislocation is emphasized by this cultural and class divide, which also shows how outside symbols of luxury and status can intensify emotions of estrangement and alienation.

Theo's experiences of displacement are also set against the backdrop of the art world, as he gets

caught up in a web of intrigue and deceit surrounding a valuable artwork called *The Goldfinch*. Theo is lost in a sea of doubt and moral ambiguity as a result of his engagement in the realm of art theft and forgery, which further blurs the boundaries between truth and illusion. With its focus on aesthetics and beauty, the art world provides Theo with a brief reprieve from his inner anguish, but it also acts as a sobering reminder of his own dislocation and alienation from the outside world.

Tartt deftly examines the various ways that displacement shows itself in her characters' lives throughout the book. Each character in *The Goldfinch* struggles with their own sense of displacement as they traverse the turbulent terrain of trauma, grief, and self-discovery, whether it be through psychological estrangement, emotional alienation, or physical displacement. By doing this, Tartt reminds readers that we are all travellers looking for a place to call home and encourages them to reflect on the universal themes of loss, longing, and the pursuit of belonging.

As a dynamic setting that captures the spirit of diaspora, New York City is regarded as the melting plot. The city's diversified populace and varied areas serve as a microcosm of the larger diasporic experience. Theo's travels across the city highlight the complex web of cultural interconnections that characterize diasporic existence in addition to reflecting the physical displacement that is a part of his life. Theo emphasizes the complex nature of diaspora in an urban context by turning each neighbourhood into a chapter in his investigation of identity and belonging.

Carel Fabritius' Goldfinch painting serves as both a focal point and a symbol of displacement, encapsulating the novel's examination of diaspora. The painting, which was taken during the raid on the museum, serves as Theo's burden and comfort. A bird removed from its natural home, the Goldfinch is a potent emblem of survival and displacement. Its

existence in Theo's present serves as a concrete reminder of his terrible background, underscoring the long-lasting effects of diaspora on individual identity.

The novel gains additional cultural relevance from the recurrent theme of antique furniture. The characters' attempts to preserve their cultural legacy in the face of displacement are symbolized by these artifacts, which are relics of the past. But as characters struggle with the weight of history and the difficulties of balancing their cultural roots with the constantly shifting present, the weight of these relics becomes evident. The difficulties of maintaining one's cultural identity in a diasporic society are symbolized by the antique furnishings. The idea of the "gilded diaspora" examines the complex connection between privilege, riches, and displacement. Theo's lavish yet emotionally troubled life is a prime example of the gilded diaspora. The tale highlights the upsetting influences that come with living a life of affluence and examines how material prosperity could conceal deeper existential issues. A major theme that prompts readers to consider the repercussions of living in luxury is the contrast between affluence and emotional detachment.

The novel's art world functions as a miniature representation of the opulent diasporic society. The quest of artistic expression is entwined with privilege and riches in this elite world, which is traversed by characters such as Theo. The novel's overarching theme of futility of material prosperity in fostering a true sense of identity or belonging reflect the glittering character of the art world. Tartt examines the shallow appeal of money in light of more profound existential issues via the prism of the art world. The Goldfinch explores the idea of cultural hybridity by showing characters who, as a result of being uprooted, manage several cultural identities.

The story examines how diaspora affects the development of hybrid identities as Theo engages

with people from various cultural backgrounds. The Goldfinch's Characters struggle with adaptation and assimilation, underscoring how elusive cultural identity is in diasporic settings. The novel offers a sophisticated depiction of cultural hybridity, highlighting the ways in which relocation may cause a person to redefine their identity and sense of place.

In *The Goldfinch*, diasporic experiences are largely represented through art and material culture. The protagonists' emotional travels are reflected in the picture *The Goldfinch*, which is a potent emblem of longing and displacement. Through art, the book examines how displaced people might find solace and ties to their past through artistic expressions and cultural relics. The importance of art in illustrating diaspora highlights how everyone longs for emotional ties and cultural preservation, even in strange places.

One of the main features of *The Goldfinch* is the development of diasporic communities, which emphasizes the value of social assistance in adjusting to displacement. The novel's characters interact with people who have gone through similar displacement experiences in order to find comfort and a sense of belonging in diasporic networks. The book highlights the strength and resiliency of these communities and the function of social links in creating a feeling of home away from home. *The Goldfinch* illuminates the ways in which diaspora promotes solidarity and mutual support among displaced people by examining community and belonging. Theo's persona is not the only one that demonstrates the diasporic element.

This article provides a thorough examination of how characters, situations, and symbols contribute to the investigation of displacement, cultural identity, and the quest for belonging by dissecting the diasporic components in *The Goldfinch*. By examining the complicated interactions between

power, riches, and the intricacies of diasporic experiences, the gilded diaspora serves as a conceptual framework that deepens comprehension of the novel's themes. In the end, *The Goldfinch* is a literary examination of the human condition that asks readers to consider the common difficulties of surviving in a society characterized by alienation, loss, and identity inquiry.

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SEARCH FOR SELF IN RACHEAL GOLD'S *BEING EMILY*

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Abstract

Identity is a trump card for an individual to live in this society. People face different kinds of identity crisis like, quest for the cultural identity, traditional identity, self-identity, gender identity and so on. They try their best to expose their own identity before the world. People who live without identity are not at all concerned or respected by the rest of the society. Being Emily portrays the lifestyles of transsexuals, their search for self and their individual desires. This paper attempts to explore the identity crisis faced by transsexuals in Being Emily by Racheal Gold.

Keywords: transsexuals, gender, identity crisis

Desires vary from person to person. When a person's desire regarding gender varies the society refer them as abnormal and corner them. Gender is a set of expectations from the society regarding the behaviour, characteristics, and thoughts. These set of rules are framed by an unknown person with unbreakable law. Though laws are implemented to safeguard and to uplift the life of these people, still an invisible thread separates ordinary people from people with identity disorder.

Gender is a complex term to comprehend. There is difference between sex and gender. Gender comes from the Latin word, genus meaning kind or race. Sex comes from the Latin word, sexus and is generally assigned at birth by external genital appearance. On looking the genital appearance, others assign the sex of a particular child as boy or girl. On the other hand, gender is one's own interest in a particular gender that is whether the person is willing to be a boy or girl.

People with gender disorder feel that their soul is trapped in a wrong body. This feeling pricks their conscious till they attain their desire. They try to

control their mind for the sake of society or family. But, this suppression of their gender identity causes both mental and physical pains in them. At one stage, they try to portray themselves as opposite sex. They change their name and identity and slowly acquire their desired gender. The terms, transpeople and transgender are often used as an umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and gender expression differs from their birth sex. Whittle et al (2007) state that 'transgender' is:

a very broad term to include all sorts of trans people. It includes cross dressers, people who wear a mix of clothing, people with a dual or no gender identity, and transsexual people. It is also used to define a political and social community which is inclusive of transsexual people, transgender people, cross-dressers (transvestites), and other groups of gender variant people. (85)

Trans people have the ability to shine like other people. But they are curtailed and ridiculed by the society. For instance, Pritika Yashini, the first Trans gender to get placed in police department has

crossed number of hurdles and now appointed as a police officer in Tamil Nadu. At first, her application is rejected. Through court, she fought and achieved a good position in her life. She acts as an example for other Trans people.

The trials and tribulations faced by the protagonists are heart breaking. It is set in America. The novel focuses on the life of Christopher, who fights to expose his identity as a woman in the society. The novel pinpoints the quest for their own identity in the contemporary society. Katherine V. Forrest opines, "*Being Emily* is a wonderful, valuable and very contemporary book that I believe will change minds and save lives. I was very much affected by the story, which feels piercingly real in all its details"

Trans women are the one who are labelled man at birth, but has a quest to become a woman. In *Being Emily*, the protagonist is a MTF (Male to Female). Christopher is the protagonist of the novel, who struggles a lot to establish her identity as a woman. He is christened as Christopher, but he loves to be called 'Chris'. From kindergarten itself the protagonist has a weird feeling that he is struck in a wrong body. But, at that age he is unaware of gender disorder.

The trials and tribulations faced by the Trans genders are pinpointed in *Being Emily* through the life of Chris. The entire novel revolves around him and his quest to expose his identity to the society as a woman. In the first chapter of the novel itself his unendurable mentality regarding his gender is exposed. When he takes bath, he feels that he is washing someone else's body.

Transpeople feel that there is a mismatch between their inner mind and outer façade. They overthink and imagine about their future and this results in mental issues like anxiety, depression and changes in their behaviour pattern. They feel that something is lacking in their life.

Chris is a typical sixteen year old guy: tall, angular, a member of the swim team, good enough student, likes working on cars with his dad, has had the same girlfriend for seven months. He has two only slightly uptight, somewhat hands-off parents, a younger brother with whom he gets along pretty well. But Chris is carrying a heavy secret: he doesn't-he can't- think of himself as a guy. (Browning)

Chris is blessed with a lovable family and comfortable life. But, when he is alone he feels that his soul is trapped in a wrong body. Chris creates a gap between him and his family members. He wants to convey his feelings and desires to his parents and friends. But he is scared of their response to his desire. So, he deliberately avoids sharing things with his parents.

Companions are like guarding angels to a person. Usually, a person shares his or her personal and sensitive problems with friends than parents. Chris also does the same. But, unfortunately some of his friends break their friendship with him. This incident makes him to lose faith in getting solace from his friends. At the same time, he wants to share the dark side of his life to someone.

The situation of Chris is explained by a critic, in the Lipstick Review as: "In his head and his heart, he is a girl masquerading as a guy, always has been as far back as he can remember. And he's come to the point where he can't live that way anymore that he has to tell someone. But who?" (Browning). He is afraid to uncover the hidden truth to his girlfriend, Claire. She is in love with Chris and he never want to cheat her by hiding his secret. So, he comes out with a decision to reveal the truth to Claire. At the same time, he is dilemma whether to convey the truth to her or not because he is not in a state of mind to part his relationship with her. He tells,

I had tried to tell two other friends earlier years, but that hadn't gone so well. One stopped talking to me and other laughed so hard I

confirmed to him I'd be kidding... that morning I stood in front of my closet wondering what you wear to tell your girlfriend that the boy she's dating is really a girl inside (2).

Chris decides to confess the truth to Claire, his friend. He explains his pains to her and she is shell-shocked to hear it. He tells "I knew I was a girl. In kindergarten, I kept lining up with the girls when it was time to come in from recess and the teacher would make me go over and get in line with the boys...I tried harder to be a boy" (20). He also adds that he is willing to undergo surgery and Claire spent the entire night goggling website regarding "sex change" (21).

Trans genders usually find pleasure in exposing themselves as opposite sex. They dress and imitate the behaviours of their opposite sex. While doing so they satiate their thirst for the acquired gender. In the case of Chris, he finds pleasure in wearing his mother's clothes when he is alone in his room. He purchases some women garments and tucks it inside a duffel bag with Claire's name on it. While wearing those clothes he feels like his soul get remunerated. He tells "I slowly became visible. I went from being a charcoal outline of a person to being a flesh and blood human being, my skin filled from the inside out as I arrived into my body and my life" (29).

Dressing like the opposite sex may seem weird to an ordinary person. But it provides comfort and a feeling of wholeness to those people. They make up and dress themselves in a grand manner because of the years and years of suppressed and buried desire in their mind. When they get a chance to unveil, they perform it in an ostentatious manner. When Chris is in women's clothing he feels wholeness in him. He says,

I shucked my pyjamas. The next few minutes were the best and worst of my whole day: the worst because I felt like such a freak, and the best because I slowly became visible. I went

from being a charcoal outline of a person to being a flesh and blood human being, my skin filled from the inside out as I arrived into my body and my life. (29)

In the later part of the novel, after getting acquaintance with Natalie, another transsexual he undergoes shopping with her and Claire purchases skirt, inner wears, hats and heels shoes. He also regularly shaves his legs and hands. When someone asks him about his clean shave, he tells that he is in the swimming group and so he does it.

People with gender disorder usually seek the help of their own community people. They believe that they will be supported and encouraged by them. Similarly, Chris also goggles and joins in Gender Peace. His user name is "Emily CH for Emily Christine Hesse" (33). He gets acquaintance with Natalie and they plan to meet in the city.

Chris is very careful while speaking to others. The reason behind this is he is not ready to expose his disorder to anyone. Wherever he goes, he creates an agenda in my mind. His mind works like that of a programme in a system. For instance, when he will have lunch with his friends, he creates a schedule in his mind as,

/run: lunch with the guys

1. pick one parent—complain
2. mention sports
3. mention car
4. joke about girls
5. nod
6. nod
7. nod
8. grunt
9. nod. (37,38)

This shows how he prepares himself before he is getting ready before mingling with a group. Even while speaking to his parents, he prepares himself not to speak up regarding his identity disorder.

Meanwhile, Chris's parents are worried about his strange behaviour and they arrange a meeting

between Chris and a psychiatrist, Dr. Webber. When Chris hears this, he thinks that he actually needs the guidance of an endocrinologist. He says, "What I really needed was an endocrinologist to put me on the right hormones. I felt miserable disconnect between my heart, which just wanted to cry" (35). Psychiatrists commonly begin their interactions with the personal questions and Webber also does the same. He enquires Chris about his father and his relationship with him and so on. Chris takes a firm decision not to reveal his hidden truth to Dr. Webber at any circumstance.

The gender disorder prevails in a person from the young age itself. As a child, he or she is unable to identify the disorder in him or her. Parents also fail to notice the difference in their behaviour as both male and female child behave more or less similarly. GIRES (2006) have explained the causes of gender dysphoria

Transsexualism, is strongly associated with the unusual neurodevelopment of the brain at the foetal stage. Small areas of the brain are known to be distinctly different between males and females in the population generally. In those experiencing severe gender dysphoria, one of these areas has been shown to develop in opposition to other sex characteristics and is, therefore, incongruent with the visible sex appearance (2)

In the case of Chris also at the age of four, when Heather's mom calls him boy, he feels bad. He plays with Heather, a young girl of his age, and he makes a beautiful doll house and on seeing it, Heather's mother comments him as "sweet boy" (30). This hurts him a lot. He hates to be called "young man", "son" (35). His christened name is Christopher. But he hates to be called so. At the age of six, he requests his mom to change his name.

A Person who feels alone spent more time with books and mirrors. They consider them as good companions. They get comfort from those things.

Chris' best companion in his room is his restroom mirror. He speaks up his mind with the mirror. Sometimes he cries in front of it. When he dresses up like a woman, and admires his beauty in the mirror. He takes up important decisions in life like to share his hidden secret to Claire by standing in front of the mirror.

Chris feels comfortable when he discusses his mental ailments with Natalie, one of his online friends. He hears from Natalie that her mother is very helpful to her to undergo sex change. He comes to know more about hormones treatment and surgery. He admires her dressing sense and make up. In his next meeting with Natalie and the TG group people, Chris hears the sufferings of other Trans genders like Mark who was thrown out from the house by his parents and so on. While returning home, Natalie hands him a bottle of hormones, labelled Spironolactone. It is an anti-androgen and it blocks testosterone production. After reaching home, Chris' mother asks about his trip to the town, he tells that he saw something unusual, "A woman who used to be a man" (109). Chris's mother advises him not to go to city alone.

Chris' parents are not open-minded towards Chris' decision. She gives a detailed description regarding the gender disorder. They are not convinced and Chris's father leaves the room. Dr. Mendel advises Chris not to make matters worse by arguing with his parents. Chris promises to do so and he leaves. After reaching home, his mother yells at him. She insists him not go to city and to stop using mobile phone and internet. He runs to his room and sent an email to Natalie and Claire that he is in need of help.

Chris is house arrested and Claire comes to meet him at home. She pretends to Chris' mother that she is unaware of anything regarding Chris's decision. They escape from home and Chris explains everything to Claire. Depression and stress choke Chris. He tears his shirt with knife and it hurts

his arms. He shouts in pain and anger. His father consoles him to sleep. They plan to take him to Dr. Webber to make him to understand the effects of hormone treatment and surgery. Chris and Dr. Webber argue over the gender disorder and Chris' desire to become a woman. Dr. Webber tries to convince him saying that during his young age Chris' mother is the bread winner of the family and this incident made him to idealize women and degrade men. He also adds that the problem he is undergoing is "psychological" and "not physical" (179). He advises him to undergo plastic surgery and refers sex change as "misnomer" (180). He gives him a week to think over the matter. But Chris is very stern in his decision.

After a long struggle, Chris' father takes him to an endocrinologist. He prescribes Spironolactone and Premarin and insists him not to take more than two and half milligrams. On the way they go to Natalie's house and informs her about her parents approval. Chris' father gives him a car as gift for Christmas and asks him to sell it and use the money for his surgery. But his mother is very adamant. She is not able to imagine her own son as a woman. She is afraid he may turn into a freak. Chris' only desire is to become a woman. He is not ready to think about the shortcomings of undergoing surgery. GIREs (2006) note that:

Transpeople may identify as gay, lesbian, straight or asexual. Some trans people say that, until the process of transition is complete, they cannot tell what their future sexual preference will be. It may remain the same; it may change. A trans person who has always been attracted to women, may remain so. Or not. A trans people who has always been attracted to men, may remain so. Or not. During the process of transition, the issue of sexual orientation may be of little interest to the individual concerned, since the issue of gender identity is uppermost in his or her mind.(3)

When Chris says that after becoming a woman his life will become much easier, she yells at him. She says, "People don't go from one to the other. You're not a woman. You don't act like a woman, you don't think like a woman. I'm afraid you're just going to turn out to be a freak, and you'll never get what you're really looking for" (203). He consoles her mother by explaining his pain to her. He says that he is pretending as a guy to everyone. He is living a life by lying to everyone and this hurts him a lot. He feels that his true self is smashed every day. He says, "I would rather fail at being myself than succeed at being someone I'm not" (203).

After three years, Chris enrolls himself as Emily Christine Hesse in the University of Minnesota. He undergoes sex change surgery and Claire accompanies him to the hospital. She gives moral support to Chris. Hormones make Chris' skin soft and supple. It is hard for his mother to digest the truth that Chris has turned in to Emily. But she accepts the reality and tries to develop a bond with Emily. Finally, Chris's dream comes alive. He exposes his identity as a woman and leaves a peaceful life. Like a butterfly, that flaps its wings out of the cocoon, he also comes out of his sticky life and lives peacefully.

There is a huge disparity between the condition of a transgender in Indian context and America. People in America are flexible and open minded towards change than in India. In India, people look the Trans genders as aliens only. Parents also hate to keep the child with gender disorder along with them. They are expelled from the house and they join with their own community people and fight for their survival. In the case of Chris, his parents are not ready to leave him. They try to create a bond between them and Emily.

Trans people are not at all provided with sufficient opportunities, they often face discrimination and harassment. Many organizations are developed to improve the status of Trans

people. But, no proper data is produced about the opportunities or benefits provided to them. Awareness programs, rallies and other programs should be conducted regarding the Trans people. The people's mentality regarding a person with gender identity should be modified. They should be treated as an ordinary person by the society. In public places, restroom facilities shall be provided to them. Free tailoring class and other self-employment programs shall be arranged for them.

Rachel Gold voices for the voiceless in this novel. The hurdles faced by Emily to expose her

own identity as Emily is beautifully portrayed by her. It also portrays the mental pains of Trans people and acts as advice to the ordinary people who make fun of them.

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CROSSING BORDERS: CULTURAL CONNECTIONS IN ANJALI JOSEPH'S *ANOTHER COUNTRY*

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Abstract

Literature is a part of culture in a society and embodies aspirations, trials and tribulations of a nation. Cultural studies emerge during the last quarter of the twentieth century, especially in its last decade. In India, the constituent elements of culture include nationality, ethnicity, religion, caste, social class, regional affiliation and language. It is widely recognized that women's sameness are constituted as much by nationality, social class and other categories of identity such as they are by sex and gender. As an Indian Diasporic women writer, Anjali Joseph's writings make her stand apart from the orthodoxy of female representation because she refuses to assume women, their felicity of marriages and its satisfaction. This paper brings how the protagonist have forgotten her tradition and culture and her search for some sort of sameness.

Keywords: cultural diffusion, identity, immigration, assimilation,

Indian women of this twenty-first century wish to follow the western culture. Indian educated woman lies in the western tradition and behavior while still she possesses the essential Indian nationalist spirit within her heart. Though Leela's parents are in Bombay, she moves to Paris. She mingles herself with the culture but could not find the sameness. Her hopes are all failed.

The novel *Another Country* is not only a nostalgic romanticism based on fragments of places, memories, desires and experiences of the past but also a reconstruction and revalidation of the protagonist Leela's sameness. The events and locales that form a part of her sameness have been nostalgically delineated by the author. The cross-cultural impact on her sameness is partly Indian or partly England. The problem of the protagonist is immigration and her assimilation. As a part of the diasporic community, Leela sometimes feels isolated and alienated and the overseas

languages create a state of mental imbalance, a situation of estrangement where a person feels unable to adapt with the eternal alien environment and feels restless and isolated as well.

Culture diffusion occurs, when there is tremendous difference between two different cultures and leads a person to a feeling of depression and frustration. Raymond Williams in his work *Culture and Society* says about culture as "... an individual habit of mind: the state of intellectual development of a whole society: the arts: and the whole way of a group of people" (16). This culture shock occurs when she leaves her own culture and enters into another country and thereby her old values come into conflict with new one she finds. It is truly observed by Uma Parneshwaran as: "When one arrives in a Newland, one has a sense of wonder and adventure at the sight and feel of a landscape so different from what one has been accustomed to: there is also sense of isolation and

fear: and intense nostalgia is a buffer to which many retreat" (4).

During her travel by train, Leela meets an African bald with a thick neck who asks her, "You're African, aren't you, you little bitch?" He leant in close... You little snob. You're a half-caste" (16). A week later she meets her friend Nina and tells her everything,

... about the man she'd met at a concert a week earlier. "I told my mother about it, eh, and she said, "I hope you remember you're not just representing yourself, you're representing your country". She burst into laughter. 'I think she was telling me not to be a slapper'.... 'You're representing your country". (17)

Immigration causes traumatic effects on even educated and westernized Indians hence they are afflicted with an oasis of identity. They must assimilate their country into their without imitating the westerners. Once Leela meets Patrick's friends Stella and Simon in a bar, they sit together to have a drink. Simon takes Leela to his room and puts a hand on her shoulder and talks about his work at the company. The state of exile, a sense of loss, the pain of separation and disorientation make Leela to have a quest for identity in an alien land. She undergoes several transformations during her journey of life in London which becomes a tale of moral courage, a search for self-awareness and self-assertion. Amy who is a friend of Leela in London welcomes her and they chat and enjoy the moments of the past which happen during their graduation.

Joseph's women are brought up in a culture presented with such ambiguities from childhood. Immigrant's life's are being shared by the influence of rich cultural and religious status on the one hand and the new religious status on the other and also the new learning imposed by British colonialism in India. These different influences involve with self-recognition and self-assimilation right from the

start. Fluctuations of emotions are obvious for Indians when they confront a cultural change. It is not an easy process to separate one's emotions from one's roots. Memories of the past are sentimentally associated with persons, places and institutions of childhood, teenage and youth. Richard and Leela meet Amy at a party who grabs Richards arm while talking to him it irritates Leela and she asks Amy:

'Look, another thing. Why were you flirting with Richard?' She had to repeat herself.

'Oh, don't be absurd,' Amy said.

Leela shivered. It wasn't warm. 'You kept touching his arm. You wouldn't have liked it if I'd done that. Remember the time you accused me of flirting with Doug?' Boring Doug, she appended silently.

Amy bent close and spoke loudly. 'Leela I'm not interested in Richard'

'All Right!'

'I'd never flirt with your boyfriend'. (111)

Leela leaves the place with a determination to live on her own. This indicates that self-realization is already taking shape in her life.

Leela has thus become a caged bird who has been provided all facilities but not allowed to use them. There is a shadow of male dominance over every aspect and activities of her life. Virginia Woolf in her *A Room of One's Own* rightly states: "Imaginatively she is of the highest importance. Practically she is completely insignificant" (45). As a result Leela feels her life is dry and humdrum. She is an exile in flight from the old-world of India and old cultural values. Her sense and sensibilities are actively engaged with the world outside her, leaving no time to reflect on the problems whether life is meaningful, or why one should think of East, West, North or South when one can be a singular self as culture and history would shape one. In attempting to relocate the character in a desired but alien

environment. Joseph does not probe the inner consciousness of the protagonist, nor does she depict the deeper struggle the westerners undergo in relating to each other. Leela takes the bird-view of the western life and does not touch the deeper layers of values there.

The novel looks at western life from an immigrant's point of view leaving aside the western experience of the immigrants, their legal and illegal entry into their country and its consequences. In Shobha De's *Second Thoughts*, the protagonist Maya undergoes frustration by her husband. She says "Nobody needed me absolutely nobody... a single true friend to call my own" (266). In such a way Leela has found herself and has learnt how to live. She moves to Bombay where her parents live. She meets Mike on the seashore and shares with him her life in Paris and London. He advises her to marry the person who understands her and accepts her. Then she meets Sathya a forty year old man, rich and attractive who tells her "I don't want to get married to the kind of woman I could probably still get married to" (195), but Leela has interest on him. He too advises her to fall in love with someone and not with him.

Even though the women characters run through traumatic situations, they cannot be devoid of from the relationship that they maintain with the members of the family. The main urge is always to serve, to get on with the business of living, even if it comprises a daily routine that takes care of a hundred trifling matters, bringing an order and rhythm to it. With all the limitations and sorrows, life has to go on. To live in this world, men and women need relationships. Shantha Krishnaswamy in *The Woman in Indian Fiction in English* says "Woman treasures her freedom, her privacy, glad that her responsibilities towards her family are over, glad she needs nobody and nobody now needs her" (260).

Thus, Joseph is successful in her attempt to bring about the plight of the assertive woman who is concerned in the maze of domestic chores and takes up conventional decisions to assert her individuality and establish her sameness. Here the portrayal of woman is now in the dimension of time by being a rebel against the general current of patriarchal society and in exploring her true potential along with the struggle to fulfil her urges and needs. K.K.Sinha in *The Current Agenda of the New Woman* rightly states: "The woman of today doesn't want to play the imposter any more. She feels like owning up the truth and brave it at.... Divorce is no more a Death word for her" (92). Leela appears to be a victim and loser throughout her life.

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MACHO AND DOMINANCE: LEGACY OF PATRIARCHAL DOMINATION IN COLLEEN HOOVER'S *TOO*

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Abstract

Too Late by Colleen Hoover is an outstanding psychological suspense novel about obsession and dangerous love. The story is expressed in that lens of each character's perspectives. Asa, a notorious drug trafficker, controls Sloan, the heroine of the novel and dominates her emotionally. Thus Sloan economically depends on him. In turn Asa increased obsession day by day. The dimensions of the story changes when Carter undercover DEA enters. It's "Too Late" for each character to find a way. This paper attempts to explore the elements in *Too late* by Colleen Hoover through the lense of patriarchal theory.

Keywords: patriarchy, domination, masculinity, sex, patriarchal domination.

Patriarchy is based on the idea that men are superior to women. Sir Henry Maine is considered as the father of patriarchal theory; he made an exposition of *The Patriarchal Theory* of the origin of the society. According to this theory in his introduction he says "patriarchal theory is based on this scriptural history of the Hebrew practices. All societies originated on this model. The eldest male parent is absolutely supreme in his household. His domination extends to life and death, and is a unqualified over his children as over his slaves. The flocks and herds of the children are the flocks and herds of the father. These he holds in a representative rather than in proprietary character". Subsequently, he insisted that the development of this theory emerged in the history of Romans, Greeks, Hindoos, Celts, Teutons, Slavonians and Hebrews.

The American writer Colleen Hoover makes a detailed description of love as a source of courage in abusive relationships through self-worth and empowerment. In her work *Too Late* mainly focuses

on the legacy of patriarchal domination. It can be viewed under the characteristics lens of Asa Jackson.

The term legacy of patriarchal domination enforces the ideology of the breadwinners to next generation and the systematic inherent of both physical and mental transformation and domination over the thoughts, all actions towards the opposite sex by rejecting equal structures in both public and private spheres of life. Sylvia Walby in "Theorising Patriarchy" calls it 'a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women'. Patriarchy is based on a system of power relations which are hierarchical and unequal where men control women's production, reproduction and sexuality. The patriarchal dominance leaves a tension between both sexes in an entangled society.

Asa's past is marked by violence and he struggles with managing his anger which is the trait of toxic masculinity. It can be clearly seen through

his dominating nature as he physically hurt Sloan for not following his order and his force towards Sloan to have sexual intercourse has created a traumatic experience. He also raped and forced Jess to have sexual intercourse these incidents express the masculinity power and toxicness over opposite sex.

Asa's history of casual sex and lack of emotional intimacy with his partner demonstrate a womanising attitude. Asa uses guilt and shame as a weapon to control women's behaviour and maintain power in relationships. According to Asa, his definition of male species make readers to wide open their mouth

Men weren't designed by nature to be monogamous. It's engrained in us to spread Our Seed. To keep the population going. We breeders by default, and no matter what Society tries to force upon us, we will be breeders until we kill ourselves off. That's why We're so fucking horny all the time ...when men cheats it's purely physical. (141)

Asa's philosophies on sexes were different, his ideas are filled with Patriarchal and toxic masculine urge of power domination. He tends to insist that feminine goals based on one's sex organ must be monogamous, they must have only one partner to mate until the end of their life. But his ideology or philosophy on masculinity is different. He mentions that the entire masculine community as breeders are defined based on their sex organs to spread seed in the world to increase population. Even though the society changes and imposes new ideologies, Asa insists that the goal of masculinity is to breed and to leave footprints but his partner should only have him. This shows the patriarchal nostalgia and his deeper knowledge on sex.

Masculinity usually denotes the collection of attributes, behaviours and traits that are conventionally linked and designed for men and boys. This can comprise physical features like dominance, strength and psychological or emotional

characteristics like self confidence, independence and assertiveness. These characteristics develop toxic forms of masculinity to consider them as hierarchical than others.

The term masculinity is not a new term. It existed more than centuries ago. In ancient Greece the word masculinity can be referred to as 'andria' which means manliness, courage and virility. Where the men should impose these qualities in their life. In ancient Rome masculinity is closely related to their ideas of power and dominance. Romans were expected to be strong, assertive and competitive. They were motivated to be a dominant person in both of their social and personal lives. These ideas were closely related to the ideas of virility and sexuality were

Roman men were expected to have more sexual partners and to demonstrate their sexual power. Other hand women were considered as marginalised groups it can be clearly seen in the Jackson Katz's definition of masculinity as "Masculinity is a hierarchy in which some men are considered more manly than others, and in which women are considered inferior to men" in his famous book, *The Macho Paradox: why some men hurt women and how all men help* published in 2006.

The characteristic Asa's view expresses his virility and obsession over a relationship that he wants his partner to be monogamous based on his understanding that women were not meant to sleep with more than one man. But men have the tendency to have an attraction towards multiple ones. If a woman cheats it is purely mental but if a man is attracted towards a woman it is purely physical. According to the theory of Asa both men and women are different not only based on the genital organ but he imposed the image of stereotype and gender roles. It leads to the import image of stereotype and gender discrimination. This clearly expresses patriarchal masculine domination.

Asa's points on feminine characteristics are

different and optimistic. His perspectives clearly express stereotypes on general rules and gender norms. Asa wants Sloan to be loyal and obedient to his order. On being as a masculine in nature he can have multiple sexual relationships meanwhile he wants a wife who nurtures his child. According to Asa there are two categories of womanhood. It turned out to be monogamous and promiscuous. His biased masculine nature expresses a strange attitude. To satisfy his sexual urge he forced Jess, friend of Asa to have sexual intercourse multiple times though he had been in love with Sloan. To justify his actions he contemplates that men's sexual temptation and physical attraction are purely physical. To satisfy his sexual needs he seeks promiscuous women according to him they were naturally designed to satisfy men's desires. But he wants his partner to be caring, obedient and nurturing one entirely monogamous. This shows his typical understanding and narrow minded influence of patriarchal dominance.

Cheating for a man is different than cheating for a woman...proven by Mother Nature... Women don't understand because they aren't made like us. That's why men wear also given the distant ability to lie so well..."so the whores are for nature and the wives are for nurture" (142).

The expectation of male domination is particularly evident in heterosexual relationships. Where men are often in charge and expected to be breadwinners. They also play a vital role in taking decisions, imposing controlling behaviour, aggression and physical force. As David Gilmore notes in his book *Manhood in the Making* Culture Concepts of Mass Masculinity: "The Association of mass clarity with dominance in ubiquitous" (1991). Obsession and toxicness masculinity traits lead to conflict and violence in relationships.

The way Asa treated Sloan is purely the motive of physical hurt. He drags her and pulls her towards the stairs though she forgot to wear her engagement

ring he uses his strength and grasp her eventually and pulls her wrist and force the ring on her finger and pour glue on it so she will not forget to wear the ring. This is the result of the aggressive nature of masculinity. Asa also uses Sloan's brother Stephen as bait to trap her for two years and justify it as an act of love; his aggression and assertiveness prove the dominating masculine nature. Asa's relationship with Sloan is multifaceted, involving a mix of intense attraction, emotional connection, and mutual trauma.

On comparing both the characters of the novel *Too late*, Carter and Asa, these two characters are like the two Cardinal directions. Asa's character strongly emphasizes traditional masculinity. On other hand Carter's character expresses modern masculinity. He was a good listener. He never missed a chance to comfort Sloan physically, psychologically and emotionally.

Carter is a character who displays a high level of emotional intelligence. He can understand and manage his emotions and his empathetic nature is evident in various situations. Though Asa troubles Carter, his empathy towards Asa makes him the sample for modern masculinity. Carter never hesitates to show his emotions openly towards Sloan. He genuinely respects her emotions, feelings and values her thoughts and ideas. His character also demonstrates a high level of compassion towards Sloan, thus he accepts her child as his part of life his perspectives makes him as a sample for modern masculinity. Asa's tendency towards violence and aggression is another example of his classic masculinity. He repeatedly abused Sloan and forced Jess; these situations clearly express the traits for traditional masculinity. He followed the foot instructions that was guided by his father over an year when he was young this leads to Patriarchal male dominance in his relationships.

Carter's characteristic traits express a strong sense of empathy and compassion. He can emotionally relate to Sloan and on a deep level and

he is always ready to listen to her or assistants when it is required. This emotional intelligence is a crucial component of modern masculinity because it demonstrates that men may be strong and masculine while still being kind and empathetic. The portrayal of Carter as a fresh and nuanced perspective on modern masculinity. Through his vulnerability, accountability and empathy, Carter is a great example for the reason that it is possible for men to be strong and masculine while also being caregivers, compassionate and emotional intelligence. As such he serves as a powerful role model for men who are looking to redefine manhood in modern society.

Today, society is filled with two types of masculinity, traditional masculinity and modern masculinity. In *Too Late* also, two types of masculinity is portrayed by Hoover. Traditional masculinity attributes qualities like physical domination, forcefully imposing their idea through Sloan. Asa is a character who withhold Traditional masculinity. But the people who follow the characteristics of modern masculinity like Carter

cherish the relationships and show empathy towards others. They always treat others with respect and take their responsibilities into actions. Modern masculine attributes like empathy, compassion, vulnerability and accountability helps to break the legacy of patriarchal domination and emphasizes modernisation, emotional connection, equality, respect and empathy towards others.

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TRAUMA AND MEMORY: A PSYCHOANALYTIC INSIGHT INTO *SLEEPING ON JUPITER* BY ANURADHA ROY

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Abstract

This paper, "Trauma and Memory: A Psychoanalytic Insight into Sleeping on Jupiter by Anuradha Roy" deals with the trauma and memory of the protagonist Nomi Frederiksen at her Guruji's ashram. It helps in understanding how trauma and memory are interconnected in one's life on the basis of fragmentation, distortion and suppression. Basically, sexual harassment is not at all a serious matter and a considered issue in ashrams. Roy realistically brings out all the sufferings and agony faced by the protagonist. This paper introspects how as a child, she got detached and how her adulthood was spoiled by Guruji in the name of God and what was her psyche when she was sexually abused in the name of God. It discusses how Nomi's psyche, as a central character, worked on the traumatic situation especially during her abuse.

Keywords: abuse, dream, genophobia, memory and trauma.

Psychoanalytic approach helps understand the personality development of the person and psychoanalysis is a clinical method to treat psychopathology. Sigmund Freud was known as the founder of Psychoanalytic Theory. He developed this theory based on the development of the physical science of that time. Now Psychoanalytic Theory has undergone many refinements under the influence of modern science. Freud, in his *Civilization and Its Discontents*, talks about superego, "The superego is the part of our personality that strives for perfection, and which seeks to punish us for our mistakes and wrongdoing" (75).

Memories are the dynamic process through which the ego maintains its strength. This leads to trauma. Witnessing a father's murder has a profound impact on a child's mentality and psychological development. At the age of six, Nomi witnessed her father's death. The crucial death of her father was

the first traumatic incident that happened in Nomi's life. Fear and anxiety exhibit increased clinginess, traumas or nightmares due to the perceived threat to her safety. "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is not a disorder, but a normal response to an abnormal situation" (12) mentioned Rachel Yehuda in her work *Interpersonal Neurobiology and the Legacy of Trauma*. Nomi's life was also a normal response towards her father's abnormal murder.

Love, kindness, care and sharing are necessary for a healthy human mind. But Nomi's life is deprived of all these humaneness. Nomi experienced parental abandonment. In this society, parental care is needed for every child. Without parental care, the children might go astray. Here, Nomi's own mother abandons her. Nomi suffers from starvation and is alone on a shore. Harper Lee, an American novelist, also mentions in her novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird* about parental abandonment, "When a child asks you something, answer him, for goodness' sake. But

don't make a production of it. Children are children, but they can spot an evasion muddles' em" (87). Here, Harper Lee highlights the importance of honest communication between parents and children.

Universally, a mother's love is a profound and influential force in a child's life. She provides a foundation for emotional, social and physical development. But, in Nomi's case the absence of her mother is a profound loss on her physical, emotional and psychological well-being. The effect varies depending on her age. Nomi was only six when her mother abandoned her. Hunger, thrust, suffocation and danger were the physical barriers Nomi faced. Attachment issues, emotional insecurity and low self-esteem were the psychological barriers she experienced.

Sexual harassment at any stage is not only a physical trauma it damages a person mentally and leaves an individual psychologically traumatized. When Nomi was in Guruji's ashram, she was sexually harassed several times. She is silenced by the abuser, "Say nothing. I don't reveal myself in this form to anyone else. You are the chosen one. Not a word about this. I will call you and you will sit on my lap again" (93). At that tender age, Nomi knew nothing about sex or the difference between kindness and sexual advantage.

Guruji exploits the innocence of the child. He crosses his limits. He proclaims this abuse as a ritual and he says to Nomi that she was a chosen child for God. Not knowing the difference between good touch and bad touch, she becomes a prey to his sexual hunger. There is no one to teach her about good and bad. This is the plight of all children abandoned by their parents. In this current era, there are many such cases, abusing children in the name of religious rituals. Generally, those who have experienced sexual trauma show symptoms of nausea, vomit left with bad taste in their mouth. Roy depicts, "I remember how night after night I would

run to tap and sit under it, clothes and all, to wash it away: the smells, touch, the bad taste in my mouth after Guruji summoned me to his room" (174).

Noses, mouths and tongues, scrunching up as a prelude is a common symptom seen in victims of sexual harassment. Nomi also undergoes the same kind of experience. She is affected by Genophobia. It is an irrational fear of sex or sexual intimacy. This kind of phobia varies according to the age group of sexually victimized people. She was only seven when she was sexually abused by Guruji. So, below the age group of eighteen, the phobia's effect and the particular person's psychological behaviour even varies. Clinically, Nomi's hormone levels significantly vary from an un-harassed girl's hormones. Fear of sex leads her to the feeling of inadequacy, shame and loss of self-esteem, which affect her relationships and daily life.

There was drastic change in Guruji's behaviour. When Nomi narrated Guru's story in the initial pages of the novel, it was quite different from his present behaviour. Everyone in the ashram worshipped Guruji as a God. When Guruji saw Nomi at first, he said, "I will keep you safe. You have come to my ashram now. This is your refuge. Nobody will harm you" (37). But only later Nomi realizes that all his declarations were false. There was no one to help her. When a child tolerates all these and endures everything in silence, she may blast at one instance in her life. The ashram provided food, clothing, education and books. To an outsider, everything in the ashram was normal. It was praised by the public and media. It was considered as a small heaven, but inside it was a huge hell.

Nomi got her first periods at twelve. "My body fell asleep if it would tear into two when he forced my legs apart, then wider apart. He stuffed cloth into my mouth to stop me shouting for help. I remember my screams made no sound. There was blood. A burning between my legs. The sense that my body was being split open" (174), regrets Nomi. Before

her puberty he was continuously torturing her. He did not stop disturbing her even when she was menstruating. From her narration, the readers understand that she is made more vulnerable and sensitive, making her more susceptible to emotional distress and trauma. This experience of sexual abuse during her mensuration leads her to intense feeling of shame, guilt and self-blame.

Her vulnerability and helplessness traumatizes Nomi. The trauma triggers her fear and anxiety, making difficult for her to feel safe or trust others. As a coping mechanism, she experiences emotional numbness, disconnecting from her feelings and emotions. People who endure continuous sexual abuses should be given counseling and medicated attention in order to save them from trauma. But in Guruji's ashram Nomi did not have any such provisions for counselling or help. If a student in the ashram tries to share about the sexual assault of Guruji to her teachers, she is not considered as a person. They just blamed her that she is possessed by some evil spirit which forces her to speak bad about Guruji. In some instances, some girls were terribly beaten by Guruji in front of all and were threatened by some mantras in order to silence them and as a warning to others. After a few minutes, he behaves as if nothing has happened. In the name of God and spirituality Guruji plays a filthy act.

Nomi was first sexually abused at the age of seven, at an age when a child is innocent of a good and a bad touch. Even Piku, the passive friend of Nomi was abused. But she made loud noise when she was forced to enter into Guruji's room. For that reason the child was heavily attacked. She even has some scares in her private parts. Once Nomi tries to help Piku and that was brought to the knowledge of Guruji. Nomi was punished cruelly for trying to help the little girl. She painfully recollects, "I remember how I was punished for trying to untie her: three days in the kennel shed, no food. The kennel had six

dogs and their smell was close and sharp. The dogs growled at first. They came to me to sniff me with flattened ears and snarling lips. Later, I slept among them, ate scraps from their bowls and when they licked my face their tongues were rough and their breath was hot" (174).

Nomi lived in the dirty and unhygienic kennel for three days. It made her sick and is affected by parasites. In the kennel she did not get adequate protection from extreme temperatures, rain and snow. She did not receive adequate nutrition and clean drinking water. She also suffered from sleeping disturbances, noise, the small and chaos of the kennel environment which were intimidating and frightening. She had vomiting sensation and other health issues. Thus, she suffered physically and psychologically inside the kennel. Living in a kennel with dogs is a challenging experience for a child and this too has traumatized Nomi's psyche.

Nomi knew that her memories were true, concrete and detailed about the incidents happened. "Like fungus that takes birth in warm and wet places, memories ooze from the crevices of your brain spawned there, living and dying there..." (37). During the day Nomi remembered schoolwork and at nights a girl's grinding teeth noise and another's sobbing sound. "I would hear one girl grind her teeth fiercely enough to set mine on edge and another girl sob" (39).

Normally, victims of sexual harassment and abuse at any stage are both physically even mentally traumatized. The impact lies on their nervous system causing physical and psychological trauma. Nomi has returned from Oslo to Jarmuli for documentary work. One day, while taking snapshots, she happens to see a monk who reminded her of her past; made her run down the beach, cross hotels, move away from crowded area and enter a birch forest, where a house was burning, in a faraway place blood was streaming down its wall and heard a girl cried for her brother again and

again. Nomi carried the impact of trauma that retained in her crevices turned into phobia in her later stages burst out as Genophobia. This phobia arouses the physical or psychological fear of sexual intercourse.

The status of the girl child in Indian society has been a major concern and focus for policymakers, activists and communities. Historically, the girl in India has faced numerous challenges rooted in cultural, social and religious factors. Nomi embodies the collective voice of the wounded spirit of the girl children through her experience and then narrative. Nomi's story is set against the backdrop of a tumultuous childhood marked by violence exploration and loss, a poignant presentation of the broader issues faced by the vulnerable young girls.

When Nomi's family is brutally murdered during a conflict in her homeland her life is tainted with extreme violence. This initial trauma sets the stage for her later experiences of vulnerability and exploitation. She experiences more abuse during her time in the ashram, especially at the hands of Guruji who poses as a saviour but turns out to be the predator. "He pressed me back against his chest. 'Some things are forbidden, you know that, don't you? We need rules when we live together,'" (91). This mirrors the real world scenarios where children, especially girls, are often let down by those meant to protect them. The exploitation Nomi faces at the hand of the very people who are all supposed to care for her strips away her innocence. This loss is a symbolic representation of the countless girl children who face similar fates robbed of their childhood and forced to confront realities prematurely.

Nomi's journey to find her roots and understand her identity reflects a universal quest for belonging among children who have been displaced and marginalized. Her attempt to piece together her past and make sense of fragmented memories symbolises the struggles of many girl children to

reclaim their narrative from a world that often silences them. Nomi demonstrates incredible fortitude in the face of insurmountable obstacles. A survival and eventual escape from the oppressive ashram showcase the strength and tenacity many girls display in the face of adversity. Nomi's journey from victim to survivor highlights the potential for healing and empowerment, serving as a testament to the indomitable spirit of the girl child.

The systematic nature of the injustice faced by the girl children were neatly underscored by Roy. This institutional and social structure that fails Nomi is indicative of the broader failures that perpetuate the cycle of abuse and exploitation. In the narration of Nomi, Roy gives voice to the countless girl children who suffer in silence. Nomi's narrative becomes a powerful vehicle for highlighting issues that are often overlooked or ignored.

Commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking are two of the most profitable and rapidly expanding forms of illicit activity worldwide. Numerous victims are affected by the worldwide enslavement of children, who are either taken from their homes and soled or trafficked inside their nations, where they are used as commodities for labour or sexual exploitation. Girls are especially prone to be trafficked into the sex trade globally. Ninety eight percentage of people trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation are women and girls. The level of violence experienced has been associated with negative physical, psychological and social-emotional development, and health and safety standards are typically deficient in exploitative environments. The approach based on human rights for children trafficking offers a thorough conceptual framework that facilitates the development, execution and assessment of victim-focussed and law enforcement responses.

Nomi's character profoundly represents the wounded spirit of the girl children, throughout her harrowing yet inspiring journey. Roy sheds light on

the young girls' enduring challenges in hostile environments, underscoring the urgent need for compassion, protection and systematic change. Nomi's story with the blend of pain and resilience encapsulates the collective voice of many girls and children who continue to fight for their right to a dignified life.

Roy exposes the endless, treacherous hypocrisy of Indian society and a bare bodied priest who make a fuss about women's clothing. Nomi's narrative raises many burning questions. Will it ever be possible to police to stop the crimes committed against women in the name of divine sanction and initiation rituals in a society steeped in religiosity, where wives still fast for the wellbeing of their husbands and subject themselves to exploitation in the name of spirituality? Can we even envisage a situation where an Indian woman can confront gender based violence without having recourse to escape to the west? In handling these cases Roy uses this work as a weapon.

Memory is a key theme throughout the novel. Nomi's formative years have been scorched with fire. The impression of trauma and violence has taunted the landscape of her past psychologically and physically. Child abuse, war crimes and male violence against women dominate the plot and Roy is able to create compelling characters and sub plots to expose the traumatic psyche of the protagonist, Nomi.

The novel effectively elicits a profound sense of displacement, suffering and the characters' difficult journey to reconcile with the traumatic history. The clear and intense imagery successfully communicates the expensive physical and emotional toll of trauma

on the characters. The utilisation of the natural world as a figurative representation of human experiences and feelings is a frequent motif in trauma narratives. Roy realistically brings out the impact of past trauma and memory through her narrative. The traumatic fear and pain undergone by Nomi and other female characters like Piku were hectic and stressful both physically and mentally. Even at the face of trauma Nomi's struggle to set herself and other victims free is to be highlighted and celebrated. Every female child should be encouraged and trained to exercise her stamina at the face of danger and to establish her identity overcoming her traumatic past.

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND HERITAGE: A THEMATIC PEEP INTO NIDHI DUGAR KUNDALIA'S *WHITE AS MILK AND RICE*

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Abstract

This paper aims to present the cultural diversity and heritage of the Halakkis tribe of Ankola in the state of Karnataka. This paper presents a thematic analysis of one of the six tribes discussed by Nidhi Dugar Kundalia, a renowned Indian author and journalist, who is celebrated for her evocative storytelling and in-depth exploration of the human experience. Cultural diversity refers to the broad range of differences among individuals, including aspects such as language, religion, cuisine, social interaction, music and art. It reflects the distinctive identities and customs that various groups contribute to society. White as Milk and Rice illustrates how native tribes have lost their traditions and cultural heritage due to cultural assimilation and the erosion of traditional knowledge. In an increasingly globalized world, this paper contributes to the ongoing conversation about cultural diversity, indigenous rights and the dynamics of intercultural coexistence.

Keywords: culture, diversity, heritage, tradition, tribe.

Cultural diversity encompasses a wide range of differences among individuals, including language, religion, social interaction, music and art. It reflects the unique identities and customs that various groups bring to society. As Maya Angelou said in *Rainbow in the Cloud*, "Diversity creates a rich tapestry, and all threads within it are equally valuable, regardless of color" (74). Different cultures possess different languages and communication systems that are essential for the exchange of ideas and the preservation of cultural heritage. Each culture has its own distinct differences in cuisine and cooking practices, religions and spiritual practices. Cultural differences in social behaviors and customs greatly influence interactions between people. Individuals usually express themselves through dance, music, art, and storytelling and these

mediums within a culture and these are vital for their identity and the continuation of cultural traditions. Raymond Williams says in his *Culture and Society* that, "Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purpose, its own meanings" (*Culture and Society Quotes by Raymond Williams*).

Cultural diversity offers numerous benefits, including the promotion of social cohesion, economic growth, creativity and innovation. Diverse perspectives can lead to more creative solutions and unique ideas. Additionally, cultural diversity can attract tourists and foster international trade. Understanding and appreciating different cultures reduces prejudice and promotes tolerance. However, there are also challenges associated with cultural diversity. Language barriers can hinder

communication and cultural differences can sometimes result in misunderstandings and conflicts. Striking a balance between preserving cultural heritage and assimilating into the broader society can be difficult. There are several ways to promote cultural diversity. Cultural diversity enriches societies by fostering a wider range of opportunities, perspectives, and experiences, promoting peace and inclusion. Nidhi Dugar Kundalia's works, while not exclusively focused on cultural diversity, regularly explore India's cultural richness, customs and varied lives. Her notable book, *The Lost Generation: Chronicling India's Dying Professions*, highlights the impact of modernization and globalization on traditional occupations, emphasizing the importance of preserving cultural heritage and examining the effects of societal shifts on cultural practices and marginalized communities.

Literature powerfully portrays cultural diversity, exploring its richness, the challenges of coexistence, and the nuances of human difference. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's works on African identity and the immigrant experience is presented in *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah*. Likewise, Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* are some of the notable works which explore culture, identity and displacement. *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie, focuses on postcolonial identity that masterfully combines Eastern and Western traditions. Maya Angelou's, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is a powerful celebration of African-American culture and resilience. R.K. Narayan's *Malgudi Days* captures the simplicity and diversity of small-town life in India with remarkable clarity.

The theme of cultural diversity within the Halakki tribe of Ankola is beautifully woven into Nidhi Dugar Kundalia's *White as Milk and Rice* through the story of Sukri, a Halakki woman from the Konkan

coast of India. India's rich cultural diversity is exemplified by the distinctive cultural practices, oral traditions, and way of life of the indigenous tribal group Halakkis. Sukri's journey demonstrates how, in the face of hardship and modernity, this diversity is both challenged and preserved. "Channa edige mette chenche tumbe" (6) considering the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Halakki tribe, the words "Channa edige mette chenche tumbe" (6) are probably taken from an oral tradition or traditional Halakki folk song. A fundamental part of the Halakki women's cultural identity is their songs, which have been passed down through the generations.

In addition to being works of art, these songs-which Sukri learns from her mother-are archives of knowledge, history, and communal ideals. Sukri serves as a link between her tribe's long-standing customs and the contemporary world by recording and performing these songs, allowing the Halakkis' cultural diversity to be seen by a wider audience. "Neerige chepuna chepana..." (9). This quote highlights how vital water is to the continuation of life. It emphasizes the idea that life cannot exist without water and that it is essential to existence. It is frequently used to emphasize how crucial it is to preserve and value water as a valuable resource. Poverty, land loss, and social problems like alcoholism pose a threat to the Halakkis' way of life, which is firmly anchored in their relationship with the land and the natural world. These difficulties demonstrate how cultural diversity is vulnerable to outside influences on marginalized communities. Sukri's story demonstrates how her people persevered in upholding their customs despite these difficulties. "In our times, hard-working women were given more respect" (33). The quote emphasizes that regardless of gender, hard work is a quality that garners respect. Women who have traditionally been underappreciated or restricted to traditional roles are now more widely recognized for their contributions in a variety of fields, including

business, science, education, and more, in many societies. National awareness of the Halakki community is brought about by Sukri's ascent to fame as a folk artist and her eventual awarding of the Padma Shri. In addition to honoring the tribe's cultural diversity, this recognition gives Sukri the ability to speak out against alcoholism, which has damaged her community's cohesiveness, and for social change. Her activism is an example of how social progress and cultural preservation can coexist.

Heritage, the soul of community, is the living legacy of stories, artifacts, values and traditions that is being passed down through generations. It is our collective memory, embodying identity, origins, and aspirations in traditions, languages, holidays, and art, connecting us to the past and inspiring future hope. Heritage is fundamentally about identity. It influences how people and groups view themselves and their role in society. For instance, our heritage is expressed in the songs we sing, the stories we tell, and the food we eat. American- Musician Jidenna says, "I am, always have been, and always will be proud of my Nigerian heritage" (*Brainy Quotes*). Each human being in this world by nature feels proud of their culture and heritage. These components are active components of our present that are changing over time without losing their core characteristics; they are not merely artifacts from the past. Because it grounds us in a common past and serves as a basis for our values and beliefs, heritage gives us a sense of belonging. The diversity of heritage is one of its most lovely features. Each family, community, and culture have a distinct history that adds to the diverse fabric of human existence. From India's colorful festivals to Japan's complex tea ceremonies, Africa's oral storytelling customs, and Europe's architectural wonders are examples of how human ingenuity, tenacity, and wisdom are reflected in heritage. We are strengthened by this diversity, which serves as a

reminder that there are innumerable ways to live, love and make the world meaningful.

The unique language, traditions, and customs of the Halakkis distinguish them from other Indian communities. Sukri's journey serves as an example of how, despite hardship, cultural diversity can be a source of identity and strength. She exemplifies the versatility and depth of her cultural heritage by navigating both her traditional and modern worlds. Sukri's story in *White as Milk and Rice* is a potent illustration of how cultural diversity can be both a resource to be valued and a means of achieving self-determination. The customs, hardships, and tenacity of the Halakki tribe serve as a reminder of the value of acknowledging and appreciating such distinctive identities and are representative of the larger fabric of India's varied cultural landscape. By valuing and protecting our heritage, we pay tribute to the hardships, triumphs and aspirations of our ancestors. Heritage is about moving forward with a greater awareness of who we are and what we can become, not just about looking back. Heritage is a dynamic force that changes as societies do, it is not static. Preserving the essential components of legacy is important, but so is adapting them to modern situations. Heritage will continue to be significant and relevant for upcoming generations. Preserving the heritage is also a duty. The preservation of heritage is greatly aided by museums, cultural events and educational initiatives. Additionally, communities are proud of their customs and are enthusiastically resurrecting them for the next generation. People can be brought together by their shared heritage. Heritage can act as a unifying factor in a world where differences frequently divide people, promoting mutual respect and understanding between various groups. Heritage serves as a reminder that we are all members of the same human family, despite our differences. "One's heritage and roots is something to be proud of and cherished" said Sanja Morgan, American Celebrity

(*Brainy Quotes*). It serves as a legacy for the future, a compass for the present, and an invaluable gift from the past. It is the thread that connects us to our ancestors and one another, weaving the fabric of our identities together.

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RACISM IS A BARRIER TO EQUALITY: A COMPARATIVE INSIGHT INTO CRAIG SILVEY'S JASPER JONES

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Abstract

Racism is a significant barrier to equality, shaping individual and societal perceptions through deep-seated prejudices and systemic discrimination. Craig Silvey's Jasper Jones offers a psychological insight into the impact of racism on the minds of people. Through the character of Jasper Jones, a mixed-race outsider in a small Australian town, Silvey explores how racial bias influences public perception, reinforcing social exclusion and inequality. The novel examines the psychological effects of racism on both the oppressed and the privileged, revealing the ways in which fear, guilt and internalized prejudice shape human behaviour. This study highlights the enduring psychological consequences of racial discrimination and the necessity of challenging racist ideologies to achieve true equality.

Keywords: *discrimination, identity, injustice, prejudice, racism.*

Racism is any action, practice or belief that reflects the racial worldview ideology that humans may be divided into separate biological entities called race. There is a casual link between inherited physical traits and traits of personality, intellect, morality and other culture and behavioural features and that some races are innately superior to others. Racism was the heart of slavery. In the eighteenth century the ideas of race were invented to magnify the differences between the people of European origin and of African descendants. The contradiction between slavery and the ideology of human equality accompanies with a philosophy of human freedom and dignity seemed to demanded dehumanisation for those who are enslaved. In Craig Silvey's *Jasper Jones* the narrator reveals, "I think about Jeffery Lu billed every day of his life. I think about Sam Quim, a boy at our school with a cleft palate or pure style, a

lonely girl who has a ruby red birth mark like a bloodstain down her face" (81). Racism affected almost all the lives in their village, even the young children are the worst sufferers.

The Sellout by Paul Beatty is yet another work that deals about the racial problem in African-American society. Racial discrimination is portrayed by Paul Beatty thus, "The filthy one-toilet bathroom buzzed with flies. The floors and the seat were fly paper sticky... The acrid stink of UN flushed racism and shit shrivelled my face and put goose bumps on my arms. Slowly I backed out. Underneath the faded WHITES ONLY" (179). Most of the characters in racist world suffers xenophobia. The word xenophobia comes from the Ancient Greek Word "Xenos" meaning strange or foreigners. Xenophobia is a deep-rooted fear towards foreigners. The term 'Xenophobia' is usually

applied to the dominant group in a society because that group commonly oppress or suppress others. Xenophobia is an intense or irrational fear, dislike or prejudice against people from other countries. It can be manifest in various ways, such as prejudice, discrimination and hostility. Xenophobia can be fielded by lack of understanding, cultural differences, economic concerns and nationalism. Xenophobia can have serious consequences, including social exclusion, violence and mental health issues.

Jasper Jones deals with the lives of non-white people who settled in the imaginary town Corrigan because the half caste people are target for bullying and cruelty. Jasper Jones is routinely blamed for every crime and indiscretion because he is a half caste. His father is a serene and unreasonable man. His mother is dead and his father is not good. He was called as a thief, liar, thug, and truant. But it is unreal and also, he is an orphan. Jasper Jones is blamed for all the crimes that he has not committed. Racial discrimination plays a vital role in the book Craig Silvey's *Jasper Jones*. "I'd heard Jasper Jones, described as a half-caste, which I'd never really understood until I mentioned it one night at the dinner table. My father is a serene and reasonable man..." (5).

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* also deals about the same racial problem. The Blacks become slaves to White masters because of racism. The protagonist Sethe becomes a slave to white masters. They physically and mentally torture her. Sethe suppressed because of slavery. "During before and after the war he had seen Negroes so stunned or hungry or tired or benefit it was a wonder they recalled or said anything" (78). In the novel *Jasper Jones*, because of xenophobia, Jasper Jones was treated as very low. In *Beloved* because of xenophobia, she worked as a servant in White master's house. African Negroes suffered a lot in racist world. In the poem "I Too Sing America" by the poet Langston Hughes describes his anxiety,

because when White came the Blacks did not allow them in the table, they insist them to sit in the kitchen. Racism is a common problem in African Literature.

In the novel *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd, he describes the racial problem in his novel. It deals with the racial difference between Blacks and Whites. A Black care taker Roselean works under the White family. The black girl was always attacked by somebody. She complained that to the police. But the police arrested the girl Roselean, because she is a Black. This situation affects her a lot. Racial problem is highly focused here too. In *Jasper Jones*, "of course this town will blame him; of course, Corrigan is going to accuse him of this.... All of those matters is the fact of this girl's death and this town's imagination" (14). These lines show the bad opinion about Jasper Jones because of social status of racism. The racial problems lead them to slavery, fear, angry, hatred, protest and xenophobia.

Jeffrey Lu is a character who suffered xenophobia. Jeffery is a Vietnamese boy and a good cricket player. Charlie and Jeffery are good friends. The racial problem leads to violence because he was Jeffrey treated badly by the co-players. In the novel, *The Secret Life of Bees*, Monk portrayed another incident. The caretaker Roselean is a Black girl but Lily is a White girl. April is a Black girl. She is highly pathetic because of racial problem. She likes to taste ice-cream in the parlour. "The man who owned the market gave them the cones but they said to go outside to eat them.... She came home screaming that it wasn't fair" (119). April is refused to entertain there. So she committed suicide. In Monk Kidd's novel, *The Secret Life of Bees* tells that when April was fifteen she took her father's shotgun and killed herself. Here the racial suppression is highly portrayed.

Craig Silvey pointed the similar aboriginal character of Jeffery Lu. The Australian people are

mainly aboriginals and they were dominated by the Whites. They suppressed the aboriginals. The term 'White', 'Dark' refers to describe the racial difference. Jeffery's parents are Vietnamese. "So he's ruthlessly bullied and belted about by the boys at school. He probably cops it worse than Jasper" (7). These lines show the racial problems in Australian society. In the novel *The Secret River* by Kate Grenville, he says "with no one but blacks around him, other than his own son, Thornhill saw that their skins were not black, no more than his own was White" (75). These lines also show the racial difference between Blacks and Whites. In *Jasper Jones* Silvey quote another character Mad Jack Lionel. He is an old man. He is the suspecting character of Laura's death. But the narrator portrays that Lionel is a "Mad Jack is character of much speculation and intrigue for the kids of Corrigan. No child has actually laid eyes on him.... But the tall stories and rumours all weave wispily around one single infutable fact: that Jack Lionel killed a young woman some years ago, and he's never been seen outside his house since" (3). Grenville suggest that the White sellers have learned much from the aboriginals.

In *Jasper Jones* the suspected victim for Laura's death is Mad Jack Lionel. He is a good man and an aboriginal. Because of family issues he is separated from his house. The racial problem is seen in Australian Literature more commonly. Silvey quotes many novels by many authors in his work. He influenced on Southern Gothic works. Jasper Jones and Charlie are very angry towards Mad Jack Lionel so they enquire him and find him as a loyal man. In *Jasper Jones*, Jeffery was attached by words because he is a Vietnamese. The background of Vietnam War is highly dominated cause for more aboriginals. The aboriginal culture is in Australian society. An Lu is Jeffery's father who is attacked by the natives. The racial problem is mainly seen in many Australian novels. Laura's death gives a sense

of anticipation for Corrigan people. The people of Corrigan will blame Jasper Jones. Charlie wants to inform the matter to the police. But the village and the police itself blame Jasper Jones. So, he says, "All due respect, Charlie, I don't think anyone will believe that least of all your folks and specially not the sarge" (18).

Jasper is an outcast in Corrigan and this is clearly attracted by Charlie. He heard that Jasper as a half caste. Charlie brought this up by his father, who is a calm, intelligent man. His father became angry and told Charlie that it was impolite to talk about people's race. He gave Charlie a collection of books by Southern authors like Eudora Welty, William Faulkner, O' Connor, Harper Lee and Mark Twain. He enjoyed Harper Lee's *To kill A Mocking Bird*, best though he told her father that the *Adventures of Huckle Berry Finn* was his favourite. "He gave me a stack of Southern writers to start with Welty, Faulkner, Harper Lee, Flannery O' Conner. The biggest portion of the stack was Mark Twain these must have been a dozen of his book in there". (16)

In Australia the aboriginals are greatly affected by Vietnam War. It is the background of the novel. Jasper Jones and so many people settled there as aboriginals. The aboriginals are half caste people. So, they greatly are troubled with racial problem. Racism underlying the daily life of the town and it led into violence. Charlie grows with the awareness of the cruelty and racism of his fellow town people. It is a vital part of his coming of age in the novel. Noam Chomsky has studied the instrumental connection between the Vietnam War and the notion of objective scholarship. Mad Jack Lionel is the suspected culprit for Laura's death. Charlie asks about his mother who was an aboriginal. Jasper tells Charlie that he barely knew his mother, since she died in a car accident when he was young. His father is a good athlete player. But he preferred drinking and loses his career. "I have a suspicion.

He says and lights another cigarette.... Who? I lean forward. He taps his cigarette holds it by his thigh and turns to me. Jack Lionel, I reckon it was Jack Lionel." (15)

Jeffery plays cricket and he faces many barriers in the game. Sometime it is better to prepare for the best than to deny that the best will ever happen. Warwick Trent, who also in Jeffery's team, is angry and calls Jeffery Cong. In part Jeffery's initial failure is clearly because he's rusty. If he's been allowed to play cricket in all season, definitely he becomes better. This is an enormous capable and talented cricket player. This suggests the way to distinguish oneself athletically in Corrigan without being a huge belly, like Warwick Trent. Jeffery has to earn the good name from his teammates. The same team mates whom just minutes ago called Jeffery insulting racist name. But Jeffery has been so successful as. Cricket player in the match that he has won over the whole crowd. On the next hit Jeffery scores two runs, his team mates some time encourage him. One team mate calls him also as "Cong" but he means it as a nick name as a insult. On the next bowls, the bowler throw the ball very difficult Charlie realizes that Jeffery is down to the last bowl of the inning and that Corrigan must be within a few points of a victory. Finally, Jeffery hit a ball and score four

runs and wins the match. The word 'long' is a insulting and dehumanizing word. "Fuck me Cong! He screams at Jeffery who traits back to get fine! Now stay there! Fuck sake!" (168). In spite of being insulted several times, Jeffery succeeds in cricket match. This shows his strong will in achieving something great to make his identity there. All the characters struggle hard because of racism. Racism is a day-to-day suffering for not only Australian settlers in Corrigan but for people worldwide. Craig Silvey has beautifully presented the depth of racism and its impact in the psyche of characters through several incidents.

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INTERSECTIONALITY AND WOMEN EXPERIENCES IN CHITRA BANERJEE'S *INDEPENDENCE*

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Abstract

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel Independence (2022) examines women experiences and intersectionality against the backdrop of the Partition of India in 1947. The novel explores how women's lives are influenced by the complex interactions of gender, religion and nationalism during a period of communal violence and political unrest, through the narratives of the three central female characters, Deepa, Jamini and Priya, who are biological sisters. This paper analyses how gender, religious identity, and personal experiences influence the characters' responses to the devastating impact of Partition. It also examines how women become more susceptible as a result of the disintegration of multicultural coexistence and the collapse of secularism. This paper provides a critical reflection on the role of women in maintaining cultural memory in post-partition India through the experiences of female characters in the book. The study also highlights the connections between wider national and religious tensions and gendered violence, displacement, and survival strategies.

Keywords: intersectionality, multicultural coexistence, secularism, displacement, communal violence, identity.

The novel, *Independence* (2022) by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a powerful narrative of how India's Partition affected women's lives during a politically and historically complex time. It provides a compelling examination of India's struggle for independence from a national and historical viewpoint and set in the tumultuous years preceding India's independence in 1947 and the political turmoil that followed. The book explores the experiences of women from various religious backgrounds, in a number of personal narratives that explores the experiences of love, loss, identity and survival in a newly independent nation. The novel is structured to demonstrate how the greater political events of independence and violence during the partition affected people's lives especially those of women. The experiences of these women are

influenced by the intersection of gender, religion, and nationalism. The portrayal of inter-communal conflicts, the devastating effects of the partition and how women overcome these traumas and obstacles are the main focus of this analysis.

The concept of 'intersectionality' was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw in the year 1989, which examines how different social identities such as gender, race, class, religion and nationality interact to create unique experiences of privilege or discrimination. In this novel, the female characters show how their diverse identities such as being a Muslim or a Hindu during the communal riots have an impact on women experiences. The book introduces three central female characters whose lives are deeply influenced by the intersection of gender and religion. A small village in West Bengal

called Ranipur is home to the Ganguly family, which consists of three daughters, Deepa, Jamini, and Priya, as well as their mother Bina and father Nabakumar Ganguly. Prior to independence and partition, India was a secular country where all Parsis, Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus lived in peace.

Nabakumar arrived from Calcutta to visit his family and assisted in the safe delivery of Hamid's baby. Even though he was tired and it was late at night, he was willing to help and did not accept the small coins that Hamid offered him, taking into account his financial struggles. This demonstrates the fraternity and disregard for the neighbours' caste, community or even their social status.

As the partition approaches, the family's eldest daughter, Deepa finds her identity become complicated by the communal tensions that separates Hindus and Muslims. Her relationship with Raza, who is a Muslim and nephew of Nabakumar's close friend Abdhulla, becomes a source of conflict as the religious gap widens. Her journey illustrates how women's personal suffering is compounded or intensified by broader political circumstances highlighting the intersection of personal and communal identity. Deepa was compelled to leave her family for Raza's care solely because she loved a man from a different religion and community, which was responsible for the death of her father that eventually caused trauma to her mother. Although Raza as a person, is not directly accountable for Nabakumar's death, the community which he belongs bears the blame.

Deepa had to transform into a Muslim woman and entirely modify her identity. She wears a purdah similar to the other women in the community and has changed her name too. "Can a man-even Raza whom she loves with all her heart-make up for the loss of culture family community, generations of tradition woven into her being?"(119). Although, she never went through official conversion. Raza cherished her for her true self not because of her

identity. Numerous women like Deepa had to struggle with the conflict between their personal identity and the identity that society or circumstances forced them to adopt.

Deepa's experience highlights the effects of religious marginalization and communal violence on her relationships. She turns into a site of contested identity as the nation's political boundaries redraw her life and her possibilities for the future. She "... felt a bit of herself dying" (124). The death of Raza brought a significant shock to her. She was in the grasp of Mamoon. She could only look for assistance from her family. In the effort to rescue Deepa and her daughter, individuals from both communities participated, highlighting secularism and the idea that community or religion is merely a belief or identity. Being a human being is the most essential aspect of existence. People who risked their lives to save their fellow beings, friends, and loved ones during the conflict were remarkable individuals, in stark contrast to the brutal men who destroy the lives of others under the guise of religious zealotry. A prime example is Mamoon, who murdered his master in order to possess Deepa's beauty; the man who tried to rape and subsequently kill Jamini, all had their visions clouded by communal spirits, forgetting they relied on each other in harmonious days. All these excruciating events and experiences are recorded on the bodies and mind of women in India, be it a Muslim or Hindu, only the poor and despicable especially women are traumatized the most.

Multiculturalism is a social philosophy that recognizes and values the diversity of different cultural and ethnic groups within a society. It promotes the coexistence and mutual respect of different cultures, and emphasizes the importance of valuing and celebrating the contributions of all cultural groups. Before Partition, India was a secular nation with various religions where different communities coexisted, although not always

peacefully. The novel illustrates how multiculturalism encounters difficulties when confronted with political beliefs and religious identities. The collapse of multicultural unity during partition illustrates the constraints of multiculturalism against nationalist pressures.

In this novel, the religious upheaval and the violence unleashed by Partition suggest a failure of secularism. The state's inability to uphold secular values in the face of growing religious divisions, left women, especially those from minority communities, vulnerable to gendered violence. Divakaruni highlights how secularism can fail in practice when religious identities become politicized and national boundaries are drawn along religious lines.

In all these after effects of partition, women are mostly affected. They play a crucial role in preserving the cultural memory of a divided India. Through the lives of Bina, Deepa, Jamini and Priya, the novel explores how women become the repositories of family and community history. In the epilogue of the novel, Divakaruni demonstrates the lives of the female characters a few years after the Partition, where they lost the lives of two men, Nabakumar and Amit, who would have supported the family, because of communal riots, leaving the women to carry them only in their memories. The women had to rely only on themselves. They not only endure personal suffering but also serve as witnesses to the larger historical narrative of partition.

In the process, they help maintain the connection to lost histories, communities and identities. In the wake of national disintegration, this

aspect of the novel helps reinforce the idea that women are active participants in preserving cultural memory rather than passive victims. The novel provides a complex understanding of how these forces shape women's lives, especially during periods of political upheaval and communal violence, through the multifaceted exploration of intersectionality of women's experiences in pre-Partition India. Through its thematic exploration of diversity and secularism and its portrayal of women's resilience in the face of these interesting oppressions, *Independence* significantly contributes to the literary representation of the effects of Partition on women. In addition to depicting the emotional devastation and personal destruction caused by the Partition, through the female characters, Divakaruni sheds light on the larger social and political forces at work. This offers the readers a powerful narrative about survival, identity and the role of women in the construction of national history.

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DISAPPOINTMENT IN COLLEEN HOOVER'S *IT ENDS WITH US*

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Abstract

In this novel, the protagonist faces significant emotional and physical challenges in her life, stemming largely from her childhood trauma of witnessing domestic violence between her parents and she also faces the same thing from her husband. She hoped that, in contrast to her father, her husband would show her affection and concern, but she was disappointed when he injured her a couple of times. The main theme of the novel is domestic violence and disappointment, which is a common occurrence in society. The protagonist relates her life to her mother's life. She never imagined that she would also be in the position her mother was in, a life filled with multiple physical and mental abuses. The main objective of this paper is to explore the multifaceted complexities that individuals encounter in contemporary society. The protagonist tries to break the cycle of abuse and create a better future for herself, while navigating complicated relationships and emotional struggles.

Keywords: domestic violence, disappointment, childhood, trauma, self-discovery

The power conflicts, suffering, and mental anguish that victims-especially women-face are frequently examined in literary works about domestic violence. These accounts demonstrate the impact that emotional or physical abuse has on the victim's identity and potential connections. Women are frequently presented as the primary victims, which reflects patriarchy and gender imbalance in society. The discrepancy between expectations and reality in relationships-where affection and care are transformed into abuse or neglect-is a recurring subject. This underscores the emotional betrayal and complexity of both the abuser and the victim. Many works also explore the issue of expectation vs reality in relationships, in which a person expects love, care, and affection but instead receives neglect, abuse, or apathy. Disappointment and emotional betrayal are potent narrative weapons that

frequently represent the complicated psychology of both the victim and the perpetrator.

It Ends With Us by Colleen Hoover examines domestic abuse via the dreadful bond between Ryle Kincaid and Lily Bloom. The narrative uses Ryle Kincaid's complex interaction with Lily Bloom to illustrate the psychological, physical, and emotional repercussions. Lily's early years provide critical context for understanding her emotional state as an adult. She felt perplexed, afraid, and powerless after seeing her father physically attack her mother. This incident led her to have complex emotions about love and relationships. She never understood why her mother did not leave her violent father, although knowing it was neither natural nor healthy. Her uncertainty and pain persisted until adulthood.

Lily's mother's willingness to stay with an abusive husband for years shaped her

understanding of love and self-worth. As Lily grew older, she resolved never to be in an abusive relationship. "But the abuse was inevitable with their marriage, and it became our norm. When I got older, I realized that not doing something about it made me just as guilty" (17). Despite her childhood trauma, Lily's desire for a fairy tale romance and trust in the prospect of healing from her past eventually cloud her judgement when she begins a relationship with Ryle Kincaid.

Ryle, a neurosurgeon who initially appears to be a pleasant and kind companion, gradually discloses his abusive tendencies. Lily finds herself caught in a difficult situation, split between her feelings for Ryle and the developing realisation that he is capable of harming her. This is similar to the dynamic Lily saw between her parents, where the victim felt bewildered, hopeful, and ultimately imprisoned by the abuser's periodic charm and sympathy. Lily ends herself with Ryle Kincaid, who first comes across as charming and handsome but quickly turns violent. Despite being aware of the detrimental effects, Hoover depicts Lily's inner struggle as she copes with Ryle's emotional and physical abuse.

The novel emphasises how trauma may impact a person's decisions and interpersonal connections. Lily's path is about overcoming the cycle of abuse and finally choosing herself and her physical wellness. The novel illustrates how the cycle of abuse can persist even when the victim is academically aware that it is wrong. Lily demonstrates how difficult it may be to break free from the cycle of violence through her self-disappointment and internal conflict, especially when emotions like love, guilt, and hope get in the way of reason. The psychological manipulation that frequently follows abuse is reflected in Ryle's behaviour. For instance, Ryle apologises profusely and makes vows of reform after physically harming Lily. "I'm sorry, Lily. It was an accident. I'm so sorry" (186). This apology frequently makes Lily reevaluate

how she views the relationship because it exhibits an intermittent reinforcement pattern. One of the most glaring instances of Ryle's violent conduct follows a physical struggle in which Lily sustains injuries. His apologies and claim that he didn't "want" to harm her are examples of typical gaslighting, which causes Lily to question the seriousness of what he did. This comment, which is a common approach used by abusers, is an attempt to justify his actions. Lily becomes confused and caught in the cycle of abuse as a result of his regret and insistence that the violence was not his fault.

Lily is forced to handle the complexities of the issue as Ryle's aggressive behaviour intensifies. On the one hand, she thinks Ryle is a decent guy and loves him. However, she is becoming more conscious of the fact that she is in a risky and hazardous relationship. The psychological suffering that many victims go through as a result of being torn between love and the harsh reality of their partner's behaviour is reflected in this internal conflict. Lily's discovery that Ryle, the man she loved, is not who she believed him to be is the main source of disappointment in the novel. The shock of his aggressive behaviour, which forces Lily to make peace with the lovely man she initially fell for and the abuser he has turned into, adds to this intense sense of betrayal. Lily muses, "I want to lash out at him and react like I always wish my mother would have reacted when my father hurt her, but deep down I want to believe that it really was an accident. Ryle isn't like my father" (188-189). Ryle's abuse exposes his actual nature, shattering this romanticisation of him. Since Lily had put all of her expectations and faith in him, she feels deeply betrayed in addition to being disappointed by the abuse.

The insight that Ryle's violence is not an isolated incident but rather a component of a wider pattern exacerbates Lily's emotional suffering. She starts to doubt her judgement and wonder how she

could have missed the warning signs after coming to this realisation. Lily has disappointment as a result of this psychological betrayal, which goes beyond Ryle's behaviour and affects how she views herself. The emotional complexity of domestic violence, where victims are frequently compelled to face up to harsh truths about their abusers, is reflected in the disillusionment process.

Lily's disappointment is not limited to Ryle; it also extends within. She feels incredibly guilty for continuing the relationship and failing to spot the abuse's warning signs sooner. Because she feels she could have done more to stop the situation, she battles guilt. In one moment of vulnerability, Lily admits, "I hate myself more in this moment than I ever have in my entire life" (268). This self-blame is typical among domestic abuse victims, who are frequently tricked into thinking that their abusive partner is to blame for their mistreatment.

Lily's emotional recovery and her ability to leave Ryle's violent relationship are greatly aided by Atlas Corrigan, her first love. Lily deserves a relationship based on respect and caring, and Atlas embodies that kind of connection. Lily has the courage to face the abuse she has been experiencing and starts to understand what a good relationship looks like thanks to her relationship with Atlas. In addition to being a romantic interest, Atlas serves as a reminder that pure love-love devoid of violence or manipulation-is possible. When Lily reflects on her feelings for Atlas, she acknowledges, "His eyes are sincere, and if I didn't think it would be a little inappropriate, I would throw my arms around him and hug him" (289).

Lily feels empowered to regain her autonomy and make the decision to leave Ryle thanks to Atlas's support. Hope and the prospect of a future free from the toxic dynamics that have dominated Lily's existence are symbolised by his presence. Ryle's manipulation and Atlas's benevolence stand in stark contrast, giving Lily the emotional clarity she

needs to end the abuse cycle. Lily's decision to leave Ryle, which represents her personal empowerment, marks the novel's turning point. Lily's mental suffering ends when she makes the decision to prioritise her well-being and self-respect. In an empowering moment, Lily reflects, "Cycles exist because they are excruciating to break. It takes an astronomical amount of pain and courage to disrupt a familiar pattern" (360). This realization allows Lily to step into a new chapter of her life, free from the abuse that once defined her relationship with Ryle.

Lily exhibits the fortitude and resiliency required to leave an abusive relationship by making the decision to be herself. Her choice demonstrates that victims of domestic abuse may break out from the destructive cycles of abuse and is an act of self-love and empowerment. As Lily and Atlas start a new relationship based on respect and support for one another, the novel ends on a positive note. This ending supports the main idea of the novel, which is that although domestic abuse causes intense disappointment, it is possible to escape and find healing. Judith Lewis Herman in *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence-from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, explores the profound impact of trauma and how victims of abuse can heal. He addresses, "The task of reconnection requires the survivor to regain a sense of control over her life" (207). In this novel, Colleen Hoover explores the terrible effects of domestic violence and the deep sense of disillusionment it generates in both the victim and the abuser. Her writing is honest and emotionally complex. Lily Bloom's journey illustrates the psychological and emotional pain that usually follows violent relationships, ranging from physical assault to mental manipulation and gaslighting. Hoover uses Lily's experience to eloquently illustrate the internal turmoil that victims go through, especially the conflict between love and the agonising reality of abuse. The novel demonstrates how betrayal can completely destroy a person's idea

of both themselves and their spouse, leaving them feeling let down all the time.

A compelling reflection on the intricacies of domestic violence, the novel demonstrates that although disappointment is a normal emotional reaction to abuse and betrayal, it should not determine a person's destiny. The novel *It Ends With Us* reminds us that victims of domestic abuse can find the fortitude to end the cycle of abuse, accept their value, and start along the path to healing and self-respect. Hoover uses this story to not only highlight the heartbreaking facts of domestic abuse but also to give hope by showing that even in the face of the most devastating setbacks, empowerment and healing are achievable.

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SACRIFICE AND DUTY AS COMMITMENT: A THEORETIC ANALYSIS OF ROBIN ABRAHAM'S *THE LAST LETTER*

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Abstract

An attempt is made in this paper to show that sacrifice and duty offers a profound explanation on the human condition by using the lens of altruism theory. This paper delves into the theoretical underpinnings of themes, analyzing how Abraham's narrative constructs a compelling discourse on the moral and emotional complexities of fulfilling one's obligations at great personal cost. The analysis examines the journey of protagonist as a representation of the tension between individual desires and societal expectations. The paper highlights key moments in the text where sacrifice and duty are portrayed as both noble and burdensome, emphasizing the emotional toll and ethical dilemmas faced by the characters. Through close textual analysis, it explores how Abraham uses narrative structure, symbolism and character development to underscore the inevitability of sacrifice in the pursuit of duty. Robin Abraham's *The Last Letter* serves as a powerful meditation on the sacrifices inherent in duty, challenging readers to reflect on the cost of commitment and the enduring human capacity for selflessness.

Keywords: depression, duty, passion, responsibility, sacrifice.

Sacrifice refers to the act of giving up something valuable for the benefit of others. A higher cause or a greater good sacrifice can be made in various contexts including personal relationships, career and finance, health and well-being, time sacrifices and physical sacrifices. In William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the author explores the sacrifices made by the two lovers in the name of their love. In JK Rowling's *Harry Potter and Chamber of Secrets* there is a quote that says "It is not an ability that shows what we truly are but our choices and the sacrifices we make for the greater good" (333). In general, sacrifice is a fundamental concept that has been explored in various contexts including literature, philosophy and history in the context of war and military conflict. Sacrifice refers to the act of giving up one's life for the sake of one's country,

fellow soldiers or a higher cost. In India the National War Memorial is a testament to the sacrifices made by Indian soldiers who have let down their lives in the line of duty.

Duty is something that we must do because people expect us to do it. It involves a sense of responsibility, commitment and accountability to oneself, or a higher authority. There are several types of duty they are moral duty, legal duty, social duty and professional duty. The concept of duty has its roots in ancient cultures and civilization. The role of duty is multifaceted and places a significant part in various aspects of human life. Duty gives individuals a sense of direction and purpose, helping them navigate life's challenges. Fulfilling duties helps individuals develop a sense of responsibility, accountability, and self-discipline. Mother Teresa in

her book "Come be my light", said "It is our duty to be faithful not to be successful" (114). Performing one's duty whether in family work or society increases discipline and growth which are essential for self-improvement when everyone contributes their part and fulfills the duties, it promotes collectively reducing conflicts and creating a more peaceful environment by comparing sacrifice and due to this we can connect the theory of altruism.

Altruism theory is a philosophical and psychological framework that explains why individuals engage in selfless behaviors that benefit others often at a personal cost. The theory posits that altruism is a genuine and inherent human motivation, rather than simply a means to achieve personal gain or recognition. Overall altruism theory provides a framework for understanding why individuals engage in selfless behavior that benefits others. While there are criticisms and limitations to the theory, it remains an important area of study in fields such as psychology, sociology, and philosophy. Altruism theory was proposed by Auguste Comte, this theory suggests that individuals have a moral obligation to prioritize the needs of others over their own self-interest. Ayn Rand's work often critiqued altruism arguing that self-sacrifice is morally wrong. One of her notable works *Atlas Shrugged*, published in 1957 and this novel explores the concept of altruism as a moral code that undermines individual freedom and creativity and the other work is *The Fountainhead*, it was published in 1943 and this novel criticizes the altruistic notion that individual creativity should be sacrificed for the collective good.

In the novel *The Last Letter* by Robin Abraham, it is clearly revealed that John has sacrificed more in his life like his love for his friend. When he was in his school days, he had a friend named Arvind. John came to know that his friend also likes Veronica. Keeping the situation in his mind, he controlled his emotions and did not say anything to anyone. He

decided to confirm the matter directly with Arvind. When John confirms the matter, he asks Arvind to propose to her. But to be honest, Arvind feared her father because, "He is a very strict man and never allows her to play alone. Moreover, he is an army officer and the education officer of our school too. If I am caught or she complains, I will be suspended from school for sure," Arvind said with a wrinkle on his forehead." (32) Then John says that any father would be insecure about his daughter especially if she is beautiful. But he continued his routine of watching Veronica after every class. He was sure that other than Arvind and him, there must be more who would have loved Veronica but they must be scared to express their feelings. John tries to sacrifice his feelings and emotions for Arvind. It suggests that love is not merely a fleeting emotion, but a source of personal happiness and a deep commitment and willingness to make sacrifices for the well-being of others.

This thought encourages individuals to approach love with selflessness and the willingness to prioritize the needs and happiness of others. By applying this people can cultivate meaningful and fulfilling relationships based on genuine care, empathy and sacrifice. Here we can connect John's feelings, like time was hard to pass and it was harder when everyone mentioned Veronica's name with Arvind. John started to distance himself with his friend's circle. Once he came to know that Arvind's father was posted to another station in the next few days and now John was sure that Arvind must have proposed to Veronica. But when John asked about such things to Arvind he said "I couldn't dare to propose her." (32)

John cursed himself for believing, that idiot could have expressed his feelings to Veronica and again John started loving Veronica. "It is impossible to love deeply without sacrifice" said by Elizabeth Elliot, an American Christian author and missionary, offers a profound insight into the nature of love in

this quote. It suggests that true love requires sacrifice and the willingness to put the needs and well-being of others above our own. This quote encourages individuals to approach love with selflessness, empathy, and the willingness to make sacrifices for the happiness and fulfillment of others. By applying this, people can cultivate deep and meaningful relationships built on love, compassion, and sacrifice. Whatever happens in his life he never sacrifices his passion as an Army officer.

During his training days, he struggles a because of Veronica, like whenever he calls her to talk, she never picks or attends the call, so it hurts him a lot. While he was doing his duty, he takes time to talk with her but she does not mind him. John was clear in his side, that he will never sacrifice his job for anyone.

I decided to join a meditation course. After its completion, I realized the importance of a peaceful mind. I also realized that mental strength comes from mental peace which precedes physical strength. Now the goal of my life is clear. All my focus was only on one thing-NDA. I worked hard with my heart and soul for the next six months. I was missing Veronica, her care, her love. God! Wherever my girl is, please grant me that someday I find her. (133-134)

He fully concentrated on his duties, Karl Wilhelm Von Humboldt had said that, "It is worthy of special remark that when we are not too anxious about happiness and unhappiness, but devote ourselves to the strict and unsparing performance of duty, then happiness comes of itself" (77). It can be related to John's life as he has lost his love and focused on duty. And God feels his pain and sends a messiah in his life as a form of wife Tina. She filled his life with happiness. Before parting with Veronica, he just lived for her and after leaving him, John lived for the nation because it's his duty to protect his country from enemies. "A sense of duty is useful in work, but offensive in personal

relationships" (105), said by Bertrand Russell which is directly connected to John's life, his childhood wish is to get three stars in his shoulder. Now he reached his goal and got three stars. He was promoted to Major post where everyone congratulated him.

Especially his previous commanding officer colonial Mandeep Singh called and congratulated him for his promotion to Major. He believes that Tina has been very lucky for John. After she came into his life, he achieved laurels at a fast pace. John also feels that Tina was his lucky charm. She kept a party for her husband John's promotion. She invites Veronica also but at first, she refuses to come to his party, then Tina tells Veronica that if she comes to his party, she will meet her with Samanyu. By hearing the name of Samanyu Veronica got emotional because it was the name which John and Veronica had planned together that if they have a baby in future, they will name that baby as Samanyu.

Veronica was very eager to meet Samanyu. She decided to attend the party and when Veronica met Samanyu. She was hardly broken into tears because now she realized how stupid is she also said that she has left the diamond soul gentleman who loved her more than himself or the universe. Everything was changed now but John could not forget his promises with Veronica. After her separation also he fulfilled every small to big promise that he made with her. Only for Veronica, John and Tina adopted a child named Samanyu. He never ever sacrificed his promises with Veronica after leaving her. He was very true and pure to his love and himself. Anything can be sacrificed but sacrificing one's love is very hurtful. But John did that and God had given him the strength to accept reality and move on. Only his passion had made him stronger. Because of his many sacrifices, he became the captain who guided junior soldiers on the right path.

In John's part he gives importance to love, while on the other hand when we see Veronica's side, she always disgraces his love and she cheats him. But he is always truthful to her. He always used to sacrifice other things rather than love because he never ever wants to lose Veronica in his life but Veronica always sacrifices love by not choosing him. Because of Veronica in school days John always tries to escape from the class to meet Veronica and when he returns to his class his teacher scolds him very harshly. Likewise, he has missed more classes and in exams sometimes he got a pass mark or else he fails and when the report card arrives somehow, he used to manage the situation and get a sign from his parents. John has done many things to her but Veronica was not thankful to him for anything. By comparing sacrifices and duties of John and Veronica, it is merely connected to altruism theory that every individual engages in selfless behaviors that benefit others often at a personal cost.

Sacrificing a soldier's life for the nation is a very proud moment. At the same time their family members were traumatized due to the tragedy. In *Kargil: A Saga of Sacrifice & Heroism* by Rishi Raj, a military historian and researcher. He has authored over 21 books, four of which have received the prestigious Rahul Sankrityayan Award from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Apart from being an author, Rishi Raj is also a Joint General Manager at the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, a public sector undertaking of the Government of India. His experiences as a traveler and his interactions with people from diverse backgrounds have greatly influenced his writing. *Kargil: A Saga of Sacrifice & Heroism* is not just a book about war, it is also a personal account of Raj's journey to meet the families of the martyrs. This book is a tribute to the Indian Armed Forces who fought in the war. The Kargil War was a conflict between India and Pakistan that took place in the summer of 1999. The war was fought in the Kargil district of Kashmir. The

war ended on July 26, 1999. It was published in 2023 by Prabhat Prakashan. Rishi Raj offers a poignant portrayal of the sacrifices made by the soldiers and their families, highlighting the unwavering spirit of patriotism and sacrifice. Throughout the pages of *Kargil*, the authors bring to life the harrowing experiences of the soldiers who fought bravely to defend their country against enemy intrusion. From the treacherous terrain to the relentless enemy fire, each chapter is a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Indian Army and their unwavering commitment to duty.

From tales of valor to moments of heartbreak, Rishi Raj's narrative serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by the Indian Army and the importance of honoring their legacy. In conclusion, it is more than just a book it's a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Indian Army and the sacrifices they made to defend their country. Though sacrifice and duty are mostly connected with soldiers. However, John sacrificed his love for Veronica. And finally, she was broken into tears and realized how unlucky she was, that she has lost him because of her rude behavior and cut off all ties with John. However, Veronica tells him that "I am sorry John. You truly loved me and I should not have let you go" (239). By hearing this John felt bad for her and said to her "I missed you too dear. We have beautiful memories spent together, we should cherish those and not regret for something that is irreversible. We are friends forever" (239). John's sacrifice for his love made him finally friend with Veronica. After having a look at John's life, I particularly found that sometimes sacrifice teaches us a life lesson and makes us stronger than we have ever imagined. The protagonist's sense of duty and sacrifice is a major theme in the novel *The Last Letter*. As a soldier, the protagonist is willing to risk his life for his country, highlighting the importance of sacrifice and duty in time of war.

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TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE OF LUCY BARTON IN ELIZABETH STROUT'S *MY NAME IS LUCY BARTON*

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Abstract

My Name is Lucy Barton is a 2016 New York Times bestseller novel written by Elizabeth Strout, an American novelist recognized for her vivid characters. The complex connection between Lucy Barton, the title character and her mother is the main emphasis of the book. *My name is Lucy Barton* deals with a host of heavy-hitting twentieth-century hardships: poverty, neglect, the traumas inherited in families on both sides of World War II's conflict. The novel focuses on the lives of people who have been shaped by their past, particularly those who have faced hardship, desertion, and emotional trauma. This paper attempts to explore the tragic experiences of Lucy Barton through the lens of trauma theory.

Keywords: struggles, trauma, and emotion.

Trauma is an emotional react to a traumatic incident, such as an accident, crime, natural disaster, physical or emotional abuse, neglect, experiencing or witnessing violence, death of a loved one, war, and so on. The Greek term for "wound" is trauma. Although the Greeks exclusively used the term to describe physical wounds, emotional wounds are now equally likely to be referred to as trauma. Trauma theory was proposed by Cathy Caruth with her collection *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* in 1995. After her interest in trauma studies deepened, Caruth wrote *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* in 1996. She is also the pioneer of trauma theory in literature. According to Cathy Caruth and others, literature allows readers to hear what can only be revealed in unexpected and indirect ways, thus providing a window into horrific experiences. Additionally, sociology, cinema and political activity can offer fresh perspectives on and solutions for the trauma experience.

Psychological trauma theory explains how traumatic events can affect an individual's mental health, behaviour, and relationships. According to trauma theory, people undergo psychological trauma when they are exposed to situations that are overwhelming, dangerous, or unsafe and that make them feel powerless. Events like violent crimes, natural disasters, accidents or extreme neglect can cause psychological trauma. In Sigmund Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he has mentioned that, "The traumatic event is one which, by its nature, cannot be grasped by the individual" (1920, 12).

Lucy Barton in Elizabeth Strout's *My Name is Lucy Barton* experiences significant trauma during her childhood, primarily as a result of a deeply impoverished background with neglectful and emotionally abusive parents, including instances when she was left alone and locked in a truck as a young child, resulting in a lifelong sense of insecurity and emotional distress. One of the saddest scenes in Elizabeth Strout's riveting new novel involves Lucy

Barton recalling childhood memories linked to the family truck.

My Name is Lucy Barton is a real yet elegant testament to human resilience despite the pain that persists of childhood trauma. Lucy Barton recalls childhood memories associated with the family truck is one of the most tragic sequences in Elizabeth Strout's thrilling new novel. Lucy's parents would lock her in the bad-smelling pickup from morning to night when she was too little to attend school. She says, "I remember pounding on the glass of the windows, screaming, she blurts. I did not believe I would die, I do not think I thought anything; it was simply horror, knowing no one was coming, seeing the sky darken, and feeling the cold creep in. I yelled continuously. I cried so hard I could barely breathe" (92,93).

Lucy Barton lives in New York City with her husband William and grapples with her traumatic past. Originally from Amgash, Illinois, Lucy escaped a childhood of harsh poverty and abuse after gaining a full scholarship to college and seeks a new life in New York City that will allow her to tap into her full potential as a writer. Self-conscious, Lucy does not see herself as an artist. Estranged from her family, Lucy must confront her tenuous relationship with her mother when her husband invites her mother to care for Lucy in a hospital as she recovers from an infection. She claims that after visiting the hospital a few years ago with a perforated appendix, she became ill with an unexplained and unknown ailment that kept her there for nine weeks. Her husband rarely paid her a visit, and when he did, a family friend brought her two young girls. Lucy's sole consistent contact was with a gentle doctor who visited her every day above and beyond the call of duty, seemingly acting as though he were her father.

Lucy woke up one day to discover her mother seated in the chair next to her bed. Lucy had never visited New York before and had not seen her in years. "About three weeks after I was admitted, I turned my eyes from the window late one afternoon

and found my mother sitting in a chair at the foot of my bed" (3). Although she is reticent and proud to be Midwestern, Lucy's mother gives in to her request for stories about her hometown, sharing stories about Amgash and its inhabitants. For example, she told the tale of Kathie Nicely, a wealthy woman whose mother made the gowns Lucy wore, who is hated by her children, divorced by her husband, and deserted by her lover. Likewise, Mississippi Mary, whose fate, on discovering her husband's infidelity, is just as bleak. What Lucy's mother does not like to talk about is the Bartons.

Lucy's brother was cruelly humiliated by her father, who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder after returning from World War II. How the children were beaten by Lucy's own mother. When Lucy was very little, she was kept in the family truck while her parents went to work. Lucy is unable to talk to her mother about this experience; instead, she tells us about it. "She talked in a way I did not remember, as though a pressure of feeling and words and observations had been stuffed down inside her for years, and her voice was breathy and unselfconscious" (18). Lucy's mother arrives to take care of her while she recovers from complications from her surgery. Estranged, Lucy and her mother have not seen each other in years. Now an adult and a mother herself, Lucy sees her mother differently. Lucy's complicated relationship with her mother is at the center of the novel and initiates Lucy's development throughout the novel.

Lucy and her mother struggle to connect as her mother entertains her with stories about people from their hometown while Lucy seeks a deeper connection. The hidden conflict between the mother and daughter stems from Lucy's childhood trauma. When her mother abandons Lucy in her most vulnerable state out of fear, Lucy quickly comes to understand her limitations. Lucy is inspired to investigate her own identity as a writer and a person by this encounter. Through her friendships with other

artists and parental figures, Lucy gains an understanding of her trauma and its power to free her from the past. "This must be the way most of us maneuver through the world, half knowing, half not, visited by memories that Can't possibly be true" (23). Lucy discusses a moment when she recalls a traumatic memory as an adult. She captures the paralyzing and disorienting nature of these moments. Lucy's trauma affects her as an adult and influences her choices. Strout's use of the collective "us" communicates this as a universal human experience.

Lucy's reflection on the impact of reading on her life as, "But the books brought me things. This is my point. They made me feel less alone. This is my point. And I thought: I will write and people will not feel so alone!" (32). As a child, Lucy navigates isolation, abuse, and unsafe living conditions. She escapes through her schoolwork and intense fascination with reading. Lucy's painful upbringing is the source of her desire to write. Her writing plays a significant part in her personal growth as she faces her traumatic history and works through her recovery. Lucy thinks back to her time at Sarah's writing workshop. She overhears Sarah speaking to a student from another class who talks about a woman named Janie Templeton whose father begins masturbating openly in her house after a breakdown. Lucy confesses that she experienced this in her own home. After publishing her first book, she meets with a doctor and writes down traumatic experiences she has had in her life. After her parents' death, Lucy faces difficulties but quickly achieves success with her first book published. Following her children's college departure, Lucy chooses to file for divorce from her husband and refuses to accept any financial assistance from William. Lucy remarries a cellist who is a professional and shares her background. Lucy evaluates her development. She feels that by being brutal, she has done what Jeremy advised. Her girls are upset that she left, and Lucy finds it difficult to relate to them after her divorce. As the events of 9/11

unfold on the TV, Lucy and her daughter Becka watch. Lucy reassures her while Becka calls for her. As she considers her progress, Lucy finds serenity. She ends the novel by remembering the beautiful sunsets in Amgash.

Barton provides a profound understanding of the intricacies of interpersonal relationships, trauma, and personal development in Elizabeth Strout's *My Name is Lucy Barton*. Shaped by their pasts, the characters explore globally relatable and intensely emotional topics like as forgiveness, loneliness, and surviving the effects of family relationships. By analysing the lives of characters like Lucy, Reader's can gain insight into the different ways in which one relieve from the past trauma and how trauma from the past affects individuals in their future. Whether neglect, love, or regret continues to influence the present relationships and experiences. Parents should pay attention to the details upon how their acts impact children and causes them trauma. It is necessary that the parents must develop a healthy relationship with their children, and develop a better understanding. From the story of Lucy Reader's could learn the role of parents in shaping the children's mentality. To get away from the trauma and its negative repercussions, one could appropriately redirect his mind. For example, Lucy uses writing as an escape from trauma. Through her writings, she shares her trauma and negative experiences with the world.

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THE IMPACT OF MENTAL TRAUMA IN JENNIFER NIVEN'S *ALL THE BRIGHT PLACES*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate and reveal how trauma affects the two main characters in the novel. The author looks at the causes of trauma, the consequences that follow, and the explanations for PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) symptoms. The author also uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach. The two main protagonists in this study cited a variety of PTSD symptoms, which the investigators found included nightmares, emptiness, avoidance, and trouble sleeping. Bullying, unfavourable family situations (parental divorce), and deadly accidents were among the causes of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) that were also found. Both characters use a variety of defensive strategies to get beyond trauma in addition to its signs, effects, and causes. These strategies include response bullying, rejection, displacement, conversion, and sublimation.

Keywords: *post-traumatic stress disorder, mental trauma, and childhood trauma.*

Trauma is the reaction to a very upsetting or distressing incident. It is beyond a person's capacity to handle the sense of powerlessness. In life, everyone undergoes various experiences; trauma is one such experience, including sadness, happiness, fear, and anxiety. Most commonly, fiction works speak about this mental issue. Although the term trauma has several definitions, the majority of works define it as harm brought on by stress. A person's psyche would be harmed by mental trauma if they experienced one or more distressing occurrences. It results in stress that is greater than the person's capacity to manage or integrate the feelings involved, which ultimately has detrimental long-term effects. Based on their subjective experiences, trauma varies from person to person.

The two main characters of the novel *All The Bright Places*, Violet Markey and Theodore Finch, are both coping with mental distress. In Finch's case, he

undergoes childhood trauma caused by his own father that later leads him into depression and stuck in bipolar disorder. But Violet didn't undergo any childhood trauma like Finch; her elder sister Elenor's death made her hide in post-traumatic stress disorder. After surviving a tragic accident where her sister Eleonar died and she lived.

Any emotional, psychological, or physical injury a kid experiences in their early years is referred to as childhood trauma. It can be brought on by a number of unfavourable events and often occurs between birth and age eighteen, including bullying, marital violence, parental substance addiction, neglect, and physical or emotional abuse. In Finch's case, his childhood trauma holds his sleep and causes him to face sleeping problems. If we go through the novel, we can find how his childhood trauma affects his sleep that leads him to major problems of depression. Finch mourns his childhood trauma in these lines,

"I run until time stops. Until my mind stops. Until the only thing I feel is the cold metal of the license plate in my hand and the pounding of my blood" (Niven). The aforementioned sentences examine how the childhood trauma he experienced continues to plague him as a nightmare throughout his adolescence.

Most of the Finch narrative pages in *All The Bright Places* open up about his childhood trauma, which made him stuck in the past and hollow in the present. Finch shares his feelings of mental emotions that directly connect with post-traumatic stress disorder, "I wasn't asleep for a couple of days or a week or two— I was asleep for the holidays, meaning Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. I can't tell you what was different this time around, only that when I woke up, I felt deader than usual" (Niven)

Post-trauma symptoms caused by traumatic events vary greatly from person to person. According to Laurel K. Hamilton, "there are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds" (Hamilton). One type of mental illness is post-traumatic stress disorder. During World War II, post-traumatic stress disorder was referred to as "shell shock," among other titles.

Violet Markey opens up about her nightmare experience after her sister's accident: "The Nightmares started a month after the accident" (Niven). Violet experienced this nightmare repeatedly for months at a time. Violet's post-traumatic stress disorder, which she got after losing her sister, is reflected in her nightmare.

People with post-traumatic stress disorder frequently engage in avoidance behaviours, such as avoiding crowds, changing daily routines, and making an effort to stay away from circumstances that could bring up memories of terrible events. Violet exhibits avoidance behaviour, which is a sign of post-traumatic stress disorder, by avoiding several things to which she was once attached. What Violet's discourse reveals is as follows, the conversation between Mrs. Kresney and Violet Markey details how

post-traumatic stress disorder breaks a person's priority into nothingness. Violet stays away from everything she used to enjoy. She felt protected and secure from post-trauma when she played the flute in the orchestra, which is her only stepping-in activity.

Everyone experiences loneliness and emptiness occasionally, but those who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder are more susceptible. Emptiness is the starting stage of trauma, which directs a person to severe depression. Finch expresses his emptiness of life by using these words: "Awake, yeah, but completely empty, like someone had been feasting on my blood" (Niven). His life is totally rolled with emptiness and no happiness left.

Family is one of the primary causes of teen trauma. Parental abuse or parental separations are the main causes of personality disorders in people. Parents ought to be the ones who shield their kids and provide a secure environment for them. The child's mental health will suffer in the future if the parents mistreat their own child. Finch became a freak as a result of his father abusing him as a youngster and his parents' divorce. Finch says, that his father hit him alone when he was ten or eleven by telling that he could not deal with anymore. As the aforementioned phrases explain, his father left his family for other women. This affected him so much that he later developed major mental health problems as a result. The only person who loves and cares for him is his mother. His mother still loved him despite the fact that his father was already quite egotistical and cruel for abandoning their family to marry Rosemarie.

An accident is any unanticipated event that impacts a person's physical or mental health and causes pain, harm, or destruction to their healthy environment. In addition to bodily harm, people who are in accidents have psychological stress. A loved one passing away can be quite upsetting emotionally. In this case, Violet has PTSD and blames herself for her sister's death.

The novel *All The Bright Places* makes readers aware of the prior traumas experienced by both of the major protagonists. This essay intensifies the severe suffering that Theodore and Violet, the two primary heroes, endure. Violet kept swimming in the sea of PTSD, while Finch drowned in childhood trauma until the end of the novel. Two different kinds of trauma were experienced by both characters.

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