

Drishti: the Sight

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CONTENTS

- Editorial # 9
- Remapping Trauma in Mythic Narratives: A Study of Surpanakha's Story # 11
Shruti Chakraborti, M.G. Prasuna
- Representation And Narration of Trauma in Don Delillo's *The Body Artist* # 16
Abhijit Sarmah
- Voices Doomed in the Abyss of Trauma: Discussing Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* # 21
Dr. Joseph Varghese, Ms. Vani Maria, Jose
- The White Standard of Beauty and its Traumatic Impact: A Study of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* # 26
Chitra Pegu
- Reading Home as a Space of Trauma in Trezza Azzopardi's *The Hiding Place* # 31
Bonjyotshna Saikia
- Trauma of the Displaced in Herta Muller's *The Passport* and Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone* # 36
Dr. Chitra.V. S
- *Hamnet* and Narrative Hygiene: Retelling a Life # 41
Anindita Kar
- Medical Humanities and Contemporary Literary Practices # 46
Dr. Prasenjit Das
- Trauma narrative as Spaces for Individual Empathy and Community Resistance :Thematic and Narrative Concerns in Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* # 51
Sapna Kumari
- "Now We Breathe A Different Air": Reading Post 9/11 Imaginary as a Site of Trauma in Ian McEwan's *Saturday* # 56
Smitasri Joy Sarma
- Tracing the Dystopian Trail of Collective Trauma in Vijay Tendulkar's Play *Ghashiram Kotwal* # 61
Dr. Breez Mohan Hazarika
- The Insane Women- A "trauma" Reading of Felanee # 66
Dr. Jayanta Madhab Tamuly
- Exploring Trauma through Survivor's Testimony in *Cat's Eye* # 71
Sanjib Das

- Aesthetizing Trauma: The Politics of Narration in Margaret Atwood's 'Surfacing' # 75
Barnashree Khasnobi
- Negotiating the Construction of Alienated and Distorted Subjectivities through Traumatic Experiences in the memoirs of Salman Rushdie and Dom Moraes # 79
Suroshikha Debnath
- The Dislocated Self: Trauma in Wendy Pearlman's *We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled* # 84
Dr Shruti Das, Mirza Ibrahim Beg
- Locating Homophobic Violence and Trauma in the Short Film *Touch* # 89
Silba R. Marak, Dr. Dwijen Sharma
- Introspecting Trauma, Sexual Violence against Women and Alienation of 'Self' as Portrayed in Partition Literature with Special Reference to *Pinjar* # 95
Akhil Chandra Borah
- Trauma and Survival in *Jangamby* Debendranath Acharya # 100
Prateeti Barman
- Violence and the Floating Self: A Critical Study of *A Time of Madness: A Memoir of Partition* # 104
Sukriti Deswal
- Political Trauma among Common People Reflected in Selected Stories of Temsula Ao # 108
Dr. Champak Kumar Bharali
- Void, Alienation and Bereavement: Traces of Traumatic Experiences in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* # 113
Dr. Sunita Rani, Vandana Sharma
- Namita Gokhale's Selected Novels Studied in Light of Dr Brian Leslie Weiss' Parapsychological Studies # 117
Dr Rati Oberoi
- Recording the Refugee: Jatin Bala's Legacy of Persistent Subcontinental Marginality # 122
Mandakini Bhattacharya
- Role of Logotherapy in Developing Resilience: A Study of Gabrielle Zevin's novel *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*# 127
Suvitha Subramaniam, Dr. Dhanalakshmi.A
- A Literary Study of Third World Feminism, Sexual Victimization and Social Injustice towards Bangladeshi Women in Tahmima Anam's *The Good Muslim* # 131
Himani Sharma, Dr Bhavya
- A Passage to Redemption in Anita Nair's *The Better Man* # 136
Dr. Nisha Nambiar
- Projecting ASD : A Study of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of The Dog in The Night Time* # 140
Gaurab Sengupta
- Death as a Passage to Permanence: A Study of *Porphyria's Lover* and *A Musical Instrument* # 144
Tapti Roy
- Transnationality and Intergenerational Transformation of Indian Middle-Class Family in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland* # 149
Dr. Maitrayee Misra

- Capitalist Patriarchy and Position of Women: An Analysis of Mahesh Dattani's *Tara* # 154
Dr. Saugata Kumar Nath
- Indigenising the Detective Genre in Satyajit Ray's 'Feluda' series: A Study # 159
Dr. Chandreie Mukherjee
- Homes across the Water: Dislocation and Transcultural Kinship in Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* # 164
Dr. Asis De, Anupam Roy
- Decoding *Lucifer*: Challenging the Retro- Fittings in the History of Satan # 169
Anupa Rose Babu
- Masculinity and Performativity in Patrick White's *The Solid Mandala* # 174
Manohar M
- Engaging the Body: A Study of Desire and Identity in *Babyji* by Abha Dawesar # 179
Sriya Das
- Indigeneity in a Nationalist Context: Exploring Alternative Modernity in Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri's Popular Science Writings # 184
Sutista Ghosh
- Quo Vadis: A Study of K.V. Raghupathi's *The Images of a Growing Dying City* # 189
Dr. P.V. Laxmiprasad
- Women and the Domestic Space in Rashid Jahan's *Parde ke Peechey* # 195
Kanika Lakra
- The Empire is Resurfacing: Rapacious Neocolonial and Bounteous Primitive in Buchi Emecheta's *The Rape of Shavi* # 200
Dr. Arun Singh
- Serenity in Insanity: Exploring Love in Sajid Ali's *Laila Majnu* # 206
Dr Shruti Rawal
- A Critical Discourse on Aesthetics in Contemporary Indian Dalit Literature # 210
Limbod Girishkumar Nagjibhai, Dr. Prakash M. Joshi
- Theatrical Space and Visibility of Children's Concerns in Ramu Ramanathan's Play *The Boy Who Stopped Smiling* # 216
Nehal Hardik Thakkar
- Revisiting Masterpieces of Literature Through Indian Aesthetics: *A Myth Of Devotion, a river sutra & NAVEEN PATNAIK* # 221
Dr. Kalikinkar Pattanayak
- "Can a Pulaya Speak of His Life?": Autobiography as Ethnography in Kallen Pokkudan's *Kandalk kadukalk kidayile Ente Jeevitham* # 226
Liju Jacob Kuriakose, Smrutisikta Mishra
- Re-contextualization and Representation of Folk Art in Advertising # 231
Dr. Manash Pratim Goswami, Dr. Soubhagya Ranjan Padhi
- Art Forms as Narrative of Resistance: A Glance at the Art Forms of Mavilan Tribe # 239
Dr. Lillykutty Abraham

- Literary Texts towards negotiating the Practical Problems of Life : A Model # 244
Dr. Ravindra Pratap Singh
- Nation and Nationalism: Feminization of the Nation and its Evolutionary Transcendence in Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* # 248
Arijit Goswami
- The Use of Food Imagery and Representation of Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Part* and *A Man of the People* # 253
Dr. Lakshminath Kagyung
- From Marginality to Congruity: Revisiting Marginality through a Canonicity of Jain and Sikh Literature # 259
Dr. Varun Gulati
- Love, Compassion and Relationship: Balancing the Act in Andrew Stanton's *Finding Nemo* # 264
Dr. Alka Singh
- Partition Trauma, Nostalgia and Rootlessness: A Reading of Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* # 268
Dr. Dipak Kumar Doley
- Dr. Bashabi Fraser's *The Ramayana: A Stage Play and A Screen Play* # 273
Debapriti Sengupta
- নগাঁও জিলাৰ ভাওনাৰ প্ৰধান আহাৰ্য্য ছোঁ-মুখী এক বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়ন # 275
তিমাখী হাজৰিকা
- অসমৰ টাইমলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব # 283
লক্ষ্যজিৎ বৃঢ়াগোহাঁই
- জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৱৰালাৰ কবিতাত বিশ্লেষণী চেতনা : এটি বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়ন # 294
ড° দীপামণি বৰুৱা দাস
- দৰঙ্গী লোককৃষ্ণি - নাঞ্জলী গীত # 299
ড° স্বজিতা চৰৰীয়া

CALL FOR PAPERS

For Volume X, Issue I of May, 2021

Scholarly, unpublished papers are invited on any issue covered by Assamese literature/English literature/folklore/culture. Only accepted papers will be published after thoroughly reviewed by our experts.

Format:

- Articles should be submitted as MS-Word attachment paper size-A4; Font-Times New Roman (Size-12); Spacing – Single line.
- Authors are requested to follow the latest version of MLA (8th Edition) handbook in preparing articles.
- The title of article – bold and centered.
- Length of the article – should not exceed 2500 words.
- The contributors are requested not to mention their names anywhere in the article except in the front page.

Plagiarism Alert:

Authors are requested to arrange for a plagiarism test report (as per UGC recommendation) and submit the same along with their write - ups. Urkund or Turnitin check for plagiarism would only be considered.

Mode of Submission:

The full paper, complete in all details and accompanied by an abstract of about 250 words & 4-5 keywords must be submitted online on this website.

Please note:

- Name, designation, address, including email and phone numbers of the author(s) should appear on the first page below the title of the manuscript. Incomplete information will lead to rejection of the submission.
- A manuscript containing typographical, grammatical and punctuation errors will be summarily rejected and shall not be sent to reviewers for the blind peer-review process.
- All references mentioned in the “Works cited” list are cited in the text, and vice versa. Incomplete “in-text” citations and “Works cited” will lead to rejection of the submission.
- The submission should adhere to the style recommended by the MLA Handbook (8th Edition). Failure to comply with the style may cause rejection of the submission.
- Author (s) must ensure that the submission has been duly checked for plagiarism by the plagiarism checker URKUND/TURNITIN. It must conform to the permissible limit of 10% similarities, as mentioned in the UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018. A submission without the plagiarism report shall be rejected.
- A declaration mentioning the submission to be original, free from plagiarised content, not submitted elsewhere for publication, and adherence to the publication policy of the journal should be submitted with the manuscript in a separate file.
- The submission will have a preliminary peer-screening for its strength for sending for blind peer-review.
- The Submission - window will remain open for the period between December,15, 2020 and January, 5, 2021 on this website.

Focus Area for May 2021 Issue

Rewriting Mythology

Mythologies, irrespective of culture and society, have played crucial role in delineating and instituting meaning, identity and patterns of life practices while making myths tangible through symbols, stories and rituals. As cultural construct and, in turn, constructors of culture, mythology and culture have intrinsic mutuality influencing customs, behavior and even ways of communications. In its prolonged subsistence, mythology tends “to be hyperbolic and fantastic to drive home a myth” and compels the individuals to make profound sense of their etymological existence, cultural and collective values, and belief system irrespective of their religious or secular origin. Every society or culture has ‘inbuilt mechanism’ to recall and interpret its past, which is a storehouse of its customary practices and identity. That inbuilt mechanism on which sense of historical continuity, customs, belief systems rest is sustained by mythology.

Man has an instinctive fascination or love for the exotic. Today’s reader also longs to relieve himself from the constraints of the stereotypical mechanical ways of living and therefore wants to resort to the primitive impulses. He also wants to manipulate the temporal reality through ‘handling of time’ and in this regard, mythology provides him with an effective medium/device.

Rewriting mythology is not a recent phenomenon; the art has witnessed an intricate and prolonged history of more than hundred years. In Indian Writing in English, the first poet Taru Dutt galvanized the tradition with her poetic composition namely Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan. During the pre-independent period of the body of literature, mythologies were the sole source of creating sense of belonging and identity writing in an alien language. In the modern times, mythologies are foregrounded in various art forms as means of reinstating or rediscovering lost order and meaning of human existence considering them as the binding force or source of cultural needs. When these mythologies are made new through rewriting they tend to represent both the times in which they were originally set and recreated. Through rewriting, mythologies grow to comply with the situations of their recreations not only through the stories but also through the symbols, images and rituals within a broad epistemological and ideological framework. Indisputably, in this art of rewriting, writers intend to intersect their mythopoeic imaginations with contemporary values while discovering symbols, images and rituals to suit the contemporary values and ideas. Even in some cases, writers (such as Volga’s The Liberation of Sita, Chitra Banerjee’s Forest of Enchantment, Palace or Illusion, Shashi Tharoor’s The Great Indian Novel) are found exceptionally creative while accumulation new dimensions and narrative structure in the framework of the original story to suit the contemporary needs.

Incorporating all the possible dimensions and features of rewriting of mythologies, Drishti: the Sight intends to reflect upon the subject of ‘Rewriting Mythology’ from multidimensional perspectives and novel theoretical paradigm in the areas of English and Assamese literature, folklore and culture in the next edition. Scholars are invited to contribute their original scholarly research papers on any possible topic within the focus area for the next issue of the journal to be published in May, 2021.

(Contributors may also submit papers on subjects other than this focus area for this issue. Regarding modalities of submission they are requested to go through our CALL FOR PAPERS on our Website)

EDITORIAL

FREEDOM, CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

India has a an immensely large and diverse population with heterogeneous styles of living, cultures and cultural ethos. The question of cultural identities of the umpteen communities, races and tribes therefore should always get the prominence in the agenda of development. For, as Professor Amartya Sen in his seminal book: “Development as Freedom” has shown, development in broad terms ‘cannot be antagonistic to liberty’, but can rather get increased in itself through the increase in liberty.

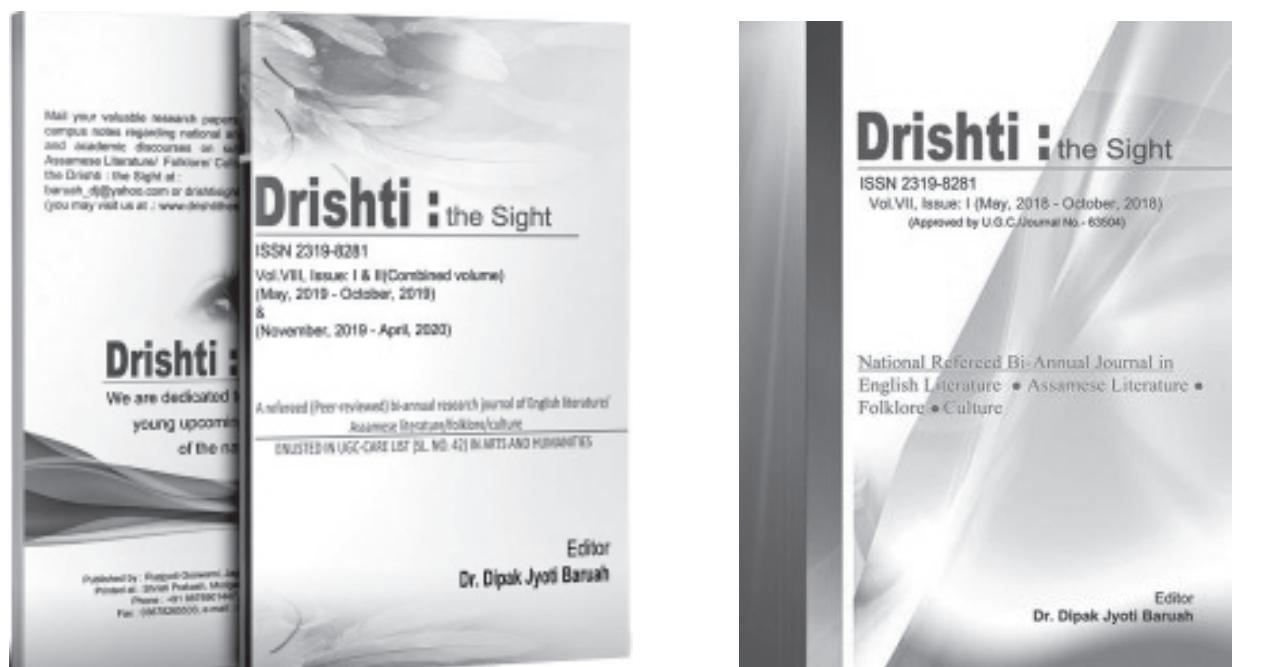
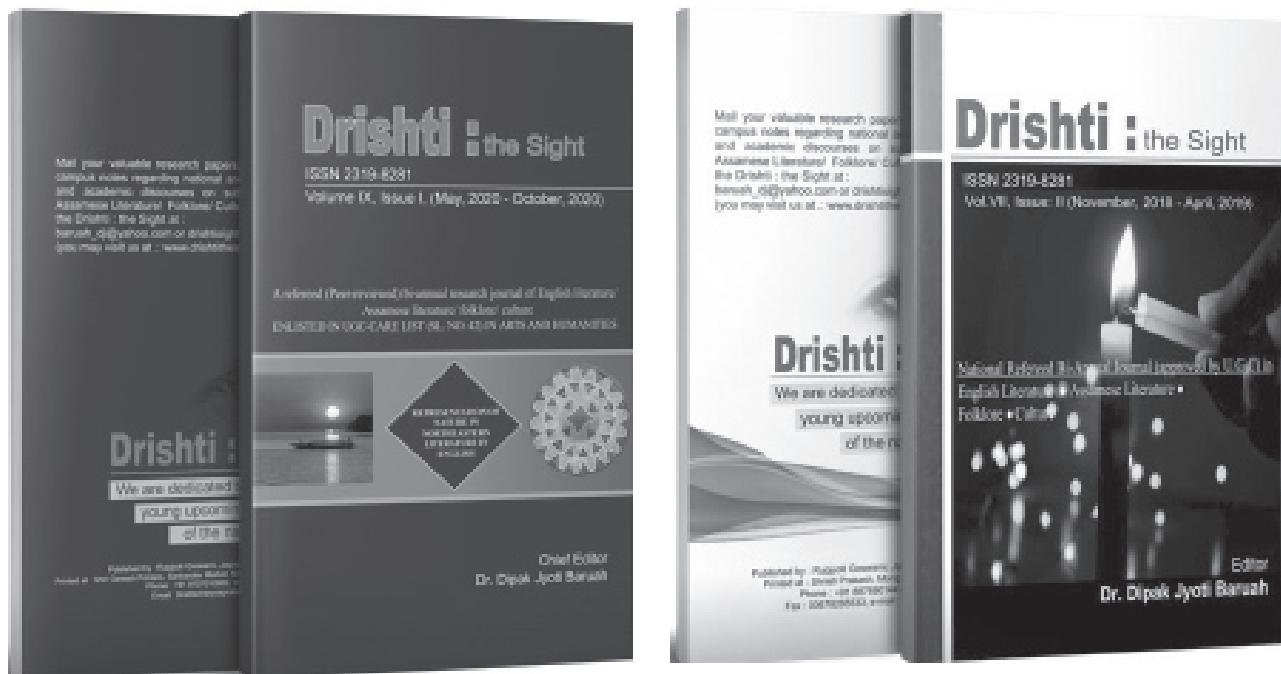
It is in the nature of the humanity that it tends to live with identity. The social development of a people too may be attributed to a great extent to the wellbeing of the native culture. For, the people then may feel optimistic about their unalloyed freedom. The feeling of being free is an outcome of various manifestations in the public and personal life. This feeling shines through many diverse attributes and culture is one of them. When the state and the policy makers pay special attention to this subject and try to foster a climate of ‘commitment’ to the people in this regard, it becomes an affirmation of its social responsibility leading to peace and harmony.

At the present juncture, when our country is choosing new economic models for development, we must be able to address these issues seriously and with due social and cultural sensibilities. We must not ignore the social cost of any (so called) economic progress. Pursuit for profit-maximizing by a state is all right, but in the flush of that pursuit, important things like social and cultural identities ought not to be jeopardized. For example, the loss of the topographical character of a place due to certain developmental works might be detrimental or counterproductive to the cause of the traditional way of living of the inhabitants. It is thus an indirect way of depriving these people of their cultural right and freedom.

In today’s world, keeping cultural traditions unaffected by the changes has indeed become a tall order. Of course, globalization has also brought some advantages for the cultural properties. Today, media can widely and effectively perpetuate anything of this kind and thus nothing remains as an exclusive reserve of one group of people only. However, the benefit of globalization needs to be made adjusted to the cause of preservation of the cultural properties without hurting the originality of the resources.

The cultural properties of any social group thrive upon their social interactions and the freedom of their soul radiate through their community life cum interactions. This gives a reason for them to affirm themselves as a group or community vis-à-vis their identity. These ‘identities’ must not be considered as an attribute to ‘divisiveness’, rather, to the contrary, it is of intrinsic importance to what we may call- unity in diversity.#

Front covers of four of our past issues



Remapping Trauma in Mythic Narratives: A Study of Surpanakha's Story

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Abstract:

The etymological meaning of the word trauma finds its source in the Greek word, *Traumatikos* (Abubakar 119) which refers to a serious physical injury. The severe physical injury often results in an even deeper psychological wound. The long history of research and studies in psychoanalysis show that trauma can often be caused by an emotional, or/and psychological wound. This research paper explores select texts on Surpanakha in connection to the context of trauma and its aftermath as represented in different mythic narratives. Although Surpanakha suffered both physical and emotional mutilation, yet, her emotional suffering has often remained unheard. Rather, the physical mutilation has emerged to be a cultural construct of punishing a woman who is a potential Other according to the patriarchal cultural values that have been dominating the understanding of Ramayana since time immemorial. Therefore, it is imperative that her emotional wound and its ramifications remains unnoticed in the mainstream thinking. This paper examines two short fictional narratives written by two different authors in which Surpanakha's mutilation and its subsequent emotional consequence has been ascribed centrality. The texts are, Ravana's

Sister Meenakshi by Anand Neelakantan, and *An Infatuation* by Amit Chaudhuri. The present paper studies Surpanakha's traumatic experience, as depicted in these texts, in the context of the trauma theory posited by Cathy Caruth and Michelle Balaev. The paper aims to demonstrate the perspective of literary representation of trauma, and its cultural dimension, as analysed by Caruth and Balaev respectively, and as explored in the selected mythic stories.

Keywords: trauma, violence, mutilation, suffering, culture, representation, Surpanakha

Introduction

The study of trauma is interdisciplinary in nature. Although psychoanalysis is the predominant field of research, yet, the perception of trauma has been innately connected to literature, politics, religion, and most importantly, culture. The idea of trauma plays a key role in connecting all these fields and has emerged as a major discipline of study transcending its psychological and pathological domain. Study and research on trauma, and the representation of trauma has become almost inevitable, especially since early twentieth century, because of various political, environmental, social, religious, cultural, ethnic and domestic upheavals that have marked the history of

mankind. While the two World Wars, Holocaust, cold wars, civil wars, atomic bomb attacks, genocides, famines and the likes have devastated the external life world-wide, the inner life has been inflicted with a rapid increase in domestic violence, rape, child abuse, incest, family dysfunction and so on(Berger 571). All these have massively resulted in bodily mutilation as well as psychological wound, and therefore, a literary and cultural representation of these experiences has been necessitated to vent out the human emotions and their reactions to the world around. This paper aims at examining the psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma, and also seeks to explore the literary manifestations of these dimensions. The methodology adopted in the paper involves a comprehensive study of Cathy Caruth's analysis of the psychological ramifications of trauma and its literary expression, based on her text, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. To comment on Caruth's argument further, Michelle Balaev's ideas on trauma from the essay "Trends in Literary Trauma Theory" which is a commentary on the literary manifestations of the cultural perspectives of trauma, is analysed. Further, this theoretical argument is applied to the two texts, *Ravana's Sister Meenakshi* by Anand Neelakantan and *An Infatuation* by Amit Chaudhuri to examine the representation of Surpanakha's traumatic experience as reflected in these fictional narratives.

Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* is one of the pivotal theoretical texts which demonstrates the importance and significance of literary representation of trauma. Caruth in this text expounds how a 'wound becomes voice'(Berger 577) and comments on its narrativity. Michelle Balaev too elucidates on the same line and further explicates the cultural dimensions of trauma. The mythic texts that are being examined in this paper have a strong underlying commentary on the traumatic suffering of Surpanakha in the context of the prevalent socio-cultural understanding of race and gender. Deviating from the popular representations of the Surpanakha episode of Ramayana, Neelakantan, and

Chaudhuri bring Surpanakha, from her peripheral existence, to the centre of their texts. Moreover, they dilute the polarized portrayal of Sita and Surpanakha, in their narratives, and demonstrate that both the female characters of the great epic have been traumatized by the men in their life, either implicitly or explicitly.

Trauma is an extremely disruptive experience which shatters the survivor's whole existence. It results in the fragmentation of one's identity and self-esteem. Trauma, although often remains unspoken, yet, affects the victim's perception of the world around. The traumatic experience that Surpanakha suffered has a dual significance in the context of the narrative of Ramayana and its socio-cultural underpinning. The episode of her mutilation has a momentous bearing on the Rama tale from a narrative point of view as well as from a cultural perspective. Surpanakha's disfigurement is considered to be the catalyst that led to the abduction of Sita which eventually resulted in the war between Rama and Ravana. Therefore, it contributes highly to the plot development of the Ramayana narrative. From the popular cultural perspective, she was a demoness who was assertive about her sexuality, who dared to exhibit her sexual preference, and therefore, deserved to be 'punished'. This dominant cultural perception, however, has ignored the trauma that Surpanakha experienced. The texts, that the present paper critically examines, represent Surpanakha's trauma, traces the emotional turmoil that she endured as a survivor of a traumatic experience, and also subtly depicts how she processed the whole experience and survived its aftermath.

Literary Representation of Surpanakha's Mutilation and her Trauma

Caruth has demonstrated her notion of trauma and its representation in *Unclaimed Experience* based on her thorough analysis of the Freudian psychoanalytic study of trauma. She refers to Freud in defining the nature of trauma, "Freud describes a pattern of suffering that is inexplicably persistent in the lives of certain individuals"(Caruth 1). She highlights Freud's understanding of the factors that subject individuals to

experience excruciating pain for reasons over which they have no control. Caruth, in alignment with Freud's notion on the connection between literature and psychoanalysis, attempts to transcend the premise of psychoanalysis and emerges with the idea of probing how the survivor can voice the suffering. She writes that the moving and sorrowful voice that cries out its wound offers a strikingly interesting phenomenon which can be scrutinized to study the plight of human trauma (Caruth 2). The medium of literary representation of trauma becomes significant in this context.

"It is the moving quality of this literary story, I would suggest—its striking juxtaposition of the unknowing, injurious repetition and the witness of the crying voice—that best represents Freud's intuition of, and his passionate fascination with, traumatic experiences" (Caruth 3).

As Caruth demonstrates, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud posits that the psychological injury is "the wound of the mind—the breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world" (Caruth 4) which is the primary source of trauma. Even if the body heals, the mind often fails to accept and negotiate with the overwhelming wound and the survivor's psychological fragmentation becomes a permanent element in their life. Surpanakha is one such individual who survived with persisting trauma since neither her corporeal disfigurement nor her emotional disruption ever healed.

Kathleen M. Erndl, in her essay "The Mutilation of Surpanakha", presents a comprehensive comparative analysis of the Surpanakha episode as depicted in different prominent, mainstream narratives of Ramayana. Her study includes the versions of Valmiki *Ramayana*, Kamban's, *Iramavataram*, Tulsidas' *Ramcharitmanas*, the *Adhyatma Ramayana*, and the *Radheshyam Ramayana*. Erndl suggests that all these versions (except *Iramavataram*) portray Surpanakha as the ugly, shameless, sexually driven she-demon who was rightly punished by the ideal man Rama and his brother, Lakshmana. Kamban in *Iramavataram*, although exhibits sympathy towards

Surpanakha, yet the act of mutilation appears to be even more violent in his text. Kamban depicts that Lakshmana punished her by cutting off her ear, nose, and breasts. This act of the mutilation inflicted a graver wound on Surpanakha, both physically and psychologically. Erndl postulates in her essay, that punishing the woman who exhibits her sexual desire is a major implicature of the episode of Surpanakha's mutilation. She refers to the larger scheme of cultural practices in the context of which violence against women often finds its root in the socially and culturally ascribed identity of a woman.

Michelle Balaev in her essay, "Trends in Literary Trauma Theory" refers to the massive role that culture has to play in connection to the violence inflicted on the victims, their subsequent suffering, and their perception of the world around them that alters as an aftermath of the traumatic suffering. She writes,

"Trauma is both a personal and cultural experience linked to place because the reorientation of the self is paired with a re-evaluation of one's relation to society, thus expanding the identification between self and world" (Balaev 165).

According to Balaev, the place where the traumatic experience takes place is not a mere geographical locale. Rather, it plays a crucial role in shaping the feelings and memory of the survivor. It refers to the site of intersection between the survivor's cultural identity and that of the perpetrator's. The forest dweller Surpanakha seemed to be a threat to Rama, Lakshmana, and Sita. She was a potential Other who had to be dominated and subjugated. The gap in cultural orientation might be considered as a reason for the inflicted violence she suffered. The factors of Surpanakha's gender identity and the tendency of phallocentric dominance also play a key role in this whole issue. Balaev opines that the fundamental assumptions regarding the socio-cultural relationship between the self and the other is disrupted by a traumatic experience and its remembrance. The characters' personal and cultural identity happens to

be deeply connected in shaping the meaning of the suffering. Surpanakha's experience has a cross cultural perspective. She was the demoness who was not supposed to engage with humans, moreover, she was a widowed female who was expected to lead a life devoid of any sexual desire. As Surpanakha chose to deviate from these set norms, she was subjected to excruciating physical pain.

According to Caruth, an individual's experience of trauma is potential enough to transform it into a shared cultural experience, since, traumatic experience is contagious, transhistorical, and therefore, intergenerational in nature(Balaev 152). It is a perpetually lived experience which is more likely to result in a 'cognitive chaos'(Balaev 150). She further suggests that a traumatic experience often disrupts a person's consciousness and it seems to be unrepresentable because the brain fails to perceive and process the whole experience in a coherent manner(Balaev 151). While the unceasing negative impact of trauma on individual's psyche deters their expression, trauma fiction becomes instrumental in lending a voice to the victim.

"Meenakshi was broken, bent and old"(Neelakantan 3), this is the opening line of Neelakantan's text, *Ravana's Sister Meenakshi*. The text is a short fictional narrative that depicts a day in Surpanakha's life. Neelakantan refers to Surpanakha as Meenakshi in his text. In his narrative Meenakshi appears as an old woman who recollects her memory, narrates it to others and in that course, attempts to negotiate with the world around her. She is placed in Ayodhya, but Lanka's splendour never ceases to fade away from her memory. She has lost her nose, ears, and breasts, yet, her bodily sensations have not died. Meenakshi's character, in this text, has been portrayed in the context of a Chandal woman, and of Sita. The Chandal woman is the narratee to whom Meenakshi narrates her traumatic experience which entails the psychological healing process of venting out and connecting to the world. A traumatic experience is never a chosen one, however, one can still attempt to transcend it through repetitive remembrance and mourning. According to

Geoffrey Hartman, the knowledge of trauma consists of two factors – the traumatic event, and the memory of it(Goarzin 1). Neelakantan has appropriated the traditional temporality and narrative elements of Ramayana. His narrative captures Meenakshi's interaction with Sita on the day Sita was to be taken away from Ayodhya after being abandoned by Rama. They both empathize with each other's trauma. While Meenakshi exhibited physical signs of her wound, Sita's was perhaps an even deeper emotional injury, none of which was ever to be healed. In this text, Meenakshi's experience and the eventual memory of trauma is constituted by both individual and collective suffering. She relives her mutilated corporeal existence as intensely as she relives the devastation that befell Lanka. In her recollection of her traumatic past, these two become one and inseparable. In her narration, her physical, geographical, and cultural space emerge as interconnected. She suffered as an individual as well as an epitome of any female who has been othered, dominated, and mutilated. In Neelakantan's narrative, Meenakshi emerges as the representation of the microcosmic Other while Lanka exemplifies the macrocosmic Other, both devastated and traumatized.

Amit Chaudhuri too, in his short story, *An Infatuation* portrays Surpanakha's character with care and sympathy. He deviates from the traditional versions, and depicts her as a shy, adolescent girl who fell deeply in love with Rama. Chaudhuri beautifully captures the anxiety, nervousness, and yet the pleasure that a young girl experiences while approaching a man. Although she was aware of the difference between her racial and physical features and that of her beloved's, still she mustered up courage to express her feelings towards Rama. Rama reciprocated it with deception and sarcasm and finally instructed Lakshmana to 'teach her a lesson' that she would remember forever(Chaudhuri 249). Chaudhuri's story ends depicting the initiation of Surpanakha's traumatized existence for the rest of her life. Her emotional debilitation overshadowed her bodily wound,

"Even when the pain had subsided a little, the bewilderment remained, that the one she'd

worshipped should be so without compassion, so unlike what he looked like”(Chaudhuri 249).

And thereafter, the trauma had changed her perception of the world in which she lived.

Conclusion

Neelakantan and Chaudhuri, both in their respective narratives, connect the traumatized protagonist's individual suffering with larger social factors and cultural ideologies. In their texts, Surpanakha's trauma evolves to be representational of the trauma that the marginalized vanquished is subjected to suffer. In their subversive interpretation of the authoritative versions of Ramayana they aim at portraying Surpanakha as a wronged individual who was inflicted

with violence that she never deserved. Surpanakha's traumatic wound finds a voice in these texts. Neelakantan and Chaudhuri depict her painful yet transcendent emotional state and aim at demonstrating how her traumatic experience restructured her perception of the world around her. Their narration also aims at exploring how Surpanakha processed the meaning of the traumatic event and constructed her response to it through her subsequent suffering. Trauma refers to an inner catastrophe that remains deeply rooted in the subconscious. However, as depicted in these texts, Surpanakha's terrific urge to survive poses a resistance to her traumatic memory and she sustains the wound by stoically enduring it.

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Representation And Narration Of Trauma In Don DeLillo's *The Body Artist*

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Abstract:

As Giles Foden points out in his review, Don DeLillo's thirteenth book The Body Artist is unlike any of the author's previous as well as latter works (Foden). Even though much has been written about the author's exceptional treatment of time, grief and language in the novella, considerable work is yet to be done on the author's treatment of loss and trauma as well as its literary representation and narration. Drawing on some tenets of trauma theory and pivotal works of prominent theorists like Cathy Caruth, Susan J. Brison and Robert Jay Lifton, the primary objective of this paper is to conduct a close analysis of the representation of trauma in Don DeLillo's novella The Body Artist as well as to understand the significance of narrativizing trauma. The paper would also argue that narrativizing trauma can indeed help in overcoming trauma and recreating a self.

Keywords: *trauma theory, representation, narration, loss*

One of the major voices in American fiction for nearly five decades, Donald Robert DeLillo, popularly known as Don DeLillo, is the author of eighteen novels, including *White Noise* (1985), *Underworld* (1997) and *The Silence* (2020). His books incorporate and explore a vast array of human experiences and narrative themes, from contradictions and paradoxes of postmodern culture to dynamics of family and loss in

darkly comic profundity. In his thirteenth book *The Body Artist* (2001), through the character of a bereaved performance artist, DeLillo delves into the realm of personal loss and trauma. Traumatic experiences are often looked at as overwhelming outbursts of reality that defies language and representation (Caruth 4) but, for novelists, the advancement of trauma theory in the recent decades has put forth unique ways of conceiving trauma and stirred the focus, at least academically, more towards how and why the past is remembered instead of solely dealing with what a traumatised subject remembers. And, as Cathy Caruth notes, literature is a fitting discipline to describe traumatic experiences because like psychoanalysis and its emphasis on the symbolic, literature too is concerned about the complex relationship between knowing and not knowing (Caruth 3). Even though much has been written by scholars about the author's exceptional treatment of time, grief and language in the novella, considerable work is yet to be done on the author's treatment of loss and trauma as well as its literary representation and narration. Drawing on some tenets of trauma theory and pivotal works of prominent theorists like Cathy Caruth, Susan J. Brison and Robert Jay Lifton, the primary objective of this paper is to conduct a close analysis of the representation of trauma in Don DeLillo's novella *The Body Artist* as well as to understand the significance of narrativizing trauma. In addition to that, the paper would also argue that narrativizing trauma can indeed help in overcoming

trauma and recreating a self.

In the beginning of the novella, the readers are introduced to Lauren Hartke, a young performance artist, and her significantly older husband Rey Robles, a failing film director, doing domestic chores on an ordinary morning. Narrated retroactively, the information of the traumatic event arrives subsequently through an obituary inserted in the narrative. The readers learn that this is the last time Lauren sees Rey before he goes to one of his ex-wives' apartment and commits suicide. From the very onset of the novella, the readers are placed in the position of the traumatised subject. In the introductory paragraph of the novella, an unidentified speaker addresses the readers in the present tense and makes some statements on how time "seems to pass", on how everyone only receive "a sense of things" that destroys the surety of "who we are", and on the irreversibility that go along with the world's becoming (DeLillo 1). These statements pave the way for a crucial question: what would the readers change or would do differently if they were given a chance to face up to these very statements? Following that, the narrative offers them a chance to change what hovers in the horizon but, as evident, they cannot. Though the verb tense signals that "it" (the suicide committed by Rey) has already happened in the past, Lauren's ignorance of what hovers demand that "it" be passed through again.

In *Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma, Narrative and History*, Cathy Caruth identifies that trauma's distinctive effects shoot from a fractured temporality evident both in the original moment as well as in its conscious recurrence. The original moment, "experienced too soon, too unexpectedly" (Caruth 4), is not accessible to consciousness until it resurfaces time and again in the form of repetitive actions and bad dreams. Traumatic narratives, writes Caruth, are a kind of "double telling", fluctuating between the crises of life and of death, between the story of the agonizing nature of an event and the story of its survival (Caruth 7). Lauren's narrative emerges from the time following the loss of her husband and the novella mimics the

temporality of traumatic experience by taking the readers through the original moment time and again. Moreover, as Robert Jay Lifton points out in *The Broken Connection* (1996), the traumatised subject often experiences "self-condemnation" and "this guilt seems to subsume the individual rather harshly" (Lifton 172). Likewise, Lauren also repeatedly experiences guilt for having not seen "it" (the suicide of Rey) coming and not being able to do anything to stop "it" from happening. She feels responsible for Rey's death. In the first chapter, the readers find Lauren anxiously identifying many instances where the chance that Rey might commit suicide was apparent during their last breakfast together. For instance, when Lauren questions Rey why he needs to shave and not let his beard grow, Rey says "I want God to see my face" and laughs (DeLillo 16). Like the repetition of the traumatic experience itself, the guilt also keeps returning to Lauren.

Due to the repeated appearance of a death that Lauren has not quite grasped, she struggles to recognise the difference between life and death and thus, she floats between them like the French actress in Caruth's study of *Hiroshima mon amour* (1959). It gives birth to Lauren's desire to absolve her guilt and be dead like Rey (DeLillo 36). Caruth considers this sort of lethal sympathy as another approach to traumatic survival and in due course, it leads to fragmentation of the self, so that the body of the traumatised subject can become a monument for a death (Caruth 30-31). Similarly, Lauren ruptures her subjectivity to such an extent that, in one instance, while walking through her house she can hear herself from other parts of the house (DeLillo 37). As David Spiegel points out, traumatic experiences often "take the form of loss of control over parts of one's mind—identity, memory, and consciousness" (Spiegel) and it is apparent in Lauren's case. Furthermore, Lauren also yearns to bring time to a standstill, for each passing moment reminds her of the invariable nature of the number next to Rey's name in the obituary. She understands, as she states during her performance piece, that "When time stops,

so do we ... In dreams or high fevers or doped up or depressed. Doesn't time slow down or seem to stop?" (DeLillo 109) This yearning can be understood as Lauren's attempt to hide from her knowledge of Rey's death, to move into a state where time doesn't exist. Added to that, she could no longer see and understand things the way the older part of her used to but there was also no way she could return to her "older part", to the state prior to the knowledge of her husband's death (DeLillo 39). But unfortunately, the knowledge available to Lauren is incomplete too. Several parts from the story are missing, something that can only be picked up in the voice of loss. Towards the end of the second chapter, Lauren hears the noise that she recognizes from her last breakfast with Rey (DeLillo 42). Shortly afterwards, Lauren sees a stranger in her empty house, whom she names Mr Tuttle and immediately feels as if the one whom she felt before but didn't see, one who flouts the limits of the human was sitting right across the bed (DeLillo 102). However, the abstruseness of the narrative makes the readers ponder if everything is as it seems or Mr. Tuttle is merely a creation of her imagination. As it becomes apparent from a close study, Mr Tuttle is in fact a simulation and creation of the real. He speaks a weird dialect of English and his speech divulges a fractured subject displaced in time. Instead of addressing himself as a speaking 'I', he turns himself into an object. Mr Tuttle's first response to Lauren is "It is not able" (DeLillo 45). And, he doesn't seem concerned about the difference between future and past tense either. For instance, when Lauren asks him what he sees outside, Mr Tuttle answers "the trees are some of them" and "it rained very much" (DeLillo 47).

Mr Tuttle is the representation of Lauren's traumatic experience and what Mr Tuttle speaks is projection of Lauren's loss. Mr Tuttle is Lauren's wound made palpable. What the readers hear are not his words but the language of Lauren's misery. His speaking in the past tense about things yet to happen is a sign of Lauren's own disturbed mind failing to cope with the loss. As a defence mechanism, Mr Tuttle is created by

Lauren to shield and dissociate from the reality she is made to witness but denies to realise. As Trauma Studies enlighten us, the structure of traumatic experience makes the survivor be alone with the wound. And, subsequently, it is the wound that starts voicing loss. The voice that surfaces, Caruth maintains, is no one else's but the survivor's own voice released through the wound (Caruth 2). It's also of note how Lauren struggles for outside references to make sense of Mr Tuttle's actions and to get him placed because he is Lauren's loss and has no past of his own. The fact that he is a creation is also apparent in his demeanour and physical characteristics. Mr Tuttle only gives an impression of life but does not display understanding and is rigid like a dummy. For most of the part, his speech is either scrambled or nonsensical though suspiciously suggestive. Having a conversation with him is similar to putting lines into the mouth of a parrot or a songbird and Lauren realises that, for instance, when she asks Mr Tuttle if he ever talked to Rey.

"Did you ever talk to Rey? The way we are talking now." "We are talking now." "Yes. Are you saying yes? Say yes. When did you know him?" "I know him where he was." (DeLillo 64)

Lauren and Mr Tuttle do not really have conversations, for in it only one person speaks and in addition to that, the structure of traumatic experience prevents Lauren from identifying herself as the source of the imagined conversations. Mr Tuttle is an excuse for Lauren to deny entering normal time again because that would require her to accept the knowledge of Rey's death. To fend off death and ensnared by the yearning to see Rey alive, she fills the void left by Rey with an imaginary being. Refusing to recognise Mr Tuttle for what it is makes Lauren accept Mr Tuttle's enactment of Rey as genuine. Thus, when Mr Tuttle begins to tell Rey's personal stories, Lauren starts to hear them in Rey's voice and thinks, "This was not some communication with the dead. It was Rey alive in the course of a talk he's had with her... not long after

they'd come here" (DeLillo 63). Mr Tuttle formulates a kind of chant in which he seems to identify himself with a moment that is neither the present nor the past nor the future. As the narrative moves forward, Mr Tuttle begins to speak similar to Lauren and Rey and in comprehensible grammatically-correct sentences that are more like fragments from the past, anecho of the couple's final conversation. Even though initially she doesn't address it, Lauren also observes that Mr Tuttle is more of an artifice and less of a human being: small, chinless with an unusual kind of body. But, he is also the one who keeps Rey alive for her. However, the real problem surfaces when while pushing Mr Tuttle to speak like Rey, Lauren realises that she can't remember Rey correctly. This realisation too makes Lauren want to expunge her own past. When Mr Tuttle endeavours to rebuild the original site of Lauren's trauma, that is, the conversation Lauren had with Rey before he committed suicide, she watches her "separated self" crawl and dissolve into him. She fails to differentiate between the enactment and the original moment and consequently, submits herself to an eternally still present. A review of her performance act titled *Body Art in Extremis: Slow, Spare and Painful* rightly sums up Lauren's psychological state: "She is acting, always in the process of becoming another or exploring some root identity" (DeLillo 107) because she has parted from her self in an effort to escape her reality.

But, the original moment was not there. Trauma is constructed only through the representations of the traumatic moment. Because Lauren saw the original moment in retrospect, she fails to find the cause of her trauma. In the first instance, she didn't know what she was seeing and therefore, there is no way for her to know definitely what happened unless the original moment is reinvented. Towards the latter part of the novella, after re-experiencing the trauma of the original moment through her performance act, Lauren arrives at the conclusion that time is the only narrative that matters and "it stretches events and makes it possible for us to suffer and come out of it" (DeLillo 94). Soon

after Lauren starts seeing Mr Tuttle for what it is, a dweller of an unbroken time, he gradually fades away. To enter normal time, she had to stop finding solace in the fantasy of timelessness Mr Tuttle provides and give away her yearning to see Rey's return. She had to stop including the event of Rey's death in the history of her own life. By narrativizing her suffering in *Body Time*, Lauren attempts to recognize her wound and act through the trauma by repossessing her own voice and identity. Furthermore, the readers also uncover the fact that it is repetition that lies behind the formation of one's identity. It's true that narrativizing her suffering didn't bring Lauren's trauma to a closure but her act of repossessing her own voice has helped her in re-entering normal time and reinstating her association to the living world. The act of narrativizing traumatic experiences, writes Susan J. Brison in *Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self*, "gives shape and a temporal order to the events recalled, establishing more control over their recalling, and helping the survivor to remake a self" (Brison 40). Creating a self-narrative is an effective procedure for recovery through trying to redeem control and restore regular life. If a traumatised subject gets access to language and an audience, they may use it as a tool to recovery although it is not always "sufficient for recovery from trauma" (Brison 40) as we can discern in Lauren's case. At the end of the novella, Lauren comes to peace with her loss, accepts the knowledge of Rey's death and reaffirms herself that Rey's death is in no way her fault and one needs to grieve to move beyond any trauma (DeLillo 126). Lauren acts through her traumatic loss by stop indulging in the fantasy of what she would have done differently if she had the chance of stopping Rey as well as by accepting that the voice of the wound is no one else's but her own. Although she could no longer go back to the time prior to her loss, she returns to a world that reaffirms her survival (DeLillo 126).

To conclude, Don DeLillo in his novella *The Body Artist* adeptly represents personal trauma and its workings through the character of Lauren Hartke by

employing multiple literary techniques and tropes. In addition to that, he has also highlighted the roles that guilt and denial plays in traumatic experiences. But most importantly, he render show narrativizing traumatic experiences along with accepting reality can help in overcoming trauma. From our study, it can be inferred that narrativizing trauma can certainly reinstate order in the life of a traumatised subject and help in re-creating a self.

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Voices Doomed In The Abyss Of Trauma: Discussing Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*

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Abstract:

The notion of trauma rose into prominence with the publication of Caruth's Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma, Narrative and History(1996) and Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's Testimony: Crises of witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History(1992). Trauma gains relevance when it is perceived in a particular social and cultural discourse. The term first appeared in Caruth's Unclaimed Experiences, the origin of which can be traced back to the works of Paul De Man, who was the teacher of Caruth. Trauma theory is usually associated with the excruciating and haunting life experiences of the survivors of the Nazi Holocaust. This paper discusses how the notion of trauma works from the perspectives of the individual and the community in the novel: The Hungry Tide(2004) by Amitav Ghosh. The paper raises the following questions: How does displacement instill everlasting trauma in people? Does language limit traumatic narratives? Does trauma distort the history and temporality? The paper makes an attempt to answer all these fundamental doubts by analysing the instances in the novel.

Keywords: Trauma, People, Community, Displacement, Memory, history, Language, Hungry Tide

TROPE OF TRAUMA

In *Unclaimed Experience* Cathy Caruth says that "trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature—the way it is precisely not known in the first instance—returns to haunt the survivor later on" (4). According to the studies conducted by Jacques Lacan, trauma emerges from void, created by extreme experiences, which cannot be articulated verbally (Balasev1). Trauma literature is a much sought after topic for critics and psycho analysts as it deals with the human psyche. Trauma cannot be represented and a dissociation may occur due to the inexplicable suffering caused by individual or collective stimuli (Balalev 1).

The novel, *The Hungry Tide* written in 2004 explores the history of the natives of the Sundarbans island in West Bengal, following a massive massacre in 1970's. Sundarbans comprising of immense labyrinth of tiny islands and entangled waterways, ironically narrates the complex and traumatic histories of settlements from 1950's to 2000. The land is hostile to its inhabitants with the potential threats of predators such as tigers, crocodiles, snakes, and sharks lurking around their habitats, and the natural disasters of cyclones and storms, foreshadowing an apocalyptic doom. The hue and cry to protect the ecosystem raised by conservationists coupled with the sweeping winds

of modernity place the survival of the inhabitants of Sundarbans at stake. The author adopts two different narratives to give account of the trauma of the natives of the island. One focuses on the Seattle based American Cetalogist, Piyali Roy, who comes to the island for research and her interaction with Kanai Dutt. The trauma of language serves as an impediment between them. The other one deals the recollection of the history of Sundarbans through the diary of Nirmal, the uncle of Kanai Dutt. Kanai meets her aunt, Nilima who is still living in the trauma of Nirmal's death, even after several years. Nirmal was a Marxist Revolutionary, who couldn't accomplish his revolutionary goals. The trauma of his unrequited love for Kusum and displacement from Calcutta haunted him, leading to his untimely death. Through these, the reader is able to gain a profound understanding of the traumatic experiences of these natives of the island, resulting from the alienation imposed by neo-colonialists, the incapability of language to narrate the traumatic experiences and impact of memories of past and impending traumas owing to natural and manmade catastrophes.

TRAUMA OF DISPLACEMENT

When a person undergoes a series of traumatic experiences, it can re-orient his state of mind leading to displacement of the self(Luci 260).In 1970's,refugees entered Morichjapi island in Sundarbans and settled there, which culminatedin a bloody feud with the government. The novel discusses the lives of people who attempted to enter India from East Pakistan, during the Partition. The government did not want them to settle in West Bengal. What followed was a saga of violence and butchering. Thousands of unnamed people were slaughtered. Through the chronicles of partition, Ghosh attempts to redefine the trauma of the victims of the partition. Their social rank clubbed with their identity crisis augmented their trauma. In other words, those who are in exile may encounter misrecognition from dominant cultural formations. Ghosh raises the issue of national and religious identities of these refugees, to delve deep into the trauma created by their displacement.

One of the main characters who have encountered trauma from the childhood is Piya. She becomes an outcaste in the U.S.A, where she is treated as the 'Other, owing to her hybrid identity (Naumann). She is unable to fit herself into their cultural discourse and becomes an embittered 'other", in her homeland. Nirmal, the uncle of Kanai, wanted to bring radical changes in West Bengal. But he suffers from a nervous breakdown and is forced to leave Calcutta. Ghosh argues that living in exile can impose the burden of trauma ,through a complicated narrative structure and an array of metaphors.

TRAUMA OF LANGUAGE

Trauma implies representability, inexpressibility and its inability to assimilate itself into the narrative. Van der Kolk states that traumatic experiences can occur in a fraction of second, which may go beyond the scope of language. (27).*The Hungry Tide* is set against the backdrop of the fictional island, Lusibari, Sundarbans. It's a chain of islands in the Bay of Bengal. Sundarbans means beautiful forest. The rich biodiversity encompassing flora and fauna makes it one of most resplendent biodiversity spots in India. But the natives know that at any time, tigers,a metaphor of the power of the natural world can attack them. They live in perpetual fear, but are unable to articulate it. According to Stern, "Language drives a wedge between two simultaneous forms of interpersonal experience: as it is lived and as it is verbally represented"(162). The natives of Sundarbans are unable to witness traumatic events, but they fall prey to their natural predator. Another instance testifying this argument is when a character named,Piddington issues a warning to the mighty British Government about its plans to construct a port in Calcutta. It would be catastrophic, as the mangroves which can prevent the storms from the coastlines of West Bengal would be destroyed with the construction of the new port. Piddington appears as a minor character, writing afraintic letter to the viceroy: "There would come a day when a great mass of salt water would rise up amidst a cyclone and drown the whole settlement" (Ghosh 286). His words fell on the deaf ears and the

port which was supposed to stand at par with Singapore was devastated in a tsunami. If there is any discrepancy between actual past and narrated past, it can lead to mental disturbance. (Stern 136). Piddington realizes the inadequacy of language to give account of the impending reality.

Traumatic experience is an exaggeration of normal experience. The ordinary gap between what is experienced and what is said is widened in trauma, so people find it difficult to express their trauma narrative. In the novel, the central characters are Piya, an American Indian cetologist and Kanai, a Delhi based translator. Kanai plays a pivotal role in the novel as he immediately brings the issue of language to the foreground. He assumes power just because he's able to speak the language which Piya cannot use. He takes advantage of the situation, while she's unable to get the information she needs, though she is an adroit in other languages. Piya speaks in Bengali, but is unable to comprehend what the natives of the Delta say about the traumatic narratives on tiger. Kanai believes that Americans including Piya are inferior to him, because they are unable to decode the local language. They are the victims and survivors simultaneously, but the barrier of language hinder their articulation. When Kanai confronts the tiger, he gets the epiphany that his language has failed him. The tiger ,better say beast was beyond what language can conjure becomes "an artifact of pure intuition, so real that the thing itself could not have dreamed of existing so intensely"(Ghosh 329). Trauma varies from one person to another, but it's articulation shares some unique features.

Piya, who was born in West Bengal, is settled in the U. S. A. Like all other migrants, her parents wanted her to master the English language so as to scale new heights in her career. Whenever she thinks of her homeland, what comes to her mind is her parents arguing in Bengali. This caused a deep wound in her mind, from which she could never free herself. "The accumulated resentments of their life were always phrased in that language, so that for her, its sound had come to represent the music of unhappiness"(Ghosh 93-94). The alien language turned out to be an

unpleasant dream for Piya and her mother, in the American Paradise. We read: "There was a time once when the Bengali language was an angry flood trying to break down her door"(93).

TRAUMA OF MEMORY

Traumatic memories of arousing events that are not necessarily available to conscious memory may return, often suddenly and unexpectedly, as flashbacks, overwhelming emotions, or 'speechless horror', at some point of time (van der Kolk 43). Cathy Caruth says that the structure of trauma is associated with distorted history or temporality. The traumatic event is not experienced or understood fully at the time that it occurs, but only later in its insistent and intrusive return(12-29). Caruth's assumptions are based on Freud's '*Moses and Monotheism*', in which he argues that a man who encountered an fatal accident may not die, but may experience a number of nervous breakdowns later. Freud names it, 'traumatic neurosis' (309). Ghosh says "Every generation creates its own population of ghosts"(50),to remind the writers about how the natives are caught in a dreadful web of memories of the past. It is true that the characters in the novel live in a kind of traumatic neurosis. Women of Sundarbans are intimidated by frequent tiger attacks. They see tigers only at times, but that fear creates a sort of paranoia, which is inextricably interwoven with their lives. Likewise, cyclones sweep away boats, slaughtering the livestock. The novel gives account of the warning issued by Henry Piddington, the Englishman who tried to convince the imperial government about the threat of an impending disaster (Ghosh 286).He forecasts that the city of Canning may get devastated by a series of storms within fifteen years of its construction. The novel is centred on the psyche of the local people, which deeply embedded in a sort of traumatic neurosis. The fear element is always latent in them, though they live in an exotic island.

Trauma doesn't emerge from the unconscious, but from history(Caruth151). The traumatic experience cannot be fully deciphered by the victim; therefore it cannot remain as a memory or narrative in them. On the flipside of the coin, trauma may continue to haunt the

survivors for an uncertain period of time. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud states that the soldiers who survived bombshells, were often haunted by nightmares of fierce battles(292). The novelist says that women in the island clad themselves in the clothes of widows, whenever their husbands step out of the houses. They anticipate attack from their natural predators(tiger and cyclones).In other words, they are always haunted by the ghosts of a potential doom.

TRAUMA DEFYING HISTORY AND TIME

Trauma can violate the dimensions of history and time, which can manifest itself anytime and anywhere, it cannot simply be confined to a ‘then’ and ‘there’. “The belatedness of trauma experiences means the troubling events have the ability to violate or disrupt physical spaces as well as temporal continuity”(Nazar and Schaffer 10).As a cosmopolitan writer, Ghosh chronicles the jeremiad of the refugees of Sundarbans, devoid of money and power.“They could not speak the language of that area and the local people treat them as intruders, attacking them with bows, arrows and other weapons. For many years they put up with these conditions”(118).People like Nirmal wanted to bring about radical changes in West Bengal. But he couldn’t and died of a nervous breakdown survived by Nilima, who worked for the emancipation of women whereas illiterates like Fokir are not free from dire poverty, which existed in their community, since Partition. Besides, the islands offer a disturbed environment. Tides can claim the land at any time. The voices of the unprivileged sections are sabotaged by the power of neo colonialists.“It’s not hard to ignore the people who are dying-after all, they are the poorest of the poor”(118).

Without collective trauma identities, individuals and groups cannot enter into dialogue (Nazar and Schaffer 15).People of the island believed in a goddess named Bon Bibi,whom they believed to have some power to save them from the natural predators. But Kusum is unable to leave the memories of her father, who was killed by a tiger, in the sea of oblivion. Though she cried for help from Bon Bibi, she received no help and was left in perpetual fear and trauma. Piya is able to

narrate her trauma, only when the illiterate fisherman, Fokir saves her from the crocodile. “.....found a way to let her know that despite the inescapable muteness of their exchanges, she was person to him”(Ghosh 76). From a historical perspective, trauma is inextricably interwoven with human lives. People are forced to flee, leaving behind their dwelling and livestock, to escape the sound and fury of nature. Frequent cloudbursts in Assam and recent floods in Kerala and Tamilnadu underline the truth that mankind will never be free from the matrix of trauma and it can best expressed and understood through the works of literature.

Ghosh spent some years in the picturesque island, which enabled him to grasp the intensity of trauma faced by the natives of the Sundarbans. Each character in the novel experiences trauma in one way or the other. Kanai, who works as an international translator, who considers others inferior, feels uncomfortable in the presence of Piyali,who is a part of Indian diaspora.On the other end of the spectrum, Piya,despite all her knowledge is unable to communicate her ideas even to a forest guard. Other characters like Nilima and Nirmal shift to Lusibari, but are unable to escape the trauma of displacement. Through the characters who are suffused with their own grand narratives and world views, Ghosh traces the trope of trauma that reverberates beyond space and time.

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The White Standard of Beauty and its Traumatic Impact: A Study of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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Abstract:

Beauty is defined by individual senses or mind. Since our minds and senses differ individually, the idea of beauty also varies accordingly. It is all about how we shape our mind and how we get ourselves influenced by the others' definition of beauty. In The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison has woven story that depicts the disturbing consequences of the White standard of beauty that has rooted deep and firm in the consciousness of the Americans. Colonialism implanted in their mind a politicized and racist sense of beauty- "White is Beautiful". Since the white Americans were politically superior, their idea- fair complexion, straighter hair and blue eyes as the ideal characteristics of beauty- became dominant. This standardization of the notion of beauty triggered a race among the darker-skinned people to hunt ways and means to achieve fairer skin. However, this race has some adverse effects on- the psyche of the African-Americans. They often have to suffer from societal pressure to be beautiful and get accepted in the 'elite' category of beautiful. This societal pressure often leads to traumatic experiences. Morrison depicts the traumatic effect of this dumbest idea in the painstakingly beautiful story of Pecola and her family. The hunt for a fairer skin and the Bluest eye made Pecola psychologically unstable and unreceptive of any other notions. This article

discusses the white standards of beauty and its traumatic impact on the African-American minor girl protagonist of the novel, The Bluest Eye.

Keywords: *Beauty, Trauma, Black, Racism, Toni Morrison*

Introduction:

The record of valorisation of white over black goes back to the ancient times. Ancient religious beliefs like Manichaeism (founded by Mani in the 3rd century AC), is based on the conflict of God and matter or light or darkness. In this conflict, God or light always wins and dominates over the darkness. Even in Christianity light stands for spiritual illumination and truth while darkness stands for evil or ignorance. Therefore, the superiority of light over darkness, which is synonymous to white and black respectively, has been present in the human consciousness since the development of the human civilization. In America, this conception (or rather 'misconception') gained momentum when the colonisation of Africa led to slavery. The Americans saw the African slaves for the first time when in 1619 the American privateer the White Lion brought back home 20 African slaves by seizing them from a Portuguese slave ship. Therefore, the political supremacy of the whites over the blacks also gave impetus to their prior beliefs.

American sociologist Charles S. Johnson says that in the context of America the concepts of whiteness and blackness have moral connotation and it is not just a

matter of pigmentation. In his work, *Growing up in the Black Belt*(1941) he argues that in the popular mind black has always been assumed as an evil or the essence and the aspect of the devil. The status of the blacks in American society never had a religious basis, yet “the evil and ugliness of blackness have long been contrasted in popular thinking with the goodness of purity of whiteness.”(Johnson 257) Therefore, blackness is not just a skin colour, but a social construct, persistently inferiorized and contrasted with the white. Consequently, the white people began to consider their physical features as beautiful while that of the black people as ugly and deformed. Eminent Sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) refuted the inferiority of the black race that social Darwinism, Eugenics and Nazism established combining racial prejudices and vague scientific theory. According to him there is no scientific basis for such a belief as it is a result of social prejudice. Moreover racial differences do not mean racial inferiority.

Colonisation and slavery established the white American more politically superior than the blacks. As a result, white standard of beauty became dominant. In America black skin colour is associated with thick lips and kinky hair whereas, the white complexion goes with the straighter hair and blue eyes. Therefore, the former are the characteristics of ugliness and the latter, are of good looks. These assumptions gained more thrust by popular pop culture and other modern means of communication and got rooted deep into the psyche of all Americans, particularly, the African Americans who saw themselves through the eyes of the white. They were always aware of the dual identity – a black man and an American. While the white Americans, even though they were not the aborigines of the continent, never considered themselves of having such dual identity. Du Bois calls this awareness by the American as ‘double-consciousness’ – “this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity”(Du Bois 615). This feelings of contempt and pity when internalized by the black often results in self-loathing, trauma, loss

of identity, violence towards other blacks and even worse . Toni Morrison in her ‘The Bluest Eyes’, gives an account of a poignant story resulting out of ‘double-consciousness’.

The Bluest Eye (1970) is the first novel of the Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison, one of the most important African-American novelists. The novel is about a doomed quest of a young poor black girl child named Pecola, for a pair of blue eyes in the twentieth century racist America. It also tells the distressing tale of various black characters, suffering because of poverty, racism and distorted assumption of beauty. This quest and conviction resulted in varying psychological conditions- from light to severe. The quest of Pecola for a *perfect* beauty in a very formidable social set-up and destruction of her life in every possible ways show the extent to which such a dangerous notion of beauty can make an individual suffer.

The Bluest Eye was written when the African-Americans were still recovering from post-slavery trauma and were asserting their belongingness in the United States of America. They enforced in their movements of rights, the slogans, such as, ‘Black Power’ and ‘Black is Beautiful’. It was also a period when The Black Arts Movement was at peak. Toni Morrison shows in the novel how the popular standard of Beauty has affected the human psyche so much that a minor girl named Pecola suffered from psychological instability; although her desire was just to be beautiful, so that the people around her could love her. At eleven her own father raped her, out of pity and guilt for her ugliness. She even got pregnant with the child of her father. She suffered alone from the racist and sexual abuse that her peers and her neighbours hurled upon her. Even her own mother disliked her for her colour and ugly features. All these mental and physical abuses were inflicted upon her during the first eleven years of her life. These conditions left such a deep and traumatic impact on her mind that she became insane in the next two years of her life that Morrison writes about.

Beauty According to Pecola Breedloves:

Beauty, according to Pecola, was to have a pair of

blue eyes. Her ideal kind of beauty was to have the features of the then popular White American actress, Mary Jane- beautiful white face with wavy blonde hair and a pair of the bluest eyes. Being constantly pitied and looked down for being ugly, she sought after what people recognised as beautiful. She nurtured a powerful desire for a pair of blue eyes so that she could become pretty and hence be loved and admired by all.

...each night, without fail, she prayed for blue eyes. Fervently for a year, she prayed. Although somewhat discouraged, she was not without hope... (Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* 4)

Her prayers get answered when she approaches Soaphead Church, who seemed to live a spiritual life. He understood her pain and made her believe that she has transformed into a blue-eyed girl. Now Pecola could see that she possesses a pair of blue eyes and also tries to convince others. She got completely immersed in an imaginary world where she is the prettiest with the pair of bluest eyes. For Pecola, he is the God who answered her prayers. Ironically, her imaginary eyes gave her freedom to move away from the community as she had fulfilled their notion of beauty. She moved freely with dignity and pride. But for society she became a young girl gone mad.

Beauty is therefore inherently racist and its impact very intense. Also, the features it glamorises- white skin, blond hair and blue eyes are Caucasian. The Caucasian being the colonists were politically superior than the native Africans. Therefore, their beauty standards were also accepted as superior. Gradually this idea became dangerous and lacking as it equated white skin with personal value and implies that those who do not have these standards lack beauty and therefore inferior.

Origin of Pecola's Idea of Beauty:

The sign for Pecola's tragedy began much before her understanding of beauty. It was like she inherited her obsession of blue eyes from her mother Pauline, who in her younger days were obsessed with movies and the beautiful white actresses they showcased. She

was so much into those white actresses that she relentlessly tried to be like them. The movies educated her, and she understood the white standard of beauty, the fashion that was trending and a romantic love she was lacking.

...along with the idea of romantic love, she was introduced to another- physical beauty. Probably the most destructive ideas in the history of human thought. Both originated in envy, thrived in insecurity, and ended in delusion (Morrison 120).

She was so much influenced by the romanticized movies that she hoped for such standards in her drudged life with her husband, Cholly. Such desires and romantic expectations made her peaceful life complicated. She even went to the extent of trying to look like Jean Harlow from the pictures. She discarded her enthusiasm when she lost her front teeth. By then she realized no matter how much she tried she could never be as beautiful as the fair ladies- "I just didn't care no more... and settled down to just being ugly" (Morrison 121). But though she abandoned her desires and endeavours, they left a deep impression on memories. When Pecola was born, her family and neighbours recognised her as a hideous baby. When still in her womb, Pauline decided that she would "love it no matter what it looked like" (Morrison 122). But when she was born, her ugliness was beyond imagination. She was amazed by her blackness and could never accept her wholeheartedly. She says:

She looked like a black ball of hair...eyes all soft and wet. A cross between a puppy and a dying man. But I knowed she was ugly. Head full of pretty hair, but Lord she was ugly (Morrison 122-124).

It seems that she transmitted all her self-contempt and obsession with physical beauty to her daughter. She realized her appearance would not bring her any respect; therefore, she tried to compensate and gain respectability in other ways, by being an ideal servant in a rich household. She also could never love her daughter because of her ugliness. She loved the people of the white household more than her ugly daughter.

Thus, Pecola was a girl, neglected by her mother, raped and impregnated by her father and downtrodden by the society. The harassment she received started at home, which intensified her desire to be beautiful even more.

Isolation and Victimization: Contributors to Trauma

Toni Morrison in her narrative shows various instances of how Pecola, because of her complexion and ugliness had to feel isolated and victimized not only from the racist society but also her parents. Even her own age group did not leave her in peace. In an episode, a group of black boys was circling and holding Pecola. They were gaily harassing her with racial and sexist insults:

Black e mo Black e mo Yadadd-
sleepsnekked. Black e mo Black e mo ya
dadd sleeps nekked. Black e mo... (63)

This scene of black insulting blacks is very disheartening. It reveals their colonised and wrongly educated minds. It seemed that they thrust all their self-contempt into much weaker Pecola, who swallowed their tortures without a word. Maureen Peal, the high yellow dream child consoles Pecola when the group of black boys teased her. She tolerates and pities Pecola's blackness. She even buys her ice-cream. But once she figured out that it threatened her superiority, she proved to be hostile and insulting to Pecola just like the black boys who were tormenting her.

More painful to this incident was in an instance where she faced rejection from her own mother. This incident occurred when Pauline was working in the white household of the Fisher family. One day Pecola accidentally spills peach cobbler, her legs get burnt by the hot liquid but Pauline is unmindful of it and making the situation more humiliating for Pecola adds insults to the injury by beating her and turning her out of the kitchen. The situation gets more intensified for Pecola as it happens in the presence of the Fisher doll child who possessed the ideal characteristics of beauty and represented what Pecola has dreamed of becoming.

Pecola, hated by almost every person around her, including her parents, grew this dire need for the

miraculous gift of blue eyes which according to her only Soaphead Church can deliver. Her need grows so much that it consumes her intellect and she hallucinates having a pair of blue eyes and acknowledges herself as becoming the most beautiful girl of her place. Hence, her traumatic experiences deeply distresses and disturbs her life, making her go insane. Healing was out of question due to the then social and economic conditions.

Conclusion:

The mistreatment and subjugation of the black people by the whites has been continuing since the beginning of the colonisation. They had to fight many fights for their rights, such as- the Civil Rights movement, the Black Power movement, the 1980s Black feminist movement, pan-Africanism and the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Recently the movement of Black Lives Matter is gaining momentum among the victimized African-American community. The movement campaigns against cruelty, violence and systemic racism towards black people.

The Black is Beautiful as a cultural movement started in the United States in the 1960s by the African-Americans. This movement aimed to dispel the racist notion that black people's natural physical features such as colour, hair, facial figures are inherently ugly. Influenced by the movement and her personal experiences, Toni Morrison started to write *The Bluest Eye* in 1962. She delineates the purpose of choosing the issue in her forward to the novel. She says, "...the assertion of racial beauty was not a reaction to the self-mocking, humorous critique of cultural or racial foibles common in all groups, but against the damaging internalization of assumptions of immutable inferiority originating in an outside gaze" (Morrison IX). Therefore, as a protagonist she chose a character most delicate- a black child who is a female. Her sufferings and psychological conditions mirror that of a section of people she represents. She is an example of what society can create and also denigrate from a perfectly normal being. She was born perfectly fine. It was the social set up that defined her as ugly and lacking. Therefore, her ugliness does not belong to her. It is

just a social construct. Her desire for a pair of blue eyes is symbolic of her ardent desire for freedom-freedom from oppression, from being defined, from being mocked and pitied; and freedom of love. However, Morrison reveals that the extremities of Pecola's case were possible only because she belonged to a 'crippled and crippling family' (Morrison X). The story of Pecola therefore served her purpose of illuminating the unacknowledged version of trauma that many people face because of the misleading idea of beauty.

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Reading Home as a Space of Trauma in Trezza Azzopardi's *The Hiding Place*

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Abstract:

Trezzza Azzopardi's The Hiding Place (2000) is a novel about traumatic childhood experiences in the familial context, within the home. The concept of "trauma" in this paper encompasses an individual's suffering, and in doing so, the paper attempts to read the nuances of traumatic and post traumatic psychology. Dolores's disfigured hand as the object of stigmatisation ushers a series of corporeal and verbal abuse. This paper is an attempt to read the novel's depiction of trauma and the body, and the nuanced psyche of stigmatisation through the lens of trauma psychology and disability studies, and to read home as a space not of security, but of horror. Drawing theoretical insights from Rosemarie Thomson, Cathy Caruth, and Judith Butler among others, the paper explores the process of the autodiegetic narrator's retelling, retracing, and recollecting a traumatic past. The paper also endeavours to look into how the space of home can be turned into a space of trauma through the constant stigmatisation and othering in the familial context.

Keywords: Autodiegetic narrator, Corporeality, Home, Trezza Azzopardi, Trauma, Stigmatisation.

"There is no place like home!"

- Lyman Frank Baum

The paper refers to the above line by L. Frank Baum as this cliche singles out the unique aura of home, a place where human restlessness is supposed to give

way to genuine contentment. But an invitation to a more literal reading of the phrase: there is no such place, renders the fact that home exists only in imagination. Dorothy in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) utters this line to give the readers an idea about how she desires to get back to her home in Kansas. But this paper attempts to read the line in a different light. The same place of security, of contentment can be turned into a place of trauma, as is the case with Dolores, the autodiegetic narrator in *The Hiding Place*. The title of the novel resonates the fact that Dolores is being hidden away against her wishes, in closed chest, in rabbit's cage — reiterating the claustrophobic, dehumanizing, and demeaning places of captivity and ostracism, of rejection — "there's really no more space for anyone else in this house" (Azzopardi 5). Her narrative is so much concerned with the 'space' of the house that nearly every other page describes her house, more specifically, the lack of 'space' — "practically a ward" (Azzopardi 6). Trezza Azzopardi's *The Hiding Place* (2000) is a story about the Gauci family (the father is a Maltese immigrant and the mother is Welsh), set in Cardiff, narrated through the perspective of the youngest daughter Dolores (also the victim of a tragic fire). The narrative is an enthralling account of how family, like fire, can change from something that bestows comfort and warmth to a vicious blaze, sparing none. It narrates the horrors of a traumatic childhood in a dream-like tapestry, knitting together distinct times and standpoints. The horror is often veiled through the beautiful lyricism,

it is as if the narrator is simply stating a mundane affair in her life: "children burnt and children bartered: someone must be to blame" (Azzopardi 78). The nuanced depiction of the trauma that is so evident in the narration is somewhat a beautiful conjunction of words together. The text examines the gripping effect of childhood trauma and the crucial requirement of trauma victims to make sense of and to accept their tormenting past. This paper attempts to read home as a space not of security, but of horror. In doing so, the paper also reads the psychological nexus of the protagonist and the process of recounting the traumatic event, exploring if it is feasible to mend the scar by manifesting in words.

Each of the daughters in the Gauci family encounters abuse and trauma in diverse manners. Celesta, the eldest, is married off to a "grotesque" looking man of forty (Azzopardi 83). She is just seventeen, when she gets married to a man of her father's age. Marina is bartered off by her father to Joe Madera in exchange for the apartment and some money. Fran is sent to children's home, despite having a family, as she is characterised by 'Pyrophilia' (a condition where she attains fulfilment in anything related to fire). It is this condition that leads to a fire in the house, which nearly incinerates Dolores. Her trauma is evident through self-mutilation in the form of tattoos. Rose and Luca, on the other hand, use Dolores (their youngest sister) as a kind of an outlet through which they express their anger towards the inefficiency of their parents. The bullying of Dolores in the hands of Rose and Luca can be seen as an extended form of their latent desire to confront their parents, to confront their upbringing, to question the gradual dilapidation of their house, of their life.

Trauma victims undergo mental and physical wounds which are invisible, but Dolores's wounds are visible. Her body is the expression of her trauma, leading to the fear it generates as disabled bodies confront vulnerability and mortality of the perceiving subject. She becomes an object of fear, and thereby stigmatized, both within and outside her home. In the eyes of her father, Dolores is the embodiment of bad luck bearing

its mark on the family. The fire incident has been etched into Dolores's body through her missing fingers, her facial scar and her burned scalp. The hand is a trauma of stigmatisation, more than being a trauma of corporeal disfigurement. This leads to a series of othering and stigmatisation within the sphere of the family itself. The trauma inflicted upon Dolores outside her family regarding her disfigured hand is far less compared to the trauma she has inside her home, where her father identifies her as "a devil had come into his house" (Azzopardi 264). The repeated indifference and bullying by her sisters Rose and Luca suggests that they consider Dolores a lesser human being because of her burnt hand. The novel is about the process of stigmatisation through otherness, leading to trauma. It is only through the "disfigured hand" that Dolores is identified with and labelled as "Crip" (Azzopardi 170). Rosemarie Thomson in her *Extraordinary Bodies* (1997) foregrounds how social relationships ascribe meanings to extraordinary bodies. The not-so normal bodies (in this case, Dolores's hand) are attributed value and meanings through cultural norms and "social framing" (Thomson 31). Mrs. Jackson's interest in Dolores's hand whenever she goes out, or Mrs. Riley recognizing Dolores through her 'disfigured hand' after thirty years provides ample evidence of this social frame to which Dolores was subjected to (Azzopardi 159). Similarly, Babette Rothschild talks about this phenomenon regarding the life long impact of trauma and the process of corporeal evocation on the traumatised individual. It is not the traumatic event that haunts survivors for decades afterward, but the impact or legacy of those events in the form of emotional, bodily, and behavioural memories. Freud argues about a "delayed" amelioration of the experience of trauma as memory (in psychosexual context). He talks about how the individual could decode the actual meaning of the event only after a delayed revival of the event as memories. Traumatic memory is inherently shaped by the unconscious motives that confer meanings to the event. Trauma is so much interlinked with the body and the mind, that Jamie Marich argues how trauma is manifested in the body through various kinds of pain.

For instance, Dolores's account of the recurring "Ghost pain" weaves the narrative together with other trauma that Dolores experienced as a child. The "Ghost pain" is the mysterious neurological perception that emanates in her absent fingers. This recurring pain or sensation reveals its presence through the missing fingers. This occurrence is termed as "phantom pain" in medical sciences, which can be conspicuously existent and tangible, as an essential segment of the body (Halligan 255). This pain confounds Dr Reynolds, who finds it intriguing to "miss something [Dolores] never knew" (Azzopardi 80). However, for Dolores, this is not strange; not strange to miss something one never had, as she misses her sister Marina whom she only met as a baby. This episode captures the psychology of loss in a provocative way, transporting the readers to an initial point of trauma in Dolores's life.

Cathy Caruth in her influential *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) argues that trauma is expressed, in most cases, through silence, through the dereliction of words, through the failure of language. However, in her approach, Caruth takes only the abstract dimensions of trauma. The novel, on the other hand, implies the concrete aspect, rendering a literary approach to childhood and family trauma. The nucleus on childhood and family trauma helps in understanding the specific and concrete rather than metaphorical and abstract aspects of trauma. Trauma, as borrowed from ancient Greek, originally denotes "a violent injury from an external cause that breached the body's integrity" (Brette 1800). In other words, this can be translated as physical and mental wound. The narrator endeavours to comprehend how her present sense of self has been affected by her memories and her past. The obsession with memory is due to the lack of it, as Anne Whitehead asserts, "in the face of mounting amnesia, there is an urgent need to consciously establish meaningful connections with the past" (Whitehead 82). The narrator seeks the past and in doing so faces a complex dilemma on her part, mingled with instabilities and tensions.

The autodiegetic narrator is named Dolores (which is no coincidence), the Spanish term for 'sorrow', and

also the plural of 'dolor' meaning 'pain' in Latin. It is this pain and sorrow which is reiterated throughout the narrative. Dolores' sisters refer to her as "Crip", and her father calls her a "*Sinistre*", "*la diavola*", "*il demone*" (Azzopardi 170, 64, 86). These labels demean Dolores and vilify her which is reflective of the phenomenon of "linguistic vulnerability" which Judith Butler explores in *Excitable Speech* (1990). According to Butler, this process of naming and labelling can be cited as examples of "injurious speech" or "hate speech", which refers to the way words can injure an individual. Names play an important role in forming one's identity, in shaping one's individuality, and if that individual is called an "injurious name, one is derogated and demeaned" (Butler 02). Therefore, in the light of the theory by Butler, it is evident that Dolores has been made the subject of abuse through the process of naming and labelling by her sisters and father. Through the process of "sedimentation" produced by repetition of her "derogated" and "demeaned" names, Dolores's identity had been formed within her house through her so-called bad hand, her missing fingers, and her scarred face (Butler 10). She has grappled to defy her stigmatisation through her defying of the 'injurious' names, and not to perceive herself through those labels; but somehow, it has shaped her, it has been so much ingrained within her, that her disfigured hand became the onus of her existence. Right from her birth, she has been named in a way which implies disappointment. In a heart wrenching scene after the fire incident when Dolores was just a month old, her father visits the hospital and he calls her "Bambina, Bambina", as he fails to recall her name (Azzopardi 54). In another instance, when Dolores revisits her house after thirty years, she discovers a photograph of herself and Luca; the photograph reveals her mother's indifference towards her where she strikes the spelling of Dolores's name twice. It is however interesting to see how Dolores revered her mother as a child, and clings to her, as she "loves this; love being here in the kitchen with just my mother and no one else" (Azzopardi 74). This process of naming is also related to the process of

objectification. Rosemarie Thomson in her book *Staring* (2009) talks about the role of gaze into objectifying the victims. She argues that the body is foregrounded through the process of stigmatization, and brought to the front, into everyone's gaze. The novel explicitly highlights the scenes where Dolores has moments of being the object of the gaze. It starts right within the family, with her father branding her as 'Sinister' to her sisters treating her as an object, as an outlet of their frustration, replacing her name with the noun 'Crip' (enemy).

However, Dolores fails to perceive the impact that these names would have in shaping her existence, partly because she strives to see her home as a source of protection. Judith Herman in *Trauma and Recovery* (1992) delineates this quintessential quandary experienced by children who are engulfed in the nexus of family trauma. She insists on the veil of trust that a traumatised child has to develop on the part of her "untrustworthy and unsafe" parents (Herman 102). In the process of creating this veil, the 'badness' of a parent is shrouded and the child attempts to reinstate an image of 'goodness', in turn, blaming themselves. This is evident in Dolores's attempt to somehow instill a sense of guilt in her narratives regarding certain acts of her father. For instance, Dolores emphasizes how her father had pangs of consciousness when he decides to barter his daughters. This process of developing a sense of basic trust on the part of Dolores is also apparent in the portrayal of her mother. In the narrative about her mother, Dolores cites reasons for her failure in protecting her daughters. But the contradictory accounts of her parents (retrospect accounts mainly) conspicuously portray this dilemma in Dolores as a victim of childhood trauma. Some passages in the text evince to the fact that Mary might not have been as loving and protecting as Dolores claims her to be. The way Mary 'protects' Dolores by not sending her to school or allowing her to play outside the house are ostensible reasons to 'protect' her; but this protection apparently is a shield against the shame that she might face in the society as a mother of a disfigured child. Mary's calling her daughter 'Dol' (Doll) is a testimony

to the fact that she deprives her daughter of agency and independence. She rarely accompanies her daughter outside of their house.

The text's fragmented and disjointed narration is crucial in understanding the kind of trauma that the narrator undergoes during her childhood. Her home, which is supposed to be the safest place, is a site of her trauma. The six daughters endures their father's indifference and abuse which brings to the fore the questions of trauma and gender in the interlinked nexus of responsibility and guilt. Dolores's unquestioning acceptance of her physical disfigurement and hostility in her own home is evident in the first part of the narrative, when she is unaware of a world outside of her home. It is only in the later part, when she returns to Cardiff (her hometown) after thirty years as an adult, that she starts to ponder about the appalling entities that have traumatised her both physically and emotionally. The novel chronicles the dark realities of family traumas and in doing so, challenges the processes of remembering, narration, and representation. The novel is about the consequences that serious disordering in the family can have on individuals. Hence, this paper endeavoured to look into how the space of home can be turned into a space of trauma through the constant stigmatisation and othering in the familial context.

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Trauma of the Displaced in Herta Muller's *The Passport* and Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone*

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Abstract :

*Literature offers a fertile soil for depicting the feelings of displacement generating psychological aberrations of trauma. In this sense, the term trauma of displacement offers a new perspective. Undoubtedly, the imprints of trauma in the displaced is irrevocable and creates a condition in an individual in which one has to accept and learn to live with the fluidity of identities with their emotional tortures and cultural shocks. The perpetual impression of political and social oppression instigating psychological trauma on the lives of the writers and characters ensues as the nostalgia giving vent to a strong creative impulse evident through the analysis of Herta Muller's *The Passport* and Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone*. Discussions on the displacement and its consequent trauma in two different contexts can lead to discourses on specific characteristics of trauma. Traumatic experiences are stabs on the mind that harm the internal as well as the external co-ordination of a human being. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines trauma as the emotional response someone has to an extremely negative event. While trauma is a normal reaction to a horrible event, the effects can be so severe that they interfere with an individual's normal life. In these two novels under discussion, memory provides an immaculate*

intending to the traumatic experiences caused by displacement.

Key words: *Displaced, Psychological trauma, Identity, Oppression, Memory.*

The concept of displacement has never been extraneous to any of the literatures across the globe. In a wider context, displacement may be a quintessential, claiming that nearly all creatures are displaced beings. The inquiry of first possible displacement results in the departure from the paradise of the mothers' womb, the safest place imaginable. The security offered by the mother's womb or its role in shaping the identity acts as a source to spot the agonies of displacement. Displacement and its associating issues have offered a good scope to trauma studies.

Displacement, essentially results in far reaching consequences such as losing contact with people, culture, landscapes, and language or the so-called native place. It is nothing but a standard logic that the nostalgic remembrance of motherland juxtaposes itself with a sort of inevitability of settlement in new land. This article encompasses an astute explanation of the concept of displacement as a sense of dislocation within the self, regardless of the contexts in which they occur—European or Indian. Here, the trauma of displacement has been studied mainly from three levels. Firstly, the writers chosen for this study are women writers or

could better be rephrased as women narratives of displacement. The conditions of Central-Eastern Europe and North East India seems comparable with reference to displacement. Another level of comparison is the past or post war situations in connection with the trauma and identity displacement within the countries where abusive regimes destroyed social bonds and had an enduring impact on the people lives. This perpetual impression of political and social events instigating psychological trauma on the lives of the writers adds to the rationale of the study. The analysis is carried out on the hypothetical assumption that the imprints of trauma on the ‘self’ of the writer results in an ingenious impulse, ensuing in a realistic portrayal of this emotional extremities in their characters. The extent of suffering and the resultant trauma remains alike for all women across the world. They are seen to be doubly victimised in both societies and such trauma narratives are often perceived as their attempts to voice the unspeakable.

The concept of “home” is apparently seen as incongruent to the term “unhomely”, a key concept relating to displacement and referring to the estranging sense of the relocation of the home in an unhallowed place(Bhabha 141). Writers as well as critics refer to scores of social, political, economic, cultural and ideological issues involved in making “home” quite “unsafe” to sustain life peacefully. Coming into close contact with these developments, the use of the term “unhomely”, does not mean “homelessness” (Bhabha 141-142). Same home becomes the most sought-after place for people living overseas or in diasporic set up. They prefer having home to assert their identity and the sense of belongingness or rootedness. Any prospect of losing one’s home in this context results in restlessness and much complexity. Critics like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Jacqueline Bhabha, Saskia Sassen, among others, have taken to post colonialism in terms of globalization and the transnational circuits of economic and political displacements. Discourse on “home” bears new color and dimension in accordance with the fast-changing social, cultural and political milieu, highlighting insurgency, ethnicity, violence, illegal migration, governance deficit, underdevelopment and

unrest as some of the key areas.

Although there are immense illustrations of literary narratives initiated by politically and socially ignited displacement and its consequent trauma, this article focusses on two works- *The Passport* by Herta Muller, the German-Romanian writer from the East Central European context and *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a war zone* by Temsula Ao, a writer from North Eastern part of India. Violation of rights owing to the strategy of authority forms a rampant feature in the society making home a problematic part, accentuates the rage of the common masses and makes them at ease with militant outfits instead of coming for the help of the security forces to eradicate anti nationalist and disquieting elements.

Trauma may result from one distressing experience or recurring events of being overwhelmed which will be precipitated in weeks, years, or maybe decades because the person struggles to deal with the immediate circumstances, eventually resulting in serious, long-term negative consequences. This is reinforced through experiences like man-made, technological and natural disasters, including war, abuse or violence and differs from individual to individual. Moreover, the sudden impulses of trauma induced stress always germinate future bearings on the individual. Traumatization, as Van der Kolk mentioned “occurs when both internal and external resources are inadequate to deal with external threat” (393). Unswervingly Cathy Caruth defines trauma as “an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events during which the response to the event occurs within the often delayed, uncontrolled, repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomenon” (*Unclaimed* 11). Comparison of the conditions existing in East Central Europe and North East of India reveals that the political conditions within the respective countries instigates displacement or dislocation from their native place inflicts unresolvable wounds within the minds of the victims, often identified as psychological trauma. The attitude reflected by the women writers selected for study is crucial as women are doubly victimised and traumatised in such political situations and in a

patriarchal society.

Primarily, the life and narratives of women writers instigated by the political conditions are considered. These writers incorporate alongside the political unrest the intimations of history and culture of the state - issues that have held the state together despite such vehement sorts of violence within the post-war years. Herta Müller, a representative of East Bloc German writers, demands attention through her works depicting a realistic picture of the oppressive life under the totalitarian regime. Compatible to this, are the circumstances inspiring the writings of North East India. Müller's *The Passport* recounts the socio-political oppressions imposed by the totalitarian regime on the private life and professional life of the intellectuals and individuals which is assumed to have hastened the trauma. The gradual deterioration of ethnic Germans into a displaced minority sums up the central vein of Muller's novels. The stories from the book *These Hills Called Home* narrates North East India as neighbourhood that has been inflicted in wounds for many years. This collection of Ao's stories throws light on the importance of peace and cultural values and movingly depict the agonies of the Naga society within the fifties and sixties of the last century, caught between the stubborn militancy and therefore the repressive Indian State forces. But insurgency and Nagaland are quite synonymous sometimes in reading the state's history. The narratives recount the trauma faced by the Nagas within the hands of the Indian soldiers. It also highlights the universality of the topic of women's suffering in times of conflict in several parts of the globe. Psychic numbing or behavioural or memory disorders resulting from 'shell shock' syndrome symptomized by memory loss, physical tension, uncontrollable emotions, and numbness encouraged psychologists to probe deep into the forfeits of trauma on memory. *The Passport* and *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone* prove as illustrations of this process.

Secondly, consequences of the trauma of displacement in the post-war years and repressions of state's regime on the memory of the characters are analysed. In *The*

Passport, memory of victims is exemplified through certain images, events and memories. Some of them being the war memorial, the pot hole, the tear glass, the juxtaposed images of Windisch and also the watcher alongside the disbelief in women's fidelity and also the strained relationship of Windisch and his wife. *The Passport* could be a completely unique in that most of the present events are visualized regarding incidents that happened earlier in time and different in space. Memory of the past shadows all happenings of present. Windisch, the village Miller, is seen as the utmost victim of trauma. The image of Windisch counting "two years by the war memorial" reveals that even after two years the remnants of the war torments remain unhealed (Muller 7). The pot hole by the poplar could also be a reminder that "the end is here" and perhaps "the tip" refers to the pinnacles of his traumatic life which he imagines to end alongside his emigration to the West (Muller 7).

The picture of displacement and its resultant trauma women feels is clear from the eloquence of Windisch regarding his wife's fidelity and her way of life during the war. The rift in Windisch's life together with his wife is an after-effect of the traumatic incident that happened even before the very beginning of their married life. Windisch's remark that "whoring is healthier" is an outcome of his trauma (Muller 74). His fear of his daughter's sexual subjugation and its practical value over procuring the passports discloses the role played by heart in igniting the sparks of the past and its correlation to present. Trauma gradually advances to the sensation of being dispossessed.

Another resonance of trauma within the novel is when the narrative moves between past memories and present experiences. The political conditions and its impacts too build up extreme states within the psyche. The image of trauma inhabiting its victims without which they feel alienated and empty is evoked by the loneliness suffered by the Sacristan after the burning down of the fruit tree which ate its own fruits: "he felt all the loneliness of the years. His life was transparent. Empty" (Muller 32). The narrative depicts a real trauma of psycho-social burden of totalitarianism, infesting the

Romanians as an inescapable condition of life.

In *These Hills*, Ao portray the human suffering in Nagaland shocked by the brutal soldiers and militancy. She writes about quest of Nagas for separate political status and the way the villagers survive in such a conflict prone area. The agony of suffering resulting from the crisis of politics and identity within the region has been engraved in her mind for years. Memory acts as a catalyst in recreating the realities of Nagas at the time of insurgency into her canvas of creativity. This book is a collection of ten short stories, among which three stories are illustrations of trauma. Within the story the ‘Last Song’, the girl Apenyo, who appears to possess an unprecedented ability for singing, watches her mother weaving colourful shawls which can be sold within the market to bring extra income. The line of the story is viewed as preparative of trauma: “It seemed the tiny girl was born to sing....” what the mother considered unreasonable behaviour during a toddler barely a year old, was actually the first indication of the singing genius that “she had born to” (Ao 23). The insurgency grabbing the villagers is well-pictured:

The govt chose to catch the people for anti-national activities on the festival day of church and capture all of the leaders. The mother and therefore the daughter experienced sudden conduct. soldiers were making trouble. There was chaos everywhere. Villagers trying to escape the scene were either shot at or kicked and clubbed by the soldiers who appeared to be everywhere (Ao 28).

Finally, the tragedy of Apenyo and her mother assaulted and slaughtered by the Indian Military forces along with the fact that both the mother and daughter lost their honour and life is revealed.

Satemba’s tale titled *The Curfew Mansketches* him as “a government informant and spy on his fellow Nagas during the hours of curfew” (Longkumer 121). Ao features the life of innocent villagers who are captive in their own village. “Satemba was a constable of Assam police” (Devi 919). But after he left the work

because of broken knee, he became “an informer of the military but couldn’t find peace” (Longkumer 118). The chance of encounter with a stranger further strengthened his mental agony. The protagonist was caught between two forces: “the underground forces and soldiers and was searching his identity within the midst of violence” (Ao 34-43). The strain of survival for the young male Nagas in their own villages leads to impending trauma.

An Old Man Remembers tells the story of soldiers Shashi and Imli. Their life was painful, pathetic and heart-touching. The bitterness of memory of the lifetime in jungle haunted their mind most the time (Devi 919). The terrific life of the jungle is vividly drawn in the story as: “By the time when we reached the forest, away from the mayhem in the village, it was already dark. We were hungry, we were cold, but most of all were terrified, not knowing where we were heading. The eerie jungle sounds were starting to grow in volume, which only added to our fear.” (Ao 99) It is evident in their conversation as: “soldiers we were made into and that’s what we resolved to stay.” (Ao 101) As an underground army, they also committed brutal crimes and felt desperate trying to escape from the jungle life, they were shocked as their village was totally shattered. Therefore, the story narrates the conflicting situation and the desecration of the region during the times of struggle between the Naga underground and military.

Finally, the focus is on the impact of the prevailing conditions in the life of the writers themselves. Muller’s writings are evidently autobiographical in nature. Muller’s way of writing life into literature – the oppressions of totalitarian regime she suffered in different stages of her life, marks the uniqueness of her works. A cursory scrutiny of Ao’s writings produced in the North-East region displays the fascination for violence, mostly emanating from the problems of insurgency and extremism. Temsula Ao has carved a niche in the annals of North-East writing keeping in pace with the central issues in the region. In an interview titled “The North-eastern identity is a Misnomer”, when asked whether “writers live twice,

once through the actual experience and then again processing it for writing” Ao responded:

...the writers’ perceptions differ about important issues affecting the general population but writing does not mean any processing of actual experiences as such. At best, indelible real-life experiences may provide the writer the incentive or a trigger to weave a narrative for a poem or a novel. As for living twice, the definition will be as varied as there are writers.(Joseph 3)

Concludingly, the two literary works under analysis substantiate the trauma of displacement triggered by memory mainly through the events relating to the political situations narrated as part of the life of the characters. The wounded souls of displacement, that these writers are, equip them with the strength of unique creativity sparkling in their life, characters and writings. The women characters portrayed in the works suffer the trauma of displacement doubly as they are victims of such situations directly or indirectly. Both Herta Muller and Temsula Ao have suffered the oppressions imposed by the power of the state. A common thread that binds all the stories are the common people who are often the worst victims of wars and civil strife. Thus, both works discuss the traumatic experience of displacement uniquely transferred from former generations to the latter who lacked a first-hand experience of the regimes feeling displaced in their own homelands.

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Hamnet and Narrative Hygiene: Retelling a Life

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Abstract:

This paper examines the trauma left behind by the death of Shakespeare's son Hamnet as explored in the recently published book Hamnet by Maggie O' Farrell. Because of the timing of its publication, March 2020, readers can relate to the book, and empathise with the characters. Exploring a similar psychic geography that we currently inhabit, the world therein set against the Black Death seems contemporaneous. What the author manages to deliver is a fine fusion of the private and the public. Trauma creates a rupture in the continuity of life. The novel tries to posit that by writing the play Hamlet, the playwright tries to make sense of the death of his son, and by the same act he transfers private memory to the archives of public memory. This paper explores how externalizing the traumatic event in the form of narrative, by retelling a life in a new order, and rearranging the plot, one can gain control and a certain degree of authority over the events that initially led to the trauma. Seen from another perspective, even the book Hamnet is an attempt at knowledge production around the son of Shakespeare by thrusting him from forgetfulness into cultural memory, and from obscurity into language by the very act of writing about him. The structure of the novel is like two concentric circles centred on death and disease. While at the intradiegetic level, the characters try to make sense of the loss of their child, at the extradiegetic one,

we, the readers, get a glimpse of a plague-ridden world, not very different from our own, infested with a pandemic. At both levels, stories help us make sense of the existential mess we are in.

Keywords: *Trauma, Narrative, Retelling, Private/Public Memory, Pandemic*

In the recently published book by Maggie O' Farrell, *Hamnet*, although the event that directly concerns us is a single traumatic event at a deeply personal level, when we zoom out we see it as one of a long chain of interconnected events in a narrative of misfortune that connects human lives across time and space. Exploring a similar psychic geography that we currently inhabit, the world therein set against the Black Death seems contemporaneous. What the author manages to deliver is a fine fusion of the private and the public.

My discussion of this particular text explores the psychosocial dimension of trauma, and relies on the critical tools offered by psychoanalysis but at a rudimentary level. Instead of relying heavily on a critical methodology, this paper draws on my very own and intimate ways of reading, responding and relating to the text, and of being touched and affected by it. Before going to the text, here is a little bit about the context in which the book was picked and read. Our entire species is trying to come to grips with a pandemic, in a society where everything from 'normal' relationships, to eating and outing habits, to cremation and burial practices has changed. The novel coronavirus outbreak and its global spread is the present generation's first real brush

with history. If history were a train, we have our tickets confirmed for the first time, and millions of our species are aboard the same train. This pandemic is a trauma on various levels – psychic, socio-political, economic—the effects are aftereffects of which can be fully comprehended only with the hindsight that comes with the lapse of time. But what is certain is that it has created a dent in the continuity of life, a narrative with a proper beginning, middle, and end. For once, Heraclitus's proverbial river has been left stagnant, and we, under total lockdown, step into the same waters again and again.

After the initial numbness and the shock had subsided, many of us sought ways of escape, not unlike Boccaccio's storytellers in the *Decameron* who assemble in the countryside away from the city of Florence and make merry by sharing stories to temporarily forget the pestilence looming large over everything. Martin Marafioti calls it “narrative prophylaxis” – protecting oneself with stories. He further posits that a number of medical texts both influenced and were later influenced by the literary escapades in the *Decameron* in advocating literary pursuits as a way of diverting the mind and keeping spirits high (Marafioti 69). This group of seven ladies and three gentlemen were the equivalents of the present day people of privilege who can afford to distract themselves with art in its various manifestations, and with stories. Along with social distancing, we are also observing what can be termed narrative distancing – distancing ourselves from stories of death and infections. *Hamnettoo* was picked up as a way of escape. The book centres round the death of Hamnet, Shakespeare's son, and is a fictional account of the circumstances leading to his death and to the writing of *Hamlet* named after the son. Although historical evidence or facts regarding his life or the cause of his death is scant, Maggie O' Farrell imaginatively ascribes the cause to the Bubonic plague, and spins the narrative likewise. The novel, being set in the last decade of the

16th century, seemed to ensure a safe distance from our present ordeal, and for objectivity. But reading it brought the realization that stories such as this bring human beings across time into a shared space of narrative solidarity the very basis of which is human suffering.

Trauma creates a rupture in the continuity of life. It comes unannounced, when the victim least expects it, and is least prepared to integrate it in the narrative of life. It is so swift that it passes before the consciousness can capture its movements. Agnes – Hamnet's mother and the playwright's wife – least expects to find her twins Judith and Hamnet infected with the plague, and more so to lose Hamnet to death.

The initial, instinctive reaction to a tragedy – personal or collective – is to move into a state of denial. That is naturally the way Agnes reacts when she first spots the buboes pushing themselves out of her daughter's skin. The buboes were dreaded, and found a place for themselves in the literature of fear that people knew about but never spoke of. Narrative hygiene was as important as physical hygiene. The very word “buboes” was never allowed to be formed, an airy substance that, nonetheless, chased Agnes's children down. All fearful things appear to us like fiction. We instinctively believe that nothing bad can ever happen to us. When there was news of the coronavirus outbreak in China, China seemed too far. But then this thing crossed borders on the wings of a bird, literally on the wings of international airplanes. It reached our country, then state, then district, then our neighbourhoods. But until it touched one in the family, we still remained in denial. Agnes too was in a state of denial. Although there were cases of infections now and then, some of which she had herself cured or treated in the past, she could not believe her eyes when she first saw those buboes on her daughter's body. The most dreaded moment had come. “The moment she has feared most... The pestilence had reached her house. It had marked her child's neck” (97).

Agnes had a way with herbs. The entire vicinity came to her for treatment, no matter what ailment one suffered from, and she cured them with her homemade potions made from roots and plants. It was “a magic, a gift” that never failed but once, when she needed it to work the most. She could not save her own child from the clutches of death. The birth scene of the twins shows that Agnes gave birth to a healthy, beautiful boy and a weak, crying girl with flailing breath who showed no zeal for life even at birth. The mother had not expected the girl to survive, but eventually she did. The twins were one life split into two, like “two halves of a walnut” (151). It had always been Judith who was supposed to die, ever since birth. But the twins swapped positions without anyone’s notice. Agnes was prepared to lose Judith because she had been treating her insanely with all the medicinal herbs she could procure from her physic garden, but saw them failing. None of her potions helped to resuscitate the child. Judith was turning into a spectre right before her eyes, but then this cruel turn of fate took away her healthy child. Hamnet accepted death on her behalf. While Agnes “concentrated on the wrong child” (186), and was distracted, death took away her other child.

Trauma stills the life of the victim, freezes it in time, suspends it in a particular mental space, while all around life goes on as usual. This very quality of grief that it is intimate, private, unshared and unsharable, makes it so difficult to bear. In her grief, the mother found herself alone. All other kids of her son’s age were alive and kicking and playing, while her Hamnet was gone. A crucial difference between personal and collective trauma is that in the former the victim finds herself lonely, and in most cases without empathy. And she often asks a fundamental question – “Why me?” In cases of collective crises like the Holocaust or the Wars, or the Partition of India which is closer to our collective imagination, we see that the pain is shared on a large scale, and so is empathy. Our present situation similarly demands empathy on our part more

than ever, as readers, more so as humans. The pandemic has brought our social lives to a standstill. The quotidian life has receded to the background, and we are trying our best to adapt to the situation and bring into effect the new normal. While

human beings struggle and human social connectivity has been disrupted, we see that the societies of nature continue as before. None of the natural processes has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Spring brought colours. The scents of summer are intact. Life goes on without us. In a similar manner, while Hamnet’s family is still unable to recuperate with the loss, Judith’s cats give birth to different batches of kittens. As for her mother’s gardens, they continue to flower. “Gardens don’t stand still. They are always in flux”(241).

The same tragedy touches different lives differently and elicits different responses from each. Mary, who has herself lost her daughter to the plague, believes that “grief is all very well in moderation” (224). Judith keeps looking for her other half. “What is the word, Judith asks her mother, for someone who was a twin but is no longer a twin?”(215). She tries to seek answers in the realm of language, as if she could grasp the meaning of her loss if she found a word that could describe it. Susanna sews and sews the entire time. “If she just keeps on making stitches, of equal size, over and over, perhaps all this will pass”(225). As for Agnes, she can make no sense at all of the loss. All the daily chores now seems pointless, cooking and eating too seem pointless. The grief is all consuming and takes up all her time. “She discovers that it is possible to cry all day and night”(212).

The loss has to be comprehended in order to be mourned. Forgetting of loss is crucial to mourning. Mourning is a sign that gives off the first instinct of survival. According to Judith Herman, “Folk wisdom is filled with ghosts who refuse to rest in their graves until their stories are told. Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both

for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of the individual victim" (Herman 1). There are ghosts in *Hamnet* too, both literal and metaphorical. The child Hamnet, just moments before dying, is called a "ghost" by Susanna. After his death, rumour has it that a little figure runs along Henley Street at night, presumably the ghost of Hamnet. The in-text play "Hamlet" is spectral on more than one level. Through it Shakespeare imaginatively brings back his own dead son, and it becomes the final work of mourning. The "unfinished business" of Hamlet's ghost is accomplished, but by the father Hamlet who steps in his son's place. Although pain cannot be accurately translated into words, and a portion of it is eternally lost in translation, only words can come closest to the original thing. It is only through words that one eventually gains control over the chaotic mass of raw materials left behind by a personal tragedy. Deborah Horvitz asks:

Can narrative, itself, by compelling victim-survivors to remember and to repeat stories suffused with terror, panic, and pain, serve a palliative role in the healing process? Certainly, psychoanalysis believes that crucial to recovering from an experience of trauma is the capacity and willingness to incorporate that traumatic event inside one's self as an indispensable piece of personal history and identity. (Horvitz 6)

The playwright makes the "ghost" speak up, thus bringing the unspeakable into existence with the stroke of his pen. With the stroke of his pen, he also rewrites the order of things, and retells his son's life. Agnes's first reaction on reading the name of her son on a London playbill is one of anger and disbelief. "He is himself, not a play, not a piece of paper, not something to be spoken of or performed or displayed" (251). Agnes's behavior is the most common reflex of people in trauma. They want to hold on to their pain and never talk about it because it is beyond the grasp of language, and because no one will understand. But when she first sees Hamlet on stage, the actor enacting her son, he

seems strange but familiar. "Yet this is him, grown into a near-man, as he would be now, had he lived, on the stage, walking with her son's gait, talking in her son's voice, speaking words written for him by her son's father" (265). The retelling makes the traumatic event stitch together the shattered plot of life.

Making a strong distinction between mourning and melancholy, Freud argues in "Mourning and Melancholia" that while successful mourning facilitates forgetting, melancholy archives grief, stacks it away in mental or material forms, only to go back to it again and again. The victim of trauma is of the latter kind. Agnes cuts a lock of her son's hair and Judith makes a silk pouch in which to keep it, and they both search for Hamnet in this archived material object. The playwright, however, externalizes the traumatic event, archiving it in the shape of a play, coming into a dialogue with an audience, and transfers it from the private to the public domain, there to stay forever.

The archive, as traditionally conceived, is a location of knowledge, a place where history itself is housed, where the past is accommodated. The archive is intimately conjoined with cultural memory, with its preservation, perhaps even with its supplementation (Boulter 3)

Seen from another perspective, even the book *Hamnet* is an attempt at knowledge production around the son of Shakespeare by thrusting him from forgetfulness into cultural memory, and from obscurity into language by the very act of writing about him.

The writer structures the novel in two concentric circles centred on death and disease. While at the intradiegetic level, the characters try to make sense of the loss of their child, at the extradiegetic one, we, the readers, get a glimpse of a plague-ridden world, not very different from our own, infested with a pandemic. At some crucial junctures, the two levels connect. Agnes's moment of catharsis as a spectator watching her son's life retold and re-enacted on stage is contagious and reaches the reader. The narrative does not take away

the loss, but teaches one to live with whatever remains. The strained relationship between the couple is somehow restored as the playtries to put back together a bond that was coming apart. The playwright by holding out the powers of his imagination swaps places with his son in meeting death, thereby gaining authority over their lives. What gives us solace as readers is the possibility of becoming the authors of our own lives. Life gains meaning when it is told.

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Medical Humanities and Contemporary Literary Practices

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Abstract:

Septimus Warren Smith in Virginia Woolf's novel Mrs Dalloway committed suicide by jumping down from the window. He was mentally and emotionally devastated by the experiences in World War I. Through a character like Septimus, Woolf, back in 1922, was not only providing a meticulous analysis of the trauma faced by the soldiers taking part in World War I, but was also vehemently critiquing the oppressive moves of the fictional characters like Dr. Holmes and Dr. Bradshaw who were 'deployed' to cure a traumatised Septimus by placing many of their own restrictive measures on him in the name of treatment. The fact is that 'Shell-shock' became a very pertinent issue in British Psychiatry during 1920s influencing the literary narratives of the time. But, if Medical Humanities had been in vogue, the way it is today, perhaps many like Septimus could have been heard, cured and saved. This paper discusses how Medical Humanities might stimulate important discussions on literature and its role in addressing experiences of illness, trauma and suffering as well as their treatment that the contemporary world is struggling to grapple with while also tracing some of the gaps that exist in contemporary literature in dealing with Medical Humanities.

Keywords: Medical Humanities, Literary Studies, World Literature, Empathy and Care

Introduction:

Medical Humanities, as defined by Medical Humanities Community of the New York University School of Medicine, refers to an interdisciplinary field of humanities (literature, philosophy, ethics, history and religion), social science (anthropology, cultural studies, psychology, sociology), and the arts (literature, theatre, film, and visual arts) and their application to medical education and practice. It needs no mentioning that courses on Medical Humanities are becoming very popular in the American universities like Harvard, Yale, New York; and also in South East Asian universities like Peking University of China, and University of Hong Kong. One of the most important objectives of introducing Humanities courses to medical curricula is to improve the relationship between the doctors and the patients. Besides, these world ranking institutions perhaps made this point clear that awareness on creative discourses on health and treatment can only be generated through a kind of interdisciplinary literature which justifies the idea that a certain kind of literature is actually written for the world and is relevant to the world in which we live. This is because, unlike the other disciplines, Humanities and Arts provide important insights into the human experience, condition, suffering, personality, responsibility to each other, besides offering a historico-cultural perspective on medical practices. Attention to literature and the arts became an important aspect in Medical Humanities as it started developing and nurturing the skills of observation, analysis, empathy and self-reflection—

qualities which are most essential in providing a humane medical care.

So, the emergence of the discourse of Medical Humanities as a particular mode of scholarship in the developed countries has inaugurated much discussion on health and diseases. It is because, literature not only generates awareness about health care and treatment but also exposes personal biases which may directly affect medical practices. Besides, some also believe that literature can enable the doctors or the frontline workers to think critically and empathically about the issues involved in their practices with the patients. In the United States as well as in Europe, the emergence of Reading Groups in various universities to discuss the growing interdisciplinary field of Medical Humanities and the inclusion of compulsory courses on literature and medicine among all types of health care practitioners in all stages of their career, make this point clear. Introduction of literary texts to medical curriculum and training has further enabled the learners to listen warmly to their patients, as the multiple perspectives in the texts selected for their studies have the potential to help them deal with the different types of responses coming out of the patients during treatment. But serious discussions of Medical Humanities are still not evenly distributed across the globe although the term has gained much significance in critical debates of recent times. In the Non Western countries awareness on Medical Humanities seems to be only occasional and it is only recently that Medical Humanities has been introduced into the undergraduate Medical Curriculum in India. Whereas the fact is that an interdisciplinary understanding of health and illness, role of medicine, the body and narrative, material culture and the arts, disability and healthcare, ethics and pedagogy and the emergent global challenges can positively impact the ways of living in the days to come.

Placing Medical Humanities in Literary Studies:

What exactly is Medical Humanities and what trajectories and contours would be the most appropriate to build connection between Humanities in general and Medical Humanities in particular. Humanities, since

the medieval times, has already been used to enhance our understanding on illness and healing, besides foregrounding the meaning and possibilities of human existence/experience, and has mostly been concerned with describing experiences from the individual to the global on multiple scales. But in its most recent developments, Medical Humanities engages itself with constructive criticism of the experiences of illness as well as transformation of the individual through treatment. The recent developments help to discuss how madness, anxiety, psychological disorders, trauma and sufferings of different types have informed literary works in an unprecedented way. Appreciating and interpreting the experiences of medical and health care practitioners in the study of films, literatures, music, visual arts and also philosophy as well as other cultural discourses and productions, Medical Humanities has been increasingly visible in the recent decades.

In addition to analysing the varied assumptions, the methods and models of medical education, research and practice, Medical Humanities also aims at explaining the complexities and nuances of clinical experiences across the world. The literary practices of patients; health care providers including the physicians, doctors, nurses, social workers etc; and also the non-professional care givers like family members, friends, relatives and neighbours, who assume primary and secondary care giving responsibilities, have been instrumental in popularising the ideas of this trend. So, improving human health and providing better health care more effectively depends on appreciating the very experiences of illness and suffering as opposed to focussing exclusively on the symptoms, treatment and taste results of disease etc. Thus, Medical Humanities has much to offer in this regard by extending our views, making us better thinkers and more sensitive individuals. One of the most important additions to Medical Humanities is the emergence of narrative medicine which talks about recognising, interpreting and being moved by the stories that both doctors and patients tell about their experiences. In this regard, Rita Charon's *Narrative Medicine: Honoring the Stories of Illness* is an important reference where the author

opines that narrative medicine emerged as a response to a ‘commodified’ health care system that places corporate and bureaucratic concerns over the actual needs of the patient.

Different literary practices have in fact exposed the health care professionals as well as the common readers to the varieties of the available approaches towards illness. It is important to note that in many places and contexts, specific scholarship on literature and medicine, and training in narrative medicine continue to draw entirely from specific previous literary works like Ken Kesey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (1962) that serves as a study of institutional processes, a critique of behaviourism and a tribute to individualistic principles. However, recent publications like Kamran Nazeer’s *Send in the Idiots* (2007) which deals with autism, or Antonio Lobo Antunes’ *The Land at the End of the World* (2012) that describes the experiences of the suffering people by an army doctor sent to Angola during the Portuguese Colonial War. Such narratives promote understanding of how different societies grapple with diseases and illness, trauma and suffering. Even in a third world country like India, where many people are forced to face the atrocities of life due to illness, suffering and ethnic violence in many impoverished places, Medical Humanities, besides health care, can explain the ways to deal with them in a more appealing way. Thus, new researches in the Humanities, or Medical Humanities to be more specific, should pose additional questions about the varied and multifaceted experiences of modern humans, uncovering new meaning of illness and suffering in artistic works, the very constructedness of being ill or being a ‘patient’, finding new ways to understand cultural interactions between the care givers and the ill in the society we live in and so on.

The Problems in Contemporary Literary Studies:

Allan Beveridge in his “The Benefits of Reading Literature” provides an interesting discussion on if literature has anything to offer the physicians. He argues that until recently exposure to the humanities was believed to have only deepened one’s understanding of suffering and illness. For instance,

many clinicians wrote essays, novels and poetry, and so many writersebraced medical themes. In the 18th century, the Scottish doctor Tobias Smollett earned fame through *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) and *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). The Romantic poet John Keats too was a qualified doctor and Laurence Sterne made frequent references to medicine, health and sickness in *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–69). Even in the 19th and early-20th century, authors like Georg Buchner, Anton Chekhov, Arthur Conan Doyle, Mikhail Bulgakov, Arthur Schnitzler and William Carlos Williams among others also produced literary works with some medical themes. In the second half of the 20th century, the Scottish psychiatrist R. D. Laing drew inspiration from writers like William Blake, Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Beckett and Jean-Paul Sartre to construct his existential model of madness, and in the latter part of his career, he also wrote poetry. Such examples show that instances of Medical Humanities can’t be seen as something very new to the contemporary world.

However, at some point, there did occur a rift between the Arts and medicine causing a loosening of the link between the ‘scientific’ and the ‘artistic.’ Beveridge opines that the origins of the rift can be traced to the Enlightenment, which held that reason would alone solve the problems of humanity. Subsequently, the relationship began to falter again following World War I which caused the closure of liberal arts education to which doctors had previously been meaningfully exposed. The point that can be made here is that Literary Studies doesn’t seem to have recovered from this problem even today. However, an interdisciplinary literary practice can open up new areas of research and prepare us for the some real world issues. Besides, it may also encourage collaboration of writers and researchers on relevant medical issues for creating a more integrated experience of the affairs of the world. For example, meaningful communications between the doctors and patients is essential to effective care and relationships of trust—an area still not gaining much relevance in contemporary literary practices.

Jonathan Miller, way back in 1978 provided an interesting definition of illness which helps us to comprehend the very idea of falling ill from a narrative point of view. He stated, “Falling ill is not something that happens to us, it is a choice we make as a result of things happening to us. It is an action we take when we feel unacceptable odd. Obviously, there are times when this choice is taken out of the victim’s hands: he may be so overwhelmed by events that he plays no active part in what happens next and is brought to the doctor by friends or relatives, stricken and helpless. But this is rare. Most people who fall ill have chosen to cast themselves in the role of patient. Viewing their unfortunate situation, they see themselves as sick people and begin to act differently.” (p 49) Therefore, much of the experiences of the ill persons need to be mediated by language, culture, expectation and the conventions of the clinical consultation. And this is very important because it reminds us that health, illness, well-being and suffering are aspects of experience which need to be narrativised.

From the reader’s/receiver’s view point then, Medical Humanities helps in addressing the human aspects of medicine from within disciplines like history, philosophy, sociology and literature. It also calls for the intersection of medicine and the arts; and the schooling of more insightful and compassionate care givers. The affairs of the 21st century have rendered an important impact on the phenomenon of World Literature following which many areas hitherto been excluded or left unexplored are sought to be discussed within the ambit of literature. However, as Hooker and Noonan have also stated, Medical Humanities is culturally limited by a pedagogical and scholarly emphasis on Western cultural artefacts, as well as on an unquestioned reliance upon concepts like ‘patient’, ‘illness’ and ‘experience.’ But no systematic attempt can be seen even within Contemporary World Literature which has neither addressed cultural difference as a central concern of Medical Humanities nor has it tried to facilitate the expansion of the Medical Humanities in the non-Western and/or non-Anglophone locations. Perhaps, this is one of the biggest challenges to be

met by the literature scholars researching the discourse of Medical Humanities in a non western country like India.

Conclusion:

The Federation of Royal Colleges of Physicians of the UK also mentions that ‘Good communication’ can be the solution to many of the problems that might crop up during the actual treatment of illness and it involves listening to patients and respecting their views and beliefs, giving them the proper information they need, ensuring treatment and prognosis in a way they can understand, sharing information with patients’ partners, close relatives or care taker among others. Though all these are part of medical ethics so to say, it is language what distinguishes a doctor from a veterinary surgeon. The fact is that literature can actually shape important discussions on health care and medical treatment as is evident from certain international practices. However, in the local and regional contexts, world literary practices must try to further explore human’s abilities to listen, interpret and communicate, and contribute to sensitive appreciation of medical practices. But contemporary literature does not seem to have purposefully addressed the problems like trauma, suffering, slavery, environmental degradation, health, disease and disabilities which are the most difficult challenges of contemporary times. Moreover, despite all developments in medical sciences, diseases like HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB or sudden outbreaks of Pandemics like the Covid 19, still continue to kill millions of people annually in the entire world. And here comes the relevance of analysing the ‘narratives’ under Medical Humanities for ensuring a better health care system.

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Trauma narrative as Spaces for Individual Empathy and Community Resistance : Thematic and Narrative Concerns in Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

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Abstract:

Maya Angelou, a feminist, a poet, and a writer of autobiographies, is widely known for her empowering and liberating works. She lived through the times in America when women fought for rights beyond household. They fought for equal right and equal pay, marriage rights etc. She wrote over seven autobiographies which have been often categorised as auto fiction for the sheer quality of its unique combination of factual snippets within the rubric of fiction. Her works have been widely acknowledged as trauma narrative of a woman who simultaneously reflected the trauma of the community which she represented. This paper attempts to discuss and critique trauma narrative not only as an individual space of healing and resistance but also as spaces for collective representation of trauma experiences. The paper tries to draw forth the contours of personal trauma and pain of the writer who at the same time becomes a body of collective representation of trauma and memory. This has been done by analysing the thematic and narrative construct of the same. The paper also seeks to answer some of the questions such as how far does the writer succeed in transforming her trauma to a tool of healing and emancipation? does this experience in any way coincide with the historical narrative and undergo

any distortion or metamorphosis? how much does an autobiographical mode of narration impact the channelization of trauma experience? An attempt would be made to construct a response to these questions within the rubric of literary trauma theory and studies as pioneered by the thinkers such as Cathy Caruth and Laurence Kirmayer.

Keywords: memory, anecdotes, collective, experiential, etc.

Maya Angelou, a feminist, a poet, and a writer of autobiographies, is widely known for her empowering and liberating works. She lived through the times in America when women fought for rights beyond household. They fought for equal right and equal pay, marriage rights etc. She wrote over seven autobiographies which have been often categorised as auto fiction for the sheer quality of its unique combination of factual snippets within the rubric of fiction. Her works have been widely acknowledged as trauma narrative of a woman who simultaneously reflected the trauma of the community which she represented. The following paper attempts to discuss and critique trauma narrative not only as an individual space of healing and resistance but also as spaces for collective representation of trauma experiences. The paper tries to draw forth the contours of personal trauma and pain of the writer who at the same time becomes a body of collective representation of trauma

and memory. This has been done by analysing the thematic and narrative construct of the same. The paper also seeks to answer some of the questions such as how far does the writer succeed in transforming her trauma to a tool of healing and emancipation? does this experience in any way coincide with the historical narrative and undergo any distortion or metamorphosis? how much does an autobiographical mode of narration impact the channelization of trauma experience? An attempt would be made to construct a response to these questions within the rubric of literary trauma theory and studies as pioneered by the thinkers such as Cathy Caruth and Laurence Kirmayer.

Trauma narrative is often signified by an intergenerational transmission of traumatic experience and memory. This way the homogenous interpretation of heterogeneous representations and experiences of trauma give a universal meaning to such texts. It is this organisation of memory and sharing of trauma in a text which renders a contemporaneity to trauma literature. "Trauma, in my analysis, refers to a person's emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society" (Balaev 150). The story of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* has been set against the backdrop of racial tension and conflict in south in America in 1930s. Maya had suffered sexual assault at the hands of her step dad and in this narrative she brings out the innocent expectations of a child who wants to break away from her space of shame and suffering. She not only emerges as a strong African American woman representing her own experiences but also represents her community with its legacy of historical trauma and pain. Cultural as well as psychological displacement find equal place in her work. She herself acknowledged the fact that she began this book as a way to counter her trauma post the death of her friend. The book is intended to reflect on racism which is also a major theme running through its pages. Thus begins the anecdotes of a child who doesn't feel equal to her white friends and neighbours. She blames herself for the murder of her molester and becomes quieter. It is

here that we find the effects of traumatic upheavals on a child's life and memory. It has consequences beyond repair. It can be further viewed under the light of the pluralist trauma theory which challenges the unspeakable trope in seeking to understand not only the structural dimensions of trauma that has resulted into several approaches of looking at the dissociative effects of trauma on individual consciousness and memory but also highlighted the cultural dimensions and trajectory of trauma with its diversified narrative expression. By moving away from a position that centralizes individual coping mechanism, the pluralistic model suggests that traumatic experience unravels new relationships between experience, language, and knowledge that foregrounds the social and cultural significance of trauma. Trauma studies under this approach emphasizes on the variability of traumatic representations.

In the work *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* we have a black, poor woman digging deeper into her own personal trauma showcasing the larger framework within which her community suffers. The work has been known for its own uniqueness. It easily slips under the garb of fiction to provide delight to the readers wherever required and to generate empathy towards her pain alike. The former has been attained through spontaneity in the language, fluidity in the vocabulary, intended pun, understated humour and the use of wit with irony. Also, the text compels the readers to ponder over a possible self-distancing within this structure where they cannot figure out whether it is the author narrating her own story or is it some fictional character at play representing the predicaments of two entirely different entities. However, both the traumatic experience and the text are at crossroads when presenting a pitiful condition of her community at large. It portrays a larger part of African American existence. It delves deeper into the nuances of the problems faced by her countrymen during her lifetime. Cathy Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History* (1996) viewed trauma as an event strong enough to shatter consciousness and prevent direct narrative representation. Caruth writes, "history, like

trauma, is never simply one's own, that history is precisely the way we were implicated in each other's traumas," emphasizing a universalist view of trauma that damages the psyche and evokes a shared response across time (Caruth 24). This indicates the inherent transhistorical and intergenerational nature of trauma that can be transmitted across time. From this standpoint a cultural group's traumatic experience in any point of time in history or past can be simultaneously a part of the memory or psychic existence of the individual belonging to the contemporary time and community. This merging of individual and collective experiences of trauma furthers the notion of the universal effect of trauma upon identity and memory. Similarly one can deduce that the narrative distancing by Angelou brings the readers closer to her background and empathise easily with her subject. Moreover, the simplicity of diction in the text makes this task more convenient. Angelou has tactfully handled the protagonists who seem to be moving to and fro in the world of the reality vs. fiction. Angelou employs "a rather personalized autobiographical style," according to Carol E. Neubauer, in that "she adapts elements from both fiction and fantasy" (Bloom 27). This way the author maintains a slight distance and leave the judgement per se on the readers. She also provides general comments about their situations which sound more like a third person narrator giving statements about life. Maya never shows such urgency to directly appeal to the readers rather she lays all her pain bare and leaves her readers on themselves to ponder over her situation and feel her pain.

Furthermore, we will find that autobiography holds an equally important place in the African American narrative history at large. Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the African American authors have gone on to testify to the vitality and endless variety of that irrepressible strain of freedom. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Angelou's evocative autobiography about her painful childhood growing up in Stamps, Arkansas, was published in 1970, with the same spirit. The book met with great critical acclaim due to its personal honesty dealing with the distressful issues of

rejection, racism, and fear; and yet it is often sprinkled with humour, warmth, and love. This has been the subject of various critical studies. This fusion of the public life and the private and the personal experiences with that of the political was a significant quality of her work. African American women readers were immediately attracted to her work because they recognized themselves on the pages of Angelou's books. Many went on to memorize the lines of her books while growing up. They identified with the protagonist, "Maya," who moved uneasily through the world and took refuge in books. They could relate with the self-doubt that was inevitable for girls who had no images of their beauty and worth. Angelou provided them mirror where they could see their own self. She spoke for generations of her readers when she wrote, "if growing up is painful for the southern black girl, being aware of her displacement is the rust on the razor that threatens the throat. It is an unnecessary insult" (Wall 3). Angelou had the quality of infusing the episodes of her book with themes and tropes that thread through African American literary tradition. Angelou's narratives have also been criticized for using stylistic techniques and narrative devices which would rather associate themselves with writing fiction rather than autobiographies, resulting in a number of critics classifying "Angelou's five volumes as autobiographical fiction and not autobiographies" (Lupton 29). Mary Jane Lupton writes that according to Eugenia Collier, "the writing techniques Angelou uses in her autobiographies are the same devices used in writing fiction: vividly conceived characters and careful development of theme, setting, plot, and language" (30). Lupton also contends that "the five volumes [in] Angelou's series far exceed the standard number of volumes in an autobiography ...so that they are in a sub-genre known as 'serial autobiographies' ". As Angelou narrates selected events, she adapts elements from both fiction and fantasy. Although she is clearly working within the genre of autobiography, Angelou freely borrows from these two traditional types of writing. On numerous occasions in her earlier volumes, she has employed what has become a rather

personalized autobiographical style, a method which integrates ingredients from diverse modes of writing and gracefully crosses over traditionally static generic lines. Angelou uses fiction when it comes to the anecdotes related to entertainers, politicians and some historical figures. Fictional elements are at complete play on both the conscious as well as unconscious level.

Her autobiographies did more than just to lift the veil on subjects that had been hidden. They showed that the protagonist's feelings were as important to the narrative as the events it describes. No black woman's autobiography before *Caged Bird* had revealed as much of its author's interior life. She continued to foreground her feelings. These feelings were mixed with memory and art. If readers imagined they had access to her raw feelings, Angelou insisted on the importance of her craft. "Learning the craft, understanding what language can do, gaining control of the language, enables one to make people weep, make them laugh, even make them go to war," (Wall 5). What distinguishes, then, Angelou's autobiographical method from more conventional autobiographical forms is her very denial of closure. The reader of autobiography expects a beginning, a middle, and an end-as occurs in *Caged Bird*. She or he also expects a central experience, as we indeed are given in the plot sequence of *Caged Bird*. But Angelou, by continuing her narrative, denies the form and its history, creating from each ending a new beginning, relocating the centre to some luminous place in a volume yet to be. She stretches the autobiographical canvas mingling it with delightful episodes from her past. Trauma narrative such as *Caged Bird* recreates the events in order to bring back the experiential phase so as to recall the trauma and the experiences then take the shape of another subtext for sharing. "In her autobiographies, Angelou consistently cast the South as a site of trauma and hate where she lived literally in silence for five years. However, she would eventually move to Winston-Salem, North Carolina and would reside in the South until her death." (Tucker 92). Angelou confesses that her travel South became necessary in order, as she says "to face the fear/loathing at its source

or it would consume me whole"(93) . In *Maya Angelou: The Autobiographical Statement Updated*, Selwyn R. Cudjoe rightly points out, "Afro-American liberation must contain both an internal and external dimension; the former must be our exclusive concern. It is this internal probing that characterizes [I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings] and marks the writing of the contemporary Afro-American woman writer" (94). A sense of displacement and alienation is what she often experienced throughout her early years. She stayed with her grandmother and brother and it here that she gathered her strength amidst multiple experiences of abuse and discomfort.

"Angelou's autobiographies reveal a vibrant woman who travelled the world and who was dedicated to confronting injustice whether in the United States or abroad, even as she danced and sang, acted and wrote. Simultaneously we see someone stunningly vulnerable who fought off the impact of rape, abandonment, failed marriages, and racial and gendered oppression. Transitioning easily into the role of elder and ancestor to a younger generation of poets and artists, Angelou has served as a constant reminder of the importance of maintaining a connection to one's roots during the crucial transition into the post-integration era."

(Tucker 97)

Angelou represents the community of African American which had a long history of ill treatment, slavery and abuse. It is here that her work achieves a form of a collective narrative. The dichotomy of north-south coincides and represents the survival of African American descent in the same. But one may also contend that eventually her work becomes more of an anecdotal account of an individual trauma and less of her community. Richard Wright's *Black Boy* (1945), for example, an autobiographical account of a notorious black man in the pursuit of liberation does more than just give a personal account of violence and fight against racism. Similarly, one of the most well-known autobiographies in African American history, Du Bois' *The Souls Of Black Folk* (1903), *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965) are all known

for contributing strongly to this genre in history. They have tried to study the social seclusion, the exclusionary actions against the black community in particular but with Angelou it all becomes a double layered account of a woman who is black and is subjected to sexual abuse and that has a traumatic impact over her. It is here that we must credit Angelou for creating such spaces for healing via her narrative which extends beyond the territory of genre and community.

To conclude with, one can reassert that trauma's effects on identity and memory can be used as an interplay of external and internal forces creating a broader connection between the singular and collective traumatic experience. The processes of memory remain central here in depicting trauma's impact. Psychiatrist Laurence Kirmayer for example argues that the recollection of traumatic events is "governed by social contexts and cultural models for memories, narratives, and life stories. Such cultural models influence what is viewed as salient, how it is interpreted and encoded at the time of registration, and, most important for long term memories that serve autobiographical functions, what is socially possible to speak of and what must remain hidden and unacknowledged" (Kirmayer 191). Examining the cultural context of an individual or collective group's experience of trauma draws immense attention towards the representations of the experiences out of physical abuse, sexual harassment, war, slavery, colonial oppression, and racism. It is here that Angelou's autobiography can be firmly situated to not only represent the unspeakable truth of her country's history but also letting her readers know more about her personal trauma thus documenting arecapitulation of a combined experience .

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"Now We Breathe A Different Air": Reading Post 9/11 Imaginary as a Site of Trauma in Ian McEwan's *Saturday*

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Abstract:

The 9/11 onslaught euphemized as a tragedy, moved beyond its locus to extract global attention. The cataclysmic sight of the collapsing towers marked a conspicuous blow to the super power i.e. the USA. Trauma in its protean moulds ensuing from the episode contours the immediate and belated literary responses. The attacks though materialized within the U.S. territories, its reverberations had a transnational appeal, particularly in the Western front. Set in a day's timeframe in a post 9/11 urban space, McEwan's Saturday (2005) posits an arresting negotiation of trauma and violence, family and outsider, victim and perpetrator, violence and empathy. Though the text refers to the attacks after months and located in London, it deftly penetrates the paranoid Western psyche, primarily through the consciousness of Henry Perowne. The apocalyptic fear implanted by 9/11 crisis in the Western imagination to defend itself from the brutal other manifests in Henry's efforts to safeguard himself and his family from Baxter, an intruder. The paper endeavours to analyse the representation, articulation and politics of trauma in the wake of the 9/11 attacks in Saturday.

Keywords: post 9/11, 9/11 attacks, trauma, media

The days immediately following 9/11 witnessed literary responses fraught with the wounded white Western voices. Most of them echoed the presidential rhetoric

of American victimhood, positing the unimpeachable self against the brutal other. Though authors such as Mohsin Hamid, H.M. Naqvi, Laila Halaby etc. have countered the unapologetic stereotyping of the non-Western entities, the texts of the 9/11 canon as a whole invariably draw on the geographies of trauma- physical and psychological, personal and cultural, primary and secondary etc.- ushered by the chapter. The effortless spectatorship, owing to the live and repeated broadcast of the catastrophe, catered in mentally settling the event as a global tragedy and established trauma as a trope in its literary domain. According to Kristiaan Versluys, the tragedy of 9/11 is not exclusive to America, but a predicament common to all of the advanced nations (80). The resultant traumatic experiences of the survivors, related families, unassociated individuals and the collective psyche, fashion as a leitmotif in the 9/11 discourse. In fact, the corpus has often been accused of dealing with the personal and the domestic, rather than probing into the questions of politics and policies. The fictional narratives deal with the explicit delineation of the very day, while it also serves as a backdrop in some or a passing reference in others.

The etymology of the word "trauma" rests on its Greek root connoting a wound in a corporeal sense. However, the medical and psychiatric domains and the writings of Freud allocated the psychological dimension to the word, implying a wound inflicted on the mind and hence it does not adhere to the simple and healable process

of the body (Caruth 3-4). This paper endeavours to analyse the representation, articulation and politics of trauma in the domesticated rendition of the 9/11 attacks in Ian McEwan's *Saturday* (2005). The narrative is set in a day's timeframe in the 9/11 aftermath and revolves around the lives of the Perownes and Baxter, an intruder. McEwan's text moves away from the bracketed 9/11 literary space of New York to encapsulate the urban Londonscape. The absence of the 9/11 epicentre however contributes significantly to the existing scholarship centering trauma, albeit non-American, corresponds to the overarching but complicated Western reaction on the event. The Perownes suggest a strong social and economic standing with Henry, a reputed neurosurgeon, his lawyer wife Rosalind, daughter Daisy, a poet and son Theo, a musician. The 9/11 event assuming a material as well as a semiotic status unveiled the looming precariousness even in the supreme hegemonic power, hence displaying that vulnerability takes no cognizance of any frontier. The apparently safe and sound lives of Perownes are violated by the intruders, thus presenting a microcosm of the world afflicted by sheer precariousness post 9/11. The Perownes reside in a posh neighbourhood leading a life of privilege and comfort, and their reputation is determined further by their presence in gatherings that include even the prime minister. The political overtones of the diegesis are observed in its strategic setting, the 15th February 2003, marking the grand scale protests in London and worldwide against America's declaration of War on Terror. Henry's distress emanates from the existing state of the world, and the protestors seem to testify for it, thus any action corresponding to 9/11 or its semblance rekindles his trauma. The text thus engages with the prevailing chaos of 9/11, which would take a significant period of time to dilute, and hence his trauma too.

The text opens with Henry Perowne waking up one Saturday before dawn and sinking into unrest, typical of the cynical and melancholic tenor orchestrated by 9/11. He believes words such as 'catastrophe', 'mass fatalities', 'major attack', 'chemical and biological

warfare' and have turned mundane owing to repetition, which also form his everyday life. Through his window, he witnesses a plane on fire midair heading towards Heathrow airport. The scene deftly arrests the paranoia in Henry who treats it as a repetitive dream, ensuing from the sustained trauma of the 9/11 attacks. He finds the sight familiar and spontaneously connects it to the circulated images of the hijacked planes on the World Trade Center. His cynical imagination echoes the collective sense of skepticism rife after 9/11 towards any airliner visible in motion. This reflects the manipulation of reason and the ubiquitous sense of uncanny, dread and waste pervading the lives of everyone post 9/11. It also exhibits the way harrowing memories induce psychological strain on the individual even after definite time gap of eighteen months and bearing no direct connection to the event, precipitating secondary trauma. LaCapra views that trauma unsettles the self and perforates existence itself (41). Henry's pessimism is further observed in his analogy of the Schrodinger's Cat experiment and the two equally possible outcomes of the burning plane, only to accommodate the fatalistic choice. He lands in a quandary as he wishes to do something, and it is only later that he learns it as a cargo plane with mechanical failure. His preoccupation with the ongoing political dialogues is highlighted as his mind organically wanders from the erotic thoughts concerning his wife to Saddam. The word "jihadist" uttered by Theo throws him momentarily to a dizzy state. The gravity of 9/11 is also evident in the teenage son Theo's introduction with the world outside his immediate surroundings. In a family moment, his thoughts effortlessly but oddly move to contemplate on the improbability of terrorists murdering his family that night.

McEwan makes an extensive use of medical jargon, familiarizing the readers with Henry's professional realm, also ironically placing the veteran of neurosurgery a prey to psychological trauma. Henry's expertise is described through his dexterous handling of complex and intricate surgical operations on the human brain yet himself succumbing to an anxious consciousness. The world came to a standstill at the

live reception of the planes in the American skyline launching a dystopian scenario. Though the recent history consist multiple instances of mass destruction, 9/11 dwelt on unprecedented media coverage owing to America's status of a superpower. The impact stretched to incorporate transnational reactions at the apparent disruption in the geopolitical matrix. The umbrella term of the West also comprise of England, and hence, for London, there was a passive waiting for its turn of 9/11-like event or the anticipation of revenge attacks post war. The modes of mass media, primarily television occurs throughout the text, serving as a narrative ploy to demonstrate the media dominance and aiding Henry to stay updated with the ongoing dialogues on war and verify his doubts on the plane on fire. Thus, there exists a paradoxical longing to witness a catastrophe, fuelled dramatically by media culture. Though Henry admits his adapting with the 9/11 ravages, he is clearly affected and days are saturated with bewilderment and angst to the present day, evident in the episode of the burning plane. He realizes media addiction as a part of the new order marked by the loss of his skepticism and contraction of mental freedom. His believes that words fail him as he has experienced a lot while describing the plane incident to Theo, indicating the toll on the self and situating trauma as untranslatable. In Amy Waldman's *The Submission* (2011), the U.S. media is witnessed to contribute to the frenzy following 9/11 thereby generating a culture of anxiety. Similarly, the widely circulated yet disturbing photograph of "the falling man" by Richard Drew had added remarkably to the trauma scene. Thus, Henry's case presents the classic example of mediatized trauma.

Apart from the colossal tragedy and the lingering trauma of 9/11 culture, trauma in the text at an individual level can also be located in Rosalind's past. In her initial phase with Henry, she appears to have been in denial of her mother's death three years ago which subsided after her marriage with Henry. Again, Baxter suffers from the trauma of his degenerative neurological disorder and hence is chagrined at Henry's mention of it. He treats the condition as shameful and

struggles to conceal it from Nark and Nigel. Henry's identification of him with the disorder stupefies him and the slightest prospect of receiving positive medical information prompts him to momentarily halt his violent outrage. In a similar vein, the charged encounter with the trio engenders physical trauma and later psychological strain for Henry during his squash game. The word "crash" employed in the gaming parlance transports his mind from the present to the memories of the plane at night and the street fight. LaCapra in his book draws on trauma in which "one is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes-scenes in which the past returns and the future is blocked or fatalistically caught up in a melancholic feedback loop" (21). Moreover, Henry questions the possibility of enjoying a game sans any intrusion from the outer world. It can be deduced that his frustration in the otherwise regular game probably stems out of his silenced internal trauma.

The transatlantic locale and the belated timeframe though offer the author to engage in a relatively less gory panorama of 9/11, its ramifications play its individualized and domesticated rendition in the present context in the Perownes and Baxter's lives. Though there exists no direct connection of the Perownes or Baxter with the 9/11 event, the action of the text hints at the semblance of its microcosmic sketch. The deduction of Freud that the catastrophic events in a person's life strangely seem to repeat itself (Caruth 1), materializes vividly in the text. Henry has an unpleasant exchange with Baxter on the street, with the former identifying the latter with Huntington's disease, a neurological malady. Baxter is humiliated in the presence of his companions and later intrudes the home of the Perownes causing a ruckus. In a 9/11 reading, the scene can be read in the lines of the hijackers intruding the American skies and conducting the onslaught. He carries a knife and threatens to kill Rosalind, hits and injures her poet-father Grammaticus and forces Daisy to strip naked. The celebratory scene at the Perownes on the return of Daisy after months turns topsy-turvy as the unfamiliar entities invade their

home. The impact of the trauma induced by Baxter propels Rosalind to suspend her fear and ignore the future. They however return to normal activities such as indulging in dinner or listening to music after Baxter is hospitalized. It is only later Rosalind confides in Henry the nestled terror and trembles: "I feel they're in the room. They're still here. I'm still frightened" (McEwan 265).

The rundown on Henry's life projects his hectic yet efficient management of work and family life. However, he passively participates in the ongoing socio-political configurations by being an active subscriber of mass media information. However, he refrains from siding with the polarities on the war question as the outcomes of the both weigh in same intensity and invite deliberations. Hence, his stance neither a proxy for the American vengeful voice nor the anti-war sentiment evinces the ignored middle grounds. Instead of the condensed East-West binary, the narrative conjures the sinister within the European characters. It meditates on politics of culpability, as Baxter intrudes the house and lives of the privileged Westerners, the Perownes while it is stimulated by the prior episode of him feeling humiliated by Henry's diagnosis of him with Huntington's in the presence of his friends. However, despite being physically assaulted, Henry does not detest Baxter. He admits that he is in fact intrigued by Baxter, and evaluates his own part as contributory for the trio's actions. In contrast to America, Henry wishes for an interlude to reassess the dispute and introspect on his actions. This counters America's act of evading liability that further facilitated its decree of war on terror. Moreover, the imperialist exercises on Iraq can be read analogous to Henry's act of pushing Baxter down the stairs and invading his brain during the medical procedure (Lee 79). Despite the near death situation of his family members, Henry sends help for the injured Baxter. He also goes to the hospital to operate on him and its success delivers him contentment. The vengeful American ethos post 9/11 is shattered as Henry does not fit into Rosalind's idea of revenge, as he partially shares the blame for provocation for the entire episode. Literature constitutes a prime theme in the text. In

contrast to his poet daughter Daisy, Henry sees his past years completely devoid of literature. He prefers the factual over the imaginary, and presents himself as a testament to refute Daisy's perception that people cannot exist without stories. His stance is ironical as the very next moment he collects the newspapers, the mode which filters and moulds his version of reality. The recital of Mathew Arnold's "Dover Beach" by Daisy not just serves instrumental to pacify Baxter, but elucidates the wider ken of prevalent socio-political predicaments. The poem is a meditation on the loss of faith, and the music of the world is only timeless resonance of sorrow. Henry's incompetence is vivid as he hears the music of melancholy through Baxter's ears, thus empowering the latter with a refined attribute missing in the former (Lee 95). It thus disrupts the West's grammar of the barbaric other, and sets a new paradigm where the absolute entities of the Western imagination cease to exist, thereby placing the self under scrutiny for accountability. Henry's way of handling the situation with Baxter during the day and night are new possible arenas to dissect who is asking forgiveness and from whom. Though trauma constitutes of belated effects that can be harnessed only with difficulty and perhaps never completely grasped (LaCapra 41), the two figures seem to have learned it. It allows reflection on the rigid compartments of victim and the perpetrator, and in the process relate trauma of the self with the other. The climax of the poem moves both the traumatic figures of Baxter and Henry, as the former awakens with a renewed yearning for life, while the latter learns about shared vulnerability, against his earlier stance of incapability of empathy (Pitt 57).

The text depicts the way people who are neither first hand witnesses nor distantly related to a catastrophe can be equally traumatized. The 9/11 attacks though occurred in the U.S. soil, it had ushered in a global tragedy. The fact that the narrative is set in a European city liberates the genre from cocooning in the American voice or its locale. The post 9/11 melancholy also reiterates the way personal is political and vice versa. The narrative engages with the politics of trauma but

does not endorse its total alleviation. Hence, though the cultural trauma of 9/11 cannot evaporate instantly, Henry's momentary sense of relief is witnessed at the end of the day and its affairs as he considers himself for the moment to be solely at the present, devoid of the burden of the past or any sense of unease about the future. The victim-perpetrator dichotomy apart, the narrative suggests a shared empathy and responsibility to deal with any existent, sustaining and potential modes of trauma and the resultant vicissitudes. The text is paradigmatic of one's struggles with trauma besides the subsequent means of adjusting and co-existing with it.

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Tracing the Dystopian Trail of Collective Trauma in Vijay Tendulkar's Play *Ghashiram Kotwal*

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Abstract:

Collective trauma is a social cognitive process in which the combined population experiences trauma, consequent to the cataclysmic event. It affects entire groups of people, communities or societies. It often occurs during wars, subversive attacks, natural catastrophes, economic stagnation, pandemics, famines, systematic and historical oppression etc. Collective trauma exposes people to a shared experience of anguish, despondency, mental stress, economic uncertainty, awareness of confusion, loss of identity, increased feelings of susceptibility, insecurity of vocations, damage to national pride. Vijay Tendulkar's play Ghashiram Kotwal is an apt document to locate the collective trauma of a society under repressive regimes. The present paper adopts an analytical approach to encounter the traumatic experiences of the people of Poona and their response to such crises.

Keywords: Collective trauma, Women, Cruelty, Ghashiram, Nana Phadnavis, Vijay Tendulkar

COVID-19 pandemic re-inaugurates the cataclysmic discourse of 'collective trauma' through its dystopian trail. The dictionary meaning of trauma is the experiencing of a deeply distressing or disturbing situation by a private individual or a few persons. Whereas, collective trauma is a social cognitive process in which the combined population experiences trauma, consequent to the cataclysmic event (Hirschberger). Danielle Render Turmaud precisely defines it as an

"impact of a traumatic experience that affects and involves entire groups of people, communities or societies" (Turmaud). Collective trauma often occurs during wars, subversive attacks, natural catastrophes, economic stagnation, pandemics, famines, systematic and historical oppression etc., (Aydin 125-137). The cataclysmic events expose people to a shared experience of anguish, despondency, mental stress, economic uncertainty, awareness of confusion, loss of identity, increased feelings of susceptibility, insecurity of vocations, damage to national pride etc., (Chang 1-5). The modern age experienced collective trauma during the Spanish Flu, Second World War, partition of India, September 11, 2011, attacks in the U.S., the economic recession of 2008, and demonetisation of Indian currency in 2016, etc.

Literature has been faithfully recording these upheavals in human societies. Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*, Franz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Elie Wiesel's *Night*, etc. are outstanding examples of global writings depicting traumatisation of individuals (Abubakar 121). Indian literature has not misplaced the moment of detailing dystopian events. A wide body of writings pertaining to the trying moments of India's partition exist. Khuswant Singh in *A Train to Pakistan*, Manohar Malgaonkar in *A Bend in the Ganges*, Chaman Nahal in *Azadi*, Attia Hosain in *Sunlight on a Broken Column*, Amitav Ghosh in *The Shadow Lines*, etc. discuss the traumatic experiences of one of the world's largest human

displacement. In the universe of Indian theatre, dramatists like Vijay Tendulkar have depicted various traumatic experiences in his illustrious plays. Plays like *Kamala*, *Sakharam Binder*, *The Vultures* and *Kanyadaan* delineate the traumatic encounters of victims of domestic or intimate partner violence. His celebrated play *Ghashiram Kotwal* portrays the collective trauma of the denizens of late nineteenth century Poona who were subjected to endure distressing conditions under the cruel policing of Ghasiram Savaldas and the power-politics of Nana Phadnavis.

Vijay Tendulkar's outstanding play *Ghashiram Kotwal* portrays the authoritarian regime of Nana Phadnavis and his law enforcement chief, Ghashiram Savaldas. The former is the appointed Chief Minister of Poona, but he was the de facto ruler of the Maratha Empire as the Peshwa remained in name alone. Nana possesses the Machiavellian qualities of a scheming politician and shrewd diplomacy to deny the British to take over the Maratha Empire under its expansionist programme in India. As an administrator he represents an exalted personality, but toxicity of power induces him to develop certain habits disapproved by the civilised society. Vijay Tendulkar's dramatic lenses focus on the dehumanising face of this skilful Maratha leader. Ghashiram Savaldas is an immigrant Brahman from Kannauj who lands in Poona in hunt of sustainable employment. But the influential and powerful Poona Brahmans and the corrupt police administration of this cultured city not only deny him livelihood space but also subject him to abuses and humiliation. Through an unethical practice he gains access to the handle of power to avenge cruelly the transgressions of his oppressors.

Nana Phadnavis's libidinal urges make up the evil side of his personality. His night life is consumed in the infamous Bavannakhani, the red-light district of Poona. He is the chief patron of the erotic dances performed by the courtesans of Bavannakhani. Juvenile girls or attractive married women cannot escape his sensually coloured gazes. Some of them have to submit to his sensual callings as they are overpowered by his power and money. But his staunch critics, the Maratha *sardars* or chieftains closely monitor him. They stand

as impediments to his immoral adventures. To ensure continuity of his sensuous escapades, Nana brings about a cultural transformation in the city. Brothels receive legal sanctions and flesh-trade functions under unrestrained commercial license. No sooner the filthy promotions penetrated into entire chunks of Poona's adult male population. Most married and unwedded male members, irrespective of class, caste and community swarm the sleazy spaces of Bavannakhani for fulfilling erotic pleasures. Vijay Tendulkar is convinced that the 'new normal' has ramifications enough to dehumanise a society by depriving it of lofty ideals like moral principles and sublime human values, including inviting economic hardships.

Collective trauma of women in Nana's totalitarian regime is on a vertical trajectory. Married wives of Brahmans are the worst victims of the changed cultural circumstances of Poona as their priestly husbands are not left out. Under the guise of attending religious obligations like performing "kirtan" (Tendulkar *Ghashiram Kotwal* 13) prayers and funeral rites of the deceased, the Brahman husbands virtually tread to the dance-floors of Bavannakhani. There they immerse their nights watching the erotic dances of the courtesans or satiate the cravings of their libido with the whores of the place. When the husbands are having the fun of their lives, the Brahman wives wait restlessly for the return of their husbands. Their traumatic experience remains unabated as they are underpowered to question masculine privileges. They silently absorb the trauma as they cannot afford to invite further disturbance in their family lives. The women also feel the pressure of running the kitchens as their husbands squander their hard-earned money in undesirable pursuits.

The Brahman wives equally experience group trauma from "male gaze." Laura Mulvey, in her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," defines the male gaze as an abnormal tendency of the heterosexual man to objectify or sexualise women (Mulvey 835). Nana Phadnavis extracts perverted pleasure from gazing at the female body. He frequently invites Brahman wives to exclusive sessions of *kirtan* prayers at his grand

palace. In those holy gatherings, *kirtankars* recite hymns from sacred texts. Then under his orders the devotional songs change to “*lavani—a change from a religious song to a love ballad*” (22). Nana takes full advantage of the events to ogle and leer at the intimate areas of the good-looking Brahman women. These not only hurt the religious sentiments of the women but equally placed them in traumatic situations. They concentrate their time not in listening to the hymns but in covering and adjusting their garments, away from the seductive gazes of Nana. Through the collective trauma of these Brahman women, Tendulkar points to a larger picture of the agonizing times that the fair gender encounters because of the objectification of the body, the perennial gender inequality, asymmetrical distribution of political and social power between the two sexes, and the ideological discourses of patriarchy (Mulvey 6-18).

Child sexual abuse and child marriage are two heinous crimes against the girl child. Pereda et al, estimate that globally about twenty percent of girls are sexually abused annually. Responsible bodies like the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) identified child marriage as the most pervasive form of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls (“United Nations” 12-13). The negative implications of these harmful practices are enormous for child abuse victims and they include isolation from their peers and families, early pregnancy leading to deaths during delivery, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases and depriving them of education etc., (“Child Protection...”). India is one of the most notorious countries where the girl child cannot feel safe from the sexual predators, and Vijay Tendulkar has taken note of this perennial issue in his play *Ghashiram Kotwal*. The playwright depicts that no attractive girl in Poona can feel safe from the immoral propensities of Nana. Lalita Gauri, the teenage daughter of Ghashiram meets Nana in one of his *kirtan* ceremonies, and the alluring beauty of the girl attracts immediate attention of the elderly administrator. After the ceremony is over, he tries outraging her modesty. Gauri barely escapes from the sexual predator and

runs for her life, but, Nana brings her the next day and gets a complete measure of the shy, innocent girl’s body. Gauri endures sexual trauma for months together and when she conceives, Nana directs her to a midwife for an urgent abortion. Her traumatic ordeal finally ends after she succumbs to the unscientific abortion. One more instance of feminine trauma extends to another juvenile girl of exquisite beauty. Nana stops short of plying her like a kept mistress and decides to wed her. She cannot refuse the marriage to an old man as her parents are bribed with land and expensive gifts. The marriage eventually exposes her to a traumatic existence of sharing a common roof with the grey-haired man and his six other wives. By taking up the twin issues of child sexual abuse and child marriage, Tendulkar seeks to highlight the effects of psychological trauma like anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Widom 1223-29) etc., on the psyche of the victims.

Child prostitution and human trafficking are other heinous crimes against the fair gender and as per the Central Bureau of Investigation’s own admission about one million Indian children are in the prostitution industry (“Official”). In Nana’s Poona, juvenile girls from impoverished poverty-stricken families are bought or kidnapped and forced to join the thriving flesh-markets of the day. Mainstreaming of prostitution in Poona exposes the girls to live in filthy cells and made to serve multiple numbers of customers daily. Exposed to unprotected sex, these girls give birth to babies of unknown fathers or coerced to undergo abortions under unqualified persons. They are equally exposed to sexually transmitted disease and economic instability and have to live for the rest of their lives with the social stigma of a sex worker. The dramatist stays away from mentioning the traumatic encounters of the sex slaves, but it is obvious for the reader/audience to figure out the harrowing situations of these socially vulnerable and stigmatised beings.

Nana’s appointment of Ghasiram as the *kotwal* or police chief of Poona elongates the collective trauma to the entire population. Ghashiram Savaldas is an impoverished Brahman from Kannauj who arrives in

Poona to earn his livelihood. But the maltreatment from Poona's partisan society strengthens Ghashiram's resolve to avenge the humiliations heaped upon him. He passes a decree forbidding certain activities of the people without prior approval from his office. The draconian measures include killing of pigs, carrying abortions, involvement in prostitution, stealing properties of others, sleeping or cohabitating with divorced wives, remarrying during the lifetime of one's husband, concealing one's caste, circulating and using counterfeit coins, committing suicides, etc. Women from respectable castes and communities cannot prostitute without valid licences. Poona wears the silence of a crematorium after 11 o'clock as curfew reigns. He directs his anger against his sworn enemies – the Brahmins of Poona – by refusing allowance to "sin without a permit" (32). He grants no mercy to the violators by inflicting severest of punishments, including imprisonment on mere suspicions. Citizens of Poona shudder at the mere mention of his name and have to live a life forfeited of their fundamental rights.

Ghashiram's reign of terror continues unabated, rendering traumatic existence for the people of Poona. On one occasion, he denies permission to a woman for cremating the last remains of her father-in law. It may be mentioned that denying appropriate burial to the dead is a blatant violation of human rights. Ghashiram's refusal causes extreme trauma to the family and relatives of the deceased. On another occasion the dramatist gives the reader/audience an elaborate insight of his cruel functioning. Power intoxicates Ghashiram to such exalted levels that he catches anyone on mere suspicions. He arrests a respectable Brahman of Poona on an unfounded charge by a member of the same community and subjects him to inhuman tortures like forcing him to place his bare hands on the surface of a red-hot iron ball.

Moral policing is an administrative measure of Ghashiram to stop the nefarious dispositions of the Poona Brahmins. His intention to impose the night curfew is to suspend the Poona Brahmins from visiting the red-light area. By slamming the brakes, he ensures that the Brahmins spend the nights with their legal

spouses. He issues an official order to arrest the adulterers and whoremongers. Ghashiram accompanies his cops to ensure that his diktats are followed in letter and spirit. In one of the patrolling duties, he raids the house of a Brahman and discovers that the latter was sharing a bed with a woman. The man introduces the woman as his spouse, but Ghashiram declines to purchase the story. He calls for his neighbours to verify the authenticity of his claims. Ghasiram arrests the couple and suitably punished them after the neighbours produces a negative statement. His decision to impose restrictions on the social evil of prostitution may gain approbation on moral grounds. But, he loses sight of the fact that people engaged in the flesh trade industry will ultimately suffer from joblessness and economic insecurity. Unfortunately, Ghashiram's administration did not have any compensatory packages to mitigate the trauma of livelihood losses sustained by these people.

Collective trauma of the populace of Poona, particularly the influential Brahman community, reaches the boiling point when Ghasiram transforms into a blood-thirsty beast after the premature death of his only daughter. In his new avatar, he beats and kills anyone for the slightest of crimes. He imprisons a group of immigrant Brahmins from Tanjore in a narrow cell of his police station. Their crime is that they intruded into the fruit garden of Ghashiram to pluck some mangoes for driving away the hunger in their appetites. The following morning Poona wakes to hear the news that twenty-two Brahmins died of suffocation and an equal number lying in semi-dead conditions.

The isolated examples tell the story that every section of Poona's populace suffered from the cruel policing of Ghashiram. Entire Poona "trembles at Ghashiram's name" and the city stands "straightened" (43). The mouths of the people are dry with fear and they are clueless where to complain for addressing their genuine grievances. The proud Brahman community of Poona is always at the receiving end of Ghashiram's barbarity. His policing reduces them to the softness of cotton balls. However, the incident of the tragic death of the Tanjore Brahmins bolsters the resolve of the Brahmins to fight against Ghashiram's terrors. They make a

collective march to the palace of Nana to register a protest against his cruelty. Nana realises that Ghasiram has become a real thorn in his flesh and accordingly issues a death sentence to end his barbarism. The group effort of the Brahmans to avert the crisis finally brought relief to their traumatised existence.

Thus, Vijay Tendulkar's *Ghashiram Kotwal* remains an appropriate document to read and comprehend collective trauma and its effects. Nana's libidinal cravings and Ghasiram's satisfaction of narcissistic drives unfold collective trauma on enormous sections of Poona's ordinary citizens. Under such whimsical and authoritarian regimes women suffer from insecurity while others lose autonomy to experience a life of their choice. However, the collected resolve of the Brahmans to conclude the tyranny of Ghasiram is a lesson for humanity that every crisis produces opportunities and there is certainly light at the end of a tunnel.

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The Insane Women- A “trauma” Reading of *Felanee*

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Abstract:

This paper attempts an analysis of the elements of trauma in Felanee by Arupa Patangia Kalita. It examines how the origin, identity and development of certain characters of the novel are defined and determined by trauma .Though trauma cannot be called the central subject of Felanee , it does have significant impact over the story and the formulation of certain characters –mostly women. The so called insane women of our societies often are victims of silenced history of violence and trauma .This is what happens with the ‘insane’ women of Felanee. This paper looks into the root of those traumatic experiences and their subsequent expressions in the characters of the novel. This paper puts special emphasis on the aspect of post traumatic stress disorder in developing the discussion.

Keywords : violence, conflict, identity, relationship, trauma, post traumatic stress disorder

Dr. Arupa Patangia Kalita , writer of the Assamese novel *Felanee* is known for her incantatory narrative skills, gritty social realism and sensitive portrayal of human psyche. The story of *Felanee* revolves around two agitations that the state of Assam has gone through and been presented as experienced by Felanee, the mixed-race girl whose parents were killed in one ethnic conflagration. *Felanee* hits home the reality of violence, and excels in its portrayals of women and men from the bottom of the volatile vicinity. The novel is considered to be a bold and bare portrayal of the fragile history of the state which saw several movements

and rebellions, sometimes running parallel to each other as ethnic groups either increasingly claimed nationhood within or outside the political borders of the Indian state or fought for the deportation of illegal immigrants..

The novel is entitled after the protagonist whose name literally translates as ‘thrown away’ or “discarded”. Felanee and her fellow characters stand for the people of the periphery. All the characters of the novel belong to the periphery of the society, not to the poll-centred centrality of the conventional socio-cultural framework. While going through the novel, readers do not know much about the caste, race or religion of them. Even in case of Felanee too, the bio-physical details reveal that Felanee cannot be confined to a particular racio-religious identity. The novelist does not think it necessary to inform the readers much about the racial or ethnic origin of Jonar Maa (mother of Jon), Minati, Kali Budhi, Naveen, Ful or Jagu. Readers find them just as human beings, victims of the socio-political conflicts borne out of the progressive and nationalistic mass movements, as projected by the respective movement leaders.

Critics describe *Felanee* as a naked narrative of the unimaginable sufferings of the underprivileged communities of the Assamese society which was the byproduct of the separatist or ethnic movements that had devastated the socio-economic fabric of the state. These sufferings range from the very physical to the very intense psycho-social ones, women being the major victims. Dr.Kalita has been considered as a commanding craftsman who has a good hold over exposing the female psyche. Here too, she is found to

be exposing what is absent rather than what is present, reflecting concern with the silencing and marginalisation of women in a delicate phase of the time and history. In this process, reading of trauma offers a new dimension. *Felanee* is a tale of struggle for survival. In this journey, most of the characters have gone through numerous traumatic experiences in different forms and intensity .Thus it constitutes a major pillar in the formation and development of the story as well as of the characters of the novel.

Violence and trauma are integrally interrelated concepts. Violence is basically characterised by two dimensions-physical and psychological. Physical violence works on body while psychological violence works on the soul. But it is also true that, though distinctions have been made for the sake of study, both physical and psychological violence are interrelated. Rather they are complimentary to each other, one leads to the emergence of the other. As Galtung said, “The borderline between physical and psychological violence is not very clear, since it is possible to influence physical movements by means of psychological techniques, and vice versa: physical constraints certainly have mental implications”. (1969:175). Study of trauma should encompass both the physical/visible and psychological/ mostly latent manifestations. The emerging aspect of human rights principles into conflict resolution process also intensifies the need to look into the studies of physical violence and consequent traumatic disorder.

The defining characteristic of a traumatic event is its capacity to provoke fear, helplessness, or horror in response to the threat of injury or death. People who are exposed to such events are at increased risk for Post traumatic stress disorder as well as for major depression, panic disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and substance abuse, as compared with those who have not experienced traumatic events (Halsall, 2017: 2). They may also have somatic symptoms and physical illness, particularly hypertension, asthma, and chronic pain syndromes. Medical science proves that events that give rise to traumatic stress disorder typically involve interpersonal violence (eg, rape, assault, and torture) or exposure to life-threatening

incidents or violent action (fires, earthquakes). Traumatic disorder occurs in people who have witnessed a brutal injury or the unnatural death of another person and those who have learned that a near and dear one was involved in such an event, provided there is sufficient associated terror or shock (Yehuda , 2002:109).In short ,post traumatic stress disorder refers to that condition where a person develops symptoms of physical or mental disorder, or both as a consequence of some traumatic experiences. The diagnostic and statistical manual of Mental Disorder (DSM-III) defines post traumatic disorder as the “development of symptoms which involve re-experiencing the traumatic event “numbing of responsiveness to ,or reduced involvement with ,the external world ; and a variety of automatic ,dysphonic ,or cognitive symptoms” (1980).

In *Felanee*, the novelist portrays a moving picture of traumatized characters borne out of physical, psychological and structural violence. Felanee, the central character of the novel, is a perfect example of post traumatic stress disorder. Felanee was an eye witness to the burning of her own house and how two of her neighbours were burnt alive. Her husband went missing on that night who was assumed to be killed. Felanee along with her son Moni had to hide herself in a pond and witnessed how her home and the entire village were burnt into ashes. The surroundings were filled with fire, sounds of gunfire, screaming of dying people. Even on her way to the station, Felanee came through numerous instances of bloodshed, murder and assaults. These intensely violent experiences made Felanee a traumatized soul. Throughout her days in the relief camp, Felanee used to visualise those vicious scenes. She couldn't sleep nor could she sit tranquilly.Everytime Felanee dreamt of a burning man running alive, the half burnt body of a baby or the burnt houses. Moreover, she started developing the symptoms of insomnia. She could hardly have a sound sleep.

“Jimanei tair sakhal jat khai pare,shimanei tai chabibor besi spastakoi dekhibaloi arambha kare ...kuhiyaranir patal andharar majat bharit

*lagi sitiki para afal kesuar komal deh...praye
Moniye taik jokari jokari uthai diye- 'Ma,ma oi!tai
hahisa kia?ma,anekoi kandisa kia?ma siyarisa
kia? Tai koba noare.Moniye gam pay,makak sabei
adhapagali buli koboloi loise"(Kalita ,2002:42).*

(Though she tries to close her eyes, those scenes appear more and more visibly before her eyes...she remembers the dead body of the baby lying amidst the sugarcane plantation...Moni often wakes her up and asks, "Mummy, why are you laughing? Why are you crying? Why are you shouting this way? Moni is already aware of the fact that his mother has been considered as a mad woman by others").

Felanee started behaving unusually due to the shock she had gone through. Within that traumatic phase, she also gave birth to a dead child. It increased the degree of possession by the traumatic events or images which got expressed in repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, unusual behaviours or thoughts. Experiencing or learning about traumatic event challenges a person's sense of safety, leading to feelings of vulnerability or powerlessness. When it gets imprinted on one's memory, the person recounts those events and eventually develops the symptoms of physical and behavioural disorder. Losing her husband, baby and her own house, Felanee too suffered from sheer lack of safety and loss of power. The horrific scenes were so deeply rooted in her unconscious mind that getting rid of their clutch became impossible for the lady.

Readers can easily relate the dreams of Felanee to her insecurity .She often dreams of a baby crying alone, heaps of ashes, dead bodies of chicks, dry banana leaves – signifiers of her loss, insecurity, sufferings, pain and joylessness. It stands for all the symptoms of the post traumatic stress disorder as the mind revokes the emotions associated with the trauma and the sensations such as touch ,taste ,sound ,smell all of which can present as nightmares or dreams or flash backs (Halsall, 2017: 2). In the first few chapters, Felanee appears to be a mystical character, mostly in a hallucinated stage who often fails to connect with

the reality .It resulted in her loss of the human capacity to connect with her surroundings .Therefore she couldn't adjust herself to the situation of the relief camp though Moni, her son , could adjust himself with the new surroundings. Felanee was an innocent woman, nurtured and guided under the love and care of her husband. The sudden absence of that guiding force was an unexpected shock which was heavy to be accepted by Felanee. Besides, Felanee experienced the death of her familiar ones in front of her own eyes. These loss and pain led her to a state where she started having nightmares and flashbacks which are particularly vivid moment and memories while she is awake and make her feel and act as if the event is recurring. "Traumatic memories lack verbal narrative and context; rather they are encoded in the form of vivid sensations and images which evoke the frozen nature of such memories"(Costello ;2018: 35).

Traumatic neurosis is marked by the 'compulsion to repeat' the memory of the painful event with the hopes of mastering the unpleasant feelings .The emphasis on narrative recall for normal integration of memory and the general idea of memory as a storehouse of experience are important points for the literary-critical conceptualization of trauma.(Juda;1983-354-356) .Medical Science states that traumatized person has difficulty falling or staying asleep and has developed exaggerated startle reactions in response to sounds or movements associated with the incident. This was something happened with Felanee.Whenever she heard the word "attack",Felanee started behaving abnormally and reacted to the word in a dreadful way. The traumatic memories reminded her of that horrible night in the railway platform where she used to stay after her house was burnt alive. She was already in a state of panic by losing everything. Then suddenly she heard the word "attack" and saw large number of houses burnt away. That word, hence, stuck on her mind like a symbol of loss, violence, insecurity , fear and helplessness. Later on, when Naveen used the same word to refer to the murder of the Marwari shopkeeper, Felanee again experienced that somatic horror. It was such an appalling experience that Felanee could not

even utter a single word. Trauma thus often leads to the gradual inability to normal reaction. Minati, the victim of sexual abuse too developed this inability and there are certain instances where readers experience her failure to respond rationally to situations, sounds or behaviours identical to her previous world .She could not even protest when the same man exploited her for the second time.

Sumola , another character of *Felanee* too suffers from post traumatic stress disorder .After witnessing the brutal killing of her elder brother in her own house ,Sumola changed into a silent ,insane ,traumatised entity .Her elder brother was brutally lynched and killed when he was attending a religious function in her home. Since that day, Sumola stops conversation, cooking, eating and taking care of her baby boy. It was like a ‘freezing on the spot’ impact on her leading to a state of acute numbness. Like Felanee, she also turns out to be a ‘*pagoli*’ –for the neighbours and the other villagers. Sumola bears all the symptoms of the state of constriction- numbing, withdrawal .indifference, acute passivity or surrender. Traumatic events “call into question basic human relationship. They breach the attachments of family ,friendship ,love and community .They shatter the construction of the self that is formed and sustained in relations to others .They undermine the belief systems that give meaning to human experience”(2015:45). For her, the stressor is a deliberately caused disaster – the killing of her brother by a group of young men .But the result of this physical violence turned out to be psychological one – Sumola withdrew herself from her surroundings and developed a sense of avoidance along with sudden aggressive –impulsive behaviour.

The character of Kali Budhi offers another dimension how trauma is internalized and expressed differently in the individual level. It echoes the Cathy Caruth statement where she talked about a structure of experience or reception of trauma. It may vary from individual to individual. Unlike Sumola or Felanee, Kali Budhi reacts to her traumatic experiences in a different manner for which the novelist brilliantly introduces the mythical character of Kali – one of the rare

unconventional and rebellious images of women deities of the world. Kali Budhi was the victim of sexual exploitation by two different persons who left her alone during her pregnancy when she was only seventeen years old. When Felanee met Kali Budhi ,she was an old women of fragile frame but commanding voice .At certain moments ,Budhi behaves as possessed by Goddess Kali and acts in a supernatural manner .It can easily be assumed that this mystical incarnation is nothing but her self-created mechanism of security as she was a beautiful women of strong sensual appeal (2002:140-141) .All her traumatised memories get expressed in her possessed moments where she behaves like a deity with superhuman capacity .It was also used as a carefully crafted shield of sexual and psychological safety of a tender soul who had to bear the intensity of sexual trauma at the very initial stage of her life. Her identity of displaced, homeless women too compelled her to take refuge in Kali, as the authoritative influence of Kali is hard to be denied by common men. Caruth’s formulation that what follows trauma is not simply an effect of destruction but also an enigma of survival is best reflected through the exploration of the character of Kali Budhi.

Felanee does not belong to the specific genre of a ‘trauma novel’- a kind of novel where both subject and method are adopted to develop trauma as the central concern. But certain significant portions of the story and their consequent impact over the formulation and development of the characters like Felanee, Sumola ,Kali Budhi or Minati does demand a ‘trauma’ reading of this novel. Significant features of these so called ‘insane women’ are defined and determined by Trauma. In a wider perspective, such reading can also be used to illustrate how violence and trauma engender a new trajectory in the field of fictional production by Assamese writers.

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Exploring Trauma through Survivor's Testimony in *Cat's Eye*

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Abstract:

To understand the manifold responses to trauma, examining aspects of psychological functioning within the social or cultural environment is required. Fiction that depicts trauma incorporates varied responses and survival behaviours within the characterizations of survivors. Margaret Atwood is a Canadian writer who often depicts characters as narrators of their own stories, after the fact, where they revisit their process of awakening. Cat's Eye by Margaret Atwood takes up some social contexts to deal with trauma and for this it emphasizes the narrative and expressive tools of severe circumstances. Atwood charts the psychological process of memory as compulsion and memory as healing act through the character of Elaine Risley, an artist who returns to her home town of Toronto for a retrospective of her work. Fiction by providing various perspectives facilitates readers to understand the variety of peoples' responses to shock, despite the fact that silence may accompany descriptions of the survivor's experience. Therefore this study is carried out to examine how Margaret Atwood depicts some social agents to express the survivor's testimony in her fiction. It takes up a multidisciplinary interpretive framework that acknowledges the composite nature of these depictions by shifting beyond the traditionalist Freudian perspective that primarily focuses on childhood traumas, repression, and repetition.

Keywords: *Trauma, survivor, society, sympathy, healing, Margaret Atwood*

Trauma is an individual's response to events so intense that they impair emotional or cognitive functioning and may bring lasting psychological disruption. Survivors might live with a fragmented memory or a diminished sense of self, or might feel alienated (Herman 2009: 42–47). Traumatic responses may include shame, doubt, or guilt, or may destroy important beliefs in one's own safety or view of oneself as decent, strong, and autonomous (Janoff-Bulman 1992: 19–22). It is associated with a dynamic process that might be of feeling, remembering, assimilating, or recovering from that experience. The various cause and effects of trauma have moved away from a traditional mode which focused more on the internalised isolated psychic elements toward a new trauma model that rather emphasises on the interaction of social and behavioural issues associated with trauma. Experts explain that in order to accurately measure the behavioural causes, trait-driven conceptions of personality are less important than the individual's personal history of conditioning, personal constructs, and their psychological circumstances.

The social environment, the severity of the event, and the individual's characteristics and sense of control help to determine how someone copes with trauma (Root 1992: 248; MacCurdy 2007: 17). The causes and outcomes of traumatic experience is influenced by the social environment in a variety of ways. It is not only a source of causing trauma but can also provide or refuse the required healing support on the part of

victim. The family responses to trauma and the cultural attitudes to it may either bring the victim together with healing connections, or may prevent them. The notions of expected behaviour, responses, and even symptoms are influenced by these attitudes and practices. Optimum circumstances for healing exist when a “society organizes the process of suffering, rendering it a meaningful mode of action and identity within a larger social framework”. (401–402) Individuals feel unprotected when cultures do not function this way and are forced to survive in isolation. Victims may respond to trauma in an unsympathetic environment by adapting as best they can with survival characteristics such as “egocentrism, quickness to anger, social and emotional withdrawal, rumination, or shutting down” (Root 1992: 248). Atwood has demonstrated these survival traits in her novels that chart the emotions attached to recovery on the part of victims.

Trauma can be many a times caused by the environment of social relations as well as the cultural values and it can further silence and traumatize the victims out of guilt. It can induce trauma by creating veils of illusion or by reinterpreting behaviours in many cases. Societies, communities, or families may prefer to keep stability or be willing to renounce victims for some other goals. Atwood depicts these renounces and sacrifices in her work of fictions. In *Cat's Eye*, the protagonist is portrayed with insights by way of other characters who are themselves victimized and keep their memories and remain unpersuaded by the interests of those who create or refuse to acknowledge traumatic events. Atwood creates the protagonist as narrator, who narrates her life in connection to the community. Some clues and pieces of memories are provided to the traumatized characters to re-examine survival and eventually engage in fresh ways of thinking and being.

Margaret Atwood highlights in her novel the various social aspects in connection to her characters' minds and how they bear and go through trauma in adverse social environments. Atwood again in her characterisation illustrates what Root calls the “survival schema[s]” people develop that determine their

personalities and are predicated on the individual's “history of cumulative trauma, societal view of trauma, and preparedness for trauma” (Root 1992: 250). All these social and cultural variables are examined by Atwood as they influence inasmuch the behaviours, associations, and imaginations of her characters. An intricate social web of gender rigidity in the Canada of 1940s and 1950s is well depicted in the novel *Cat's Eye* including from the rules of schoolgirls' dress and conduct to enforcement of religious and the adult cultural ideologies, to the imposed surveillance on the domestic practices of females.

The protagonist Elaine Risley is a painter whom we meet in the novel reminiscing about her childhood. Elaine having a stable and supportive home life, atheistic in nature doesn't suffice to the social conformities. Some extreme self-destructive symptoms and constant fear and anxiety are caused in Elaine by the daily surveillance and abusive commands of her three supposed “best friends”, particularly Cordelia, which leads her losing the sense of the independent identity her parents have tried to implant. Atwood here taking the help of the peer pressure suggests, the insistence on gendered, religious, and social conformity of the larger society. Atwood focuses that insistence becomes internalized on the part of women, considering men as privilege and blame them when they cannot maintain the standards set for them. Elaine, the protagonist is tormented by her “friends” to the point of almost losing her life— she is left in frozen water in a ravine - until her own imagined vision of a mother figure (the Virgin) and her actual mother come to save her and bear witness to the awful behaviour of the girls. This experience has influenced Elaine in such a way that it continues to formulate her relationships with others for the coming years.

Then she dissociates herself from the past and is unable to recall the painful childhood memories, eventually leads her ignorant of what her mother means when she refers to “That bad time you had. . . I've forgotten things; I've forgotten that I've forgotten them. . . Time is missing.” Amnesia makes her “happy as a clam: hardshelled, firmly closed” (Atwood 221). Elaine in

her adolescence tries to stay away from any emotional attachments in order to protect her sense of ‘self’. She considers relationships as pure power struggles which she formulates out of her experience with Cordelia. She rejects sympathy and empathy: “Knowing too much about other people puts you in their power, they have a claim on you, you are forced to understand their reasons for doing things and then you are weakened” (240).

Her relationship with Cordelia is both her closest relationship to anyone and also the most painful one that continues to haunt her. Cordelia again approaches Elaine for help at a low point in the latter’s life. She asks Elaine to help her flee a mental institution. Elaine at this imposition becomes much enraged, worrying for her daughter if Cordelia should attempt suicide. Though Elaine’s hesitation seems reasonable, her emotions are over-determined and her reference to want to “rub [Cordelia’s] face in the snow” recalls her own life-threatening experience on a snowy day in the ravine in their youth. In order to reconcile with her own set of emotions and the context, she must finally return to the particular spot. As Elaine goes through her old things, she recovers some of her memories with her mother and she finds herself “Looking for something that’s been thrown away as useless, but could still be dredged up and reclaimed” (422).

Elaine in order to reclaim her past and not be unconsciously ruled by it must overcome her fears. Elaine because of the past dreads being back in Toronto, a place that she left decades before, where she feels “overwhelmed” by “old time.” It is the reminder of her childhood traumas and long- lost connections. To be honoured for a retrospective of her paintings, she must return to Toronto; the unconventional woman artist can now be appreciated by conservative, provincial Toronto. With a new perspective she must now face the past, the ravine is to be revisited and the past event that happened there and reunite with Jon, her first husband. Inasmuch she understands her past, what impacted her and her art, Toronto becomes drained of much of its traumatic force.

The protagonist’s development as an artist is very much dependent upon the early traumas’ impact on her imagination, with some disadvantages and advantages; the defensive narrowing and focus of her vision has protected her from harm. She is transformed into a gifted painter of physical details by the ability to see and focus in the minute details, and it created an emotional distance to her. However, the feelings from which she has been alienated for so long are carried by this range of paintings. The process of creating these paintings stems from anxiety that is a sign of emerging memory.

Before her marriage with Jon, she starts painting domestic items from her own and the homes of her friends during the early traumatic period. This becomes a kind of visual, reflexive memories with the characteristics of trauma as represented by the appearance of these paintings and her emotional contextsthat remained dissociated at that time. Elaine’s dissociation is turned on by her artistic creations and yet her emotions are expressed; such as Mrs. Smeath’s grotesque portraits by the protagonist, who disregarded the humiliations of Elaine by the girls. Toward the end Elaine must recognize a kind of revenge as well as her cruelty that is allowed by her own vision, in terms of understanding what might have motivated Mrs. Smeath and again Cordelia. Elaine while looking at her paintings again examines Mrs. Smeath’s eyes: “I used to think these were self-righteous eyes, piggy and smug inside their wire frames; and they are. But they are also defeated eyes, uncertain and melancholy, heavy with unloved duty. The eyes of someone for whom God was a sadistic old man” (443). Elaine is able to escape herself from some of this past baggage in her attempt to acknowledge these women’s flaws and vulnerabilities. Things that made her way to become a strong artist also in some other ways affected her ability to be compassionate, which she reiterates the ability to see life through a fresh vision at the end of the novel.

In contemporary fiction, the characters’ struggle with memory and avoidance that they go through is depicted which differ from the repetitive-performative image found in the classic model of trauma that imagined a

fix state of forgetting. Atwood's novel indicates that a sympathetic listener or an environmental variable can make ease of a trauma victim's defensive patterns, by listening to his/her stories. It leads them to resituate themselves in connection to their traumatic event and the society. In this regard Cathy Caruth rightly says "trauma is never simply one's own," and that "we are implicated in each other's trauma" (Caruth 24). To conclude, literature provides readers a wealth of thick description of the conditions and characteristics of traumatic experience. Fiction with its unique ability to showcase the interconnection between the environment and human responses, illustrates the creation of emotional and cognitive patterns resulting out of trauma that in turn formulate social attitudes and structures of living. The social receptions and the acts of witnessing or sympathy are very much crucial in the whole process of trauma, how it is caused and perpetuated and even the possibilities for healing. More truly, social opinions can traumatize and often re-traumatize or can subvert victims. *Cat's Eye* is a fine specimen that Atwood features adverse social environments where trauma is ignored and healing is prevented. Margaret Atwood in order to engage the reader's empathy by closely examining the personal and social contexts of trauma and its psychological aftermaths demonstrates the scope and nature of trauma in literature. *Cat's Eye* provides narrative means to articulate trauma's effects even when dissociation may occur or when victims face denial and hostility in the social environment. Atwood represents trauma beyond the unspeakable and repetitive by depicting survivors as deeply interconnected to social networks. Trauma can be caused by these social networks by limiting victim's

expression and at the same time can offer healing support by providing a sympathetic listener. Atwood thus presents a social critique of suffering and scope of recovery by demonstrating the ties between individual trauma and larger social environment.

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Aesthetizing Trauma: The Politics of Narration in Margaret Atwood's 'Surfacing'

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Abstract:

The field of trauma literature has received critical attention from Freudian and Lacanian perspectives in works of theorists like Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman and Geoffrey Hartman. Understanding trauma in fictions, poetry, short stories and plays under the lens of socio-cultural framework has also remained under discussion. Comparative approach for in-depth understanding of trauma in works of literature has been carried out to explain the formation of cultural identities. This paper endeavours to present how experience of trauma becomes symbolic expression through a critical reading of Margaret Atwood's 'Surfacing'. Another aim of this paper is to analyze the author's approach in representing multiplicity of aesthetic emotions through the protagonist's voice of narration. The methodology is to focus on the theoretical premises on narrative structures given by Gerard Genette in 'Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method' and by Roland Barthes in 'An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative' to comprehend the politics of narration in 'Surfacing'. A critical study of the narrative technique of 'Surfacing' would reveal how language in symbolic ways operates in representing surplus emotions which aesthetically empowers the novel. This paper seeks to elaborate that narration of trauma emotions can be achieved through metaphorical language.

Keywords: Trauma Fiction, Trauma Emotions

Narrative Structure, Symbolic Expression.

"The rejection of narration and recovery and the one-sided focus on the crises caused by trauma is problematic for a number of reasons. First of all, theorizations with too narrow an emphasis on how trauma disrupts and hinders narration risk overlooking the fact that trauma also has a strong tendency to produce narration" (Schonfelder 32-33).

Margaret Atwood in her novel, 'Surfacing', presents an account of trauma voiced by an unnamed female protagonist. Along with her boyfriend, Joe, and a married couple, David and Anna, she sets out to her village in North Quebec in search of her missing father. Although, David and Joe go to the trip with their agenda of shooting a film, "Random Samples", as they remain oblivion to the feelings of the women in the novel. In 'Surfacing' the narrative function of the author is to provide a testimony of traumatic emotions of the central female character by making her the narrator who falls prey to her past. Atwood adopts a first person narrative strategy to illustrate the direct representation of over powering emotions in the protagonist, related to guilt and pain as a confession to the readers. Such style of storytelling allows readers to get access to the thought process and characteristics of the protagonist in a direct manner. In her seminal essay, 'Narrative Discourse', Gerard Genette expounded on the concept of internal focalization which caters to the restricted level of narration from the point-of-view of the central

character “where the central character is limited absolutely to and strictly inferred from his focal position alone” (Genette 193). In such narrative structure, the readers stay as passive observers because the narrator is in constant performance of representing emotions and delivering information. But such structure becomes justified in the genre of trauma fiction because the inner tragedy faced by the victims of trauma can only be recounted truly from the perspective of the victim as a narrator.

Cathy Caruth in ‘Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History’ and Anne Whitehead in ‘Trauma Fiction’ have elaborated upon memory of trauma and how it creates the fabric of narration. In trauma fictions the narrative layout is always structured by the “paradox of the incommensurability and impossibility of language and representation in relation to trauma, on the one hand, and the desperate need for a means of expression, on the other” (Wiel 2). The narrative structure of trauma fictions is disjointed due to formulaic flashbacks and the narrators’ approach in articulating the painful memories or episodes of trauma in complex ways through metaphors. Christa Schonfelder in her book titled, ‘Wounds and Words: Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction,’ has asserted that there has been a debate on understanding the relation between narrative structure and expression of trauma emotions because such emotions represent a hindrance in narration.

The ambivalence between the need for expression of emotions and a representation of failure at expression through language justify a homologous bond between such narrative formats with psychic experience of trauma. In ‘Surfacing’, the tension between the desire to express traumatic emotions and arduous search for appropriate words in communicating the narrator’s perspective by the author gives rise to a conglomeration of varying metaphors in the narrative. The narrative takes refuge in symbolic expression through metaphors to narrate the female protagonist’s chaotic and painful

state of mind. Her search for her father starts with a search for her past from the time she arrived at her village. The novel progresses through her flashing memories from her childhood, her divorce and how she abandoned her child and husband which introduces the readers with her “unpardonable sin” (Atwood 32), a constant guilt surfacing within her.

The narration talks about her alienation from herself as well as the overpowering emotions of pain which invades her mind and somatic realm. In the first part of the novel, Atwood reveals the character’s chief guilt which is located at the centre of her psychic zone, spreading gradually and taking control over her. The narrator comes under an illusion that she had an abortion with her art professor after seeing her father’s dead body in the lake which she confuses with a dead child. Through the metaphor of ‘Siamese twin’, the narrator encodes the onus of traumatic experience which is located at the centre of her experience. “A section of my own life, sliced off from me like a Siamese twin, my own flesh cancelled. Lapse, relapse, I have to forget” (57). The psychic experience of pain infiltrates her somatic realm as a memory which was repressed but returns sporadically in the novel during the period of quest for her missing father in the village. In the process of understanding the narrative framework, there are stages related to the understanding of the way in which a story unfolds through language and events. Choice of words by the protagonist of ‘Surfacing’ to express her grief and guilt points towards her actions and course of events. According to Roland Barthes, “the goal is to reconstruct the syntax of human behaviour as exemplified in narrative, to trace the succession of “choices” (Barthes 252-253) which implicitly structures the content and form of a novel. In the beginning of the novel, when the narrator reaches the lake which has been a symbol of repentance and death, she thinks to herself – “but they’ve cheated, we’re here too soon and I feel deprived of something, as though I can’t really get here unless I’ve suffered; as though the first view of the

lake, which we can see now, blue and cool as redemption, should be through tears and a haze of vomit" (Atwood 14). This arrangement of words states the narrator's deliberate wish to suffer, to repent for her past mistakes which signal her "choices" in the next sections of the novel. This sentence makes it evident that she has already started suffering and walking towards a path of painful redemption.

The emotion of guilt and a need for redemption in the narrator start consuming her since the onset of the narrative, in harmony with her quest for her disappeared father. Her idea of redemption sets in from the moment she beholds the lake in her village. Every time she dives in the lake, physical space of the lake drives her mind to the sentiment of redemption. Topography of the lake becomes a symbol of death and the concept of death can be connected to the idea of liberation and redemption. In the last section of the novel, when the narrator succumbs to her guilt and becomes hysterical, she imagines that she is undergoing redemption by detaching herself from her false body in the lake. The topography of the lake becomes a symbol of physical and psychic death for the narrator. In this novel, the lake acts as a liminal space operating as a place of quest for her father and a quest for her redemption. Atwood's symbolic representation of the protagonist's traumatic past and its damaging effects on her through continuous metaphors enriches the aesthetic quotient of the narrative as readers take time to deduce the metaphoric expression of a traumatic mind and overlapping waves of emotions. "From the lake a fish jumps/ An idea of a fish jumps/ A fish jumps, carved wooden fish with dots painted on the sides, no, antlered fish thing drawn in red on cliffstone, protecting stone" (243) gestures towards pauses in her mind and her inability to structure her thoughts in elaborate language. In understanding the politics of narrative structure of 'Surfacing', it is significant to focus on the linguistic dimension which not only shapes the content but also the form of the novel. "To understand a narrative is not only to follow the unfolding of the story but also to

recognize in it a number of "strata," to project the horizontal concatenations of the narrative onto an implicitly vertical axis; to read a narrative (or listen to it) is not only to pass from one word to the next, but also from one level to the next" (Barthes 243). As per the analogy of "horizontal axis" of meaning formation, the substitution of words in succession gives rise to the "vertical axis" which is an amalgamation of events, forming the tapestry of a novel. "Narrative thus appears as a succession of tightly interlocking mediate and immediate elements; dystaxy initiates a "horizontal" reading, while integration superimposes on it a "vertical" reading" (270). "A divorce is like an amputation, you survive but there's less of you" (Atwood 49) can be interpreted as a meaningful sentence structure from the angle of "horizontal reading" and from the angle of "vertical reading", the sentence becomes a code for a probable future action to be performed by the narrator, thereby structuring the course of events in the novel. Atwood represents the narrator's engulfing hysteria through her voice. The narrator compares her laughter with the sound of a mouse or bird about to be killed at the stage of her hysteria. Atwood represents indeterminacy in her voice through dialogic questions due to failure of meaning formation from her own thoughts and actions. She suffers from a gradual loss of identity and loss of communicative capabilities as well as a loss of hunger. The three losses are symptomatic of the hysteria she faces by surrendering to her guilt laden past.

In the first part of the narrative, Atwood shows her practical and cold hearted skill in catching a fish as she takes out a frog and attaches it to the fishing bait. In the second part, David catches a fish but she rejects it as a meal. Rejection of consuming flesh is symbolic to the rejection of her body. In the third part or the final section of the narrative, her complete dissociation from her body began after she imagined herself to be redeemed as she leaves her clothes and comes naked out of the lake. From denying eating fish and processed foods of tin cans, she detached herself from all sorts

of food. She could feel hunger at the onset of her madness but gradually she forbids herself from eating as she forbids herself from clothing. Her eating disorder at the middle of the novel can be perceived as a symptom of her stress resulting from past experiences. Due to her inability to deal with the powerful emotions of pain, she physically secludes herself from Joe, David and Anna. But at the end of the novel, she comes out of her hysteria and illusions as she allows herself to trust Joe who comes searching for her and decides to go with him. "To trust is to let go. I tense forward, towards the demands and questions" (251), speaks of her decision of coming out from the manacles of her past for which she has repented.

Conclusion: Unravelling the symbolic expression of the narrator's traumatic emotions involves an understanding of the politics of narration. Margaret Atwood's expression of the narrator's experience of terrifying emotions through motifs of trauma aesthetically enriches the narration. The oeuvre of trauma narrations is rooted in expressing the impossibility and failure of expression among the victims but symbolic expression of overwhelming trauma emotions develop the aesthetics of narration. Atwood overcomes the tension between narration and failure of narration by giving voice to the protagonist,

enabling her to present her story which can be perceived as a therapeutic healing process from her past.

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Negotiating the Construction of Alienated and Distorted Subjectivities through Traumatic Experiences in the memoirs of Salman Rushdie and Dom Moraes

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Abstract:

*The paper aims to study the role of trauma, death instinct in the construction of autobiographical subjectivities of the Indian English life narrators Dom Moraes and Salman Rushdie. With Freud's theory of death instinct and Cathy Caruth's treatise on trauma as theoretical frames, it shall argue how such factors render the autobiographical self alienated, distorted and fragmented. The memoirs taken for this study are Dom Moraes' *My Son's Father* (1968), *Never at Home* (1992) and Salman Rushdie's *Joseph Anton* (2012). Though not written in the same century, issues of traumatic subjectivity invariably feature through these two memoirs by Indian English authors. While the former encompasses trauma as a result of strained relationship with a parent, the latter is an expression of death wish and trauma owing to a societal scar. Freud in his 1920 essay "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" observes that it is the fixation of the mind to some kind of unpleasant reality that leads to anxiety, fear and death wish. Again, Cathy Caruth in her work *Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1996) argues how a whole new perspective on history and subjectivity is imparted by the experience of trauma. Both Freud and Caruth theorize how a complex, paradoxical incomprehensibility of survival overpowers the traumatic experience. Taking these interpretive*

tools into consideration the paper will make an attempt to identify the role of harmful traumatic repetition in controlling autobiographical narratives of the two writers taken for this study.

Keywords: *autobiographical subjectivity, death instinct, traumatic repetition.*

Introduction and Objectives

Traumatic experiences are often at the heart of life stories told by survivors of events like natural disasters, war or such other kinds of violence. Gadi BenEzer writes in the essay "Trauma Signals in Life Stories", "Life stories include an exposition of the relation between the private and the collective context. They can thus give a better understanding of both the personal trauma, as it is viewed within a social context, and of the social milieu, as reflected in the individual's life." (BenEzer 30) Literature often plays the role of an outlet to traumatic experiences and vindications, autobiographies and memoirs being no exception.

The paper aims to study the role of trauma, death instinct in the construction of autobiographical subjectivities of the Indian English life narrators Dom Moraes and Salman Rushdie. It shall argue how such factors render the autobiographical self alienated, distorted and fragmented. The memoirs taken for this paper are Dom Moraes' *My Son's Father* (1968), *Never at Home* (1992) and Salman Rushdie's *Joseph Anton* (2012). Though not written in the same century,

issues of traumatic subjectivity invariably feature through these two memoirs by Indian English authors. While the former encompasses trauma as a result of the torture of his hysterical and mentally retarded mother, the latter is an expression of death wish and trauma owing to a societal scar.

Theoretical framework

Sigmund Freud introduced the term death instinct in his essay “Beyond the Pleasure Principle” (1920) where he dwells upon how experience of trauma repeats itself knowingly or unknowingly. Freud calls this experience “traumatic neurosis”, an unwished for repetition of trauma as a result of some risk to life. (Freud 18) He observes how a disorder of the mind reflects the inescapable burden of historical events in the psyche. He took up war neuroses in the wake of World War I as the core of his study beyond the pleasure principle. It is the fixation of the mind to some kind of unpleasant reality, Freud observes, that leads to anxiety, fear and fright. Cathy Caruth in her work *Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma, Narrative and History* (1996) theorizes the belated impact of trauma on the human mind with Freud and Paul de Man as her references. She defines trauma as an “overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which response is delayed, uncontrolled and repetitive.” (Caruth 11) She argues how a whole new perspective on history and subjectivity is imparted by the experience of trauma. Both Freud and Caruth theorize how a complex, paradoxical incomprehensibility of survival overpowers the traumatic experience. Taking these theoretical tools into consideration the paper will make an attempt to identify the role of harmful traumatic repetition in controlling autobiographical narratives of the two writers taken for this study.

Interpretive Analysis of the memoirs

Salman Rushdie’s autobiographical subjectivity remains incomplete without taking his death instinct and traumatic experience into consideration. As Cathy Caruth aptly writes, “destructive traumatic repetition plays a major role in the creation of an individual who has survived trauma.” (Rushdie 63) A peculiar and

puzzling experience of survival is what results from the fixation to trauma. A destructive repetition of trauma is seen to rule a person’s life. The out of the blue declaration of death sentence by Ayotallah Khomeini was the event that marked the origin of Rushdie’s trauma. He was accused of being blasphemous and no less than a terrorist. The harassment and embarrassment of fatwa constantly haunted him thereafter making him ashamed even in front of his mother and son. The threatening was restricted not just to Rushdie. Even his wife Clarissa on her fortieth birthday received a threatening phone call on Rushdie’s death. “Hang Satan Rushdy. How easy it was to erase a man’s past and to construct a new version of him, an overwhelming version, against which it seemed impossible to fight” (Rushdie 5), writes the author. His traumatized self reflects Freud’s notion of the incomprehensibility of survival at the heart of human experience. (Caruth 64)

The whole of media, radio, journalists, newspapers amplified the threat to his life in the worst possible way besides posing him as a Satanic writer. “He looked at the journalists looking at him and he wondered if this was how people looked at men being taken to the gallows or the electric chair or the guillotine.” (Rushdie 5) A set of protestors outside the US Cultural Centre in Islamabad carried signs saying “RUSHDIE YOU ARE DEAD”. Pakistanis produced a film where terrorists vowed to kill the author Salman Rushdie. Such acts of forced psychological terrorism came up again and again, shattering his mental balance totally and making life totally incomprehensible for him. The burning of his book in Yorkshire also added to his deep scar. The fear was restricted not just to him but to the entire publishing industry. He now had to confront the threat again and again in different forms of violence.

A complete crisis dawned in the path of his survival. “...the author of *The Satanic Verses* was crouching in shame behind a kitchen worktop to avoid being seen by a sheep farmer.” (Rushdie 151) Crisis arose in his private life as he had to shift to secret locations one after another. Time and again in the memoir Rushdie mentions how he has been living with threat of death

in his mind. Going by Caruth's dictum, the endless repetition started leading Rushdie towards a destruction of his survival. He could not imagine anything beyond this terrible reality. The traumatic neurosis in his subjectivity is greatly instrumental in the construction of his self throughout his memoir. It even led to the hallucination of distorted imaginations in his mind as he recounts: "He saw bodies sprawling on the stairs in the front hall. He saw the brightly lit rag-doll corpses of his son and his first wife drenched in blood. Life was over." (Rushdie 159)

Split personality and self alienation invariably result from Rushdie's incomprehensibility of trauma as the author is seen constantly torn between his identities as Rushdie and Salman. Rushdie writes, "'Salman' might be crushed under the weight of what happened. 'Rushdie' was another matter entirely. . . Rushdie was much hated and little loved. He was an effigy, an absence, something less than human." (Rushdie 251-52) The author could always only visualize a whole image of his self through the reflection in the world, whereas inwardly he experienced multiple fragmented personalities of himself. Following his fatwa, the world perceived a single version of the author as against his internal fissures as a persona. His image was mirrored only as an author who did something wrong. *Joseph Anton* is thus an attempt to identify the rather fragmented versions of Rushdie himself 'Satan Rushdy' was the image mirrored by the extremists about Rushdie.

The fact that *Joseph Anton* is written in third person narrative is imperative of the huge gap between Rushdie as a writer and Rushdie as a victim of fatwa rendered Joseph Anton. The many letters in the book on God, religion etc are, however, authored in first person addressed to the reader making his troubled mind and split personality all the more prominent. He mentions at one place of how he hated the pseudonym Joe. (Rushdie 466) The pseudonym Joseph Anton that he took up signifies only an alienated personality or a fictional entity to demarcate what he actually is not. The fictional name hardly resembled the real Rushdie. In a traumatic, isolated, secret chamber with all the securities, Rushdie felt like a prisoner which he

reinforces all throughout the memoir. He kept on receiving threats against himself and also his young daughter, including letters written in blood. Such acts repetitively reinforced his trauma.

The constant repetition of his trauma triggered his death wish as evident from his own account: "At night he heard *I love you* but the days were shouting *Die*." (Rushdie 264) the claustrophobic and choking existence made him wish to die. To quote him further, "He was prepared to die, if dying became necessary for what Carmen Callil had called 'a bloody book'." (Rushdie 285) A most vivid form of death wish appears when he relates, "His biggest problem, he thought in his most bitter moments, was that he wasn't dead." (Rushdie 415) The recurring trauma of fatwa affected his relationships too in the worst possible way, with a constant lack of stability and security in his bonds with Clarissa, Marriane, Elizabeth and Padmalaxmi. He was scared for both of his sons terrified that their futures could be in utter danger in the absence of freedom and safety. The repetition thus claimed his very survival. Dom Moraes' trauma arose from the mental as well as physical wounds inflicted upon him by his mentally sick mother. The book *My Son's Father*, he writes, was cathartic in letting go his traumatic childhood. "The other reason for this book was that my childhood and adolescence had been very traumatic for me," he wrote in the Forward. His separation from his mother was not only physical but also mental, owing to her hysterical nature. The furious and destructive nature of his mother left imprints of terror in his mind. The worst instance is when his mother once reverted towards him with a kitchen knife and he had to run for his life. This kind of physical torture left serious wounds in his mind. Such horrible encounters with his unstable mother recur time and again in his memoir to the extent that he is made to hit his mother back in the most unwilling state of mind: "Yet vivid in my mind was the moment I had slapped her that afternoon, when above the smeared blood on her face the eyes of a hurt person stared back at me and filled with tears" (Moraes 95) A sense of trauma mixed with guilt keeps haunting his mind as found in his memoir. His subjectivity is thus the

consequence of “the belatedness and incomprehensibility that remain at the heart of this repetitive seeing”. (Caruth 92)

Moraes writes in his second memoir *Never At Home* that his mother was one of the main reasons why he was scared of and he preferred staying away from India. His trauma led to terrible nightmares of his hysterical mother. To quote Moraes, “The grotesque, insane figure that had ridden my nightmares for years. To come back to India and to have, at least occasionally, to confront the reality was a terrifying prospect.” (Moraes 1) The mental suffering even affected his physical condition as is manifested through his constant accounts of nausea on meeting his mother. He relates his visit to his mother after returning from a long stay in England: “My physical nausea at the sight of her, my inability to speak to her, increased my own hatred of myself... I usually left because I wanted to vomit.” (Moraes 2)

The kind of trauma experienced by Moraes was very much physical besides being mental. Such instances are again reinstated in an elaborate manner in the second memoir *Never At Home* where the physical aspect of such violence is more vividly comprehensible. “I carried scars from those years which were not only mental but physical. The back of my right hand still bears cigarette burns inflicted by my mother”, (7) expresses Moraes. His account of trauma is therefore psychosomatic in nature. Repetition and incomprehensibility of trauma occur both in his mind and body. The prospect of going back to India with his wife Judith and son Francis even became something terrifying for him, owing to a recurrence of his traumatic experience and scars, as he relates in the middle of his second memoir, “She had attacked me several times with knives; I had a scar at the back of my hand, where she had stubbed out a cigarette. I remember wild and violent scenes: my mother, disheveled, with bulging eyes and maenad hair; the sound of her screams.” (Moraes 108)

However, he brought his wife and son to visit his mother with all apprehensions, just to find his physical discomforts recurring on his way to Juhu. Moraes’ self and identity often get moulded and controlled by the

physical manifestations of his trauma like nausea and vomiting as perceived from his second memoir *Never At Home*. “What she had done to my childhood was something I tried to forget; but it expressed itself physically.” (Moraes 303) He accused his mother for messing up his childhood as well as adulthood. The impossibility to comprehend life and subjectivity in the normal way gets reflected through Moraes’ undesired physical troubles like that of nausea and a feeling of revulsion. The recurrence of the distorted image of rats that he associates with his mother’s illness is basically a doorway to his distorted memory and experience that inevitably dominated his self construction.

Moraes’ subjectivity is intertwined with a feeling of lack—within himself, and also in his friendships, relationships. “I felt that something was lacking in most of my friendships, because in few of them did I find people with any true awareness of the world...” (Moraes 22) The way he oriented his love relationships also got intertwined with the constant traumatic recollections of his mother. His survival was at stake and an unrealized death drive dominated his thoughts and actions. During his relationship with K, the troubled experiences with his mother figured in between and strained their bond. K’s reactions only reminded of the shock he had encountered from his furious mother: “Her anger made her voice shrill, and mine uncertain. All these brought terrible images to my mind: this naked, hostile emotion to me was associated only with my mother.” (Moraes 189) His unhappy and traumatic childhood thus took a toll upon his future relationships. Similar to Rushdie’s case, a lack of stability is evident in Dom Moraes’ relationships too, as she shifts from K to Judith to Leela Naidu. This lack and unstable nature of his subjectivity was the consequence of his inflicted relation with his mother.

Conclusion

The two memoirs thus function as an outlet to let go off their traumatic experiences. Caruth’s formulation that what follows trauma is not simply an effect of destruction but also an enigma of survival can be negotiated completely in both Rushdie and Moraes

where a helpless incomprehensibility of life becomes prominent as a consequence of trauma. Their selves stand in a paradoxical standpoint between destructiveness and survival as death instinct and trauma causes a distortion of subjectivity. Alienation, split personality and a disruption therefore characterizes their traumatized autobiographical subjectivities.

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The Dislocated Self: Trauma in Wendy Pearlman's *We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled*

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Abstract :

The Syrian civil war and the ensuing crisis is one of the largest humanitarian and geopolitical problems since World War II. Civil wars tear countries apart and the major casualties are the common people. Syria, a country in the Middle East, was being grossly inflicted with the absence of freedom in the political expression, dearth of employment and a widespread corruption in the administrative system under the presidency of Bashar-al-Assad. An uprising of the people in March 2011 against the dictator, inspired by the "Arab Spring" was crushed ruthlessly by the regime and went on to become a civil war creating a multitude of homeless and refugees. Wendy Pearlman's We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled: Voices from Syria (2017) is a collection of first-person testimonies of the war ravaged people of Syria. This paper attempts to analyse the psychological condition and the physical predicament of these refugees compelled to leave their homes and homeland by way of understanding the trauma of the victims of civil wars. The analysis is done within the framework of trauma theory.

Keywords: Syria, civil war, displacement, testimonies, trauma

Introduction

The Syrian civil war is one of the largest humanitarian and geopolitical crises since World War II. The uprising of the people in March 2011 against the dictator, inspired by the "Arab Spring" movement, crushed ruthlessly by the regime, descended to become a civil war and religious fundamentalism further divided and devastated the Syrians causing unfathomable trauma. This paper attempts to read Wendy Pearlman's *We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled: Voices from Syria* (2017), a collection of first-person testimonies, in the framework of trauma theory to reveal the psychological and physical trauma of forcibly displaced humans. Although trauma studies began in the 1860s it gained currency and momentum in the 1990s when critics like Cathy Caruth and others began to study the cultural and psychological effects of trauma.

Narratives of civil wars have mostly overlooked the Syrian crisis. We find in Yassin al-Haj Saleh's *The Impossible Revolution* (2017) a political analysis of the decade long war and its impact on Syria and its people; in Alia Malek's *The Home that was our Country: A Memoir of Syria* (2017), a fictionalised account of the exile of her family and in Ingrid Loland's article "Negotiating paradise lost: Refugee narratives of pre-war Syria – A discursive approach to memory,

metaphors and religious identifications” (2019) the Syrian crisis discussed within the framework of memory, metaphors and sectarian religious identifications. Writers have discussed various aspects of the war but the impact of the psychological trauma faced by the people, which take the reader to the heart of the conflict, in Pearlman’s carefully chosen testimonials is unique. Hence this paper will move away from the medical discourse of trauma and engage in discussing psychological trauma in Pearlman’s testimonials.

Syrian civil war caused the death of half a million people and forced more than four million people to flee the country with minimum possessions. Reviewing Pearlman’s book for the Irish Times on Nov 26, 2018, Riona McCormack says that the executions and arrests of the people were arbitrary; and that the loss of loved ones agonized the people who fled the country (no page). The narratives in the testimonials appear larger than life representing the voices of traumatized people caught in the snare of war. The characters have traveled in dangerous circumstances to seek asylum, and have been living in settlements or refugee camps for years bringing up crucial questions of self, culture and the native land. The feeling of emotional vacuum and alienation from the homeland is internalized primarily because the separation is not voluntary but a forced choice. While circumstances of migration generally encourage endurance by developing the power of social adjustability and cultural adaptability, in the environment of traumatic expulsion from homeland, the lost home always remains firmly installed in the psyche as an anguished disintegration of self.

Trauma and displacement

Raymond Corsini states that trauma is “the result of a painful event, physical or mental, causing immediate damage to the body or shock to the mind” (qtd. in Swart 3: 48). David Spiegel defines trauma and argues that “the mental imprint of … frightening experiences sometimes takes the form of loss of control over parts of one’s mind – identity, memory, and consciousness –

just as physical control is regained”(qtd. in Swart 3: 47). An event when it remains without any complete sustainable solution is classified as traumatic. The real perception of the toxic nature of the event produces anxiety. Intense anxiety causes absolute helplessness and a loss of control leading to trauma.

Monica Lici in her article(2020) investigates the effects of displacement, trauma and lost identity in refugees. She argues that refugee lives are marked by forced migration and the resultant trauma redefines their exterior and internal self. Considering the effect of displacement, M. Fazel and A. Stein propose the usage of a three-phased model to document the refugee migratory experience. The pre-flight phase period refers to the time spent by refugees in their country of origin, prior to fleeing to another region. They are typically entangled in strife zones and are observer to atrocities like mistreatment, viciousness, torment, physical and sexual assaults and the loss of relatives and separations from communities. The Flight Phase alludes to the unknown excursion of dislocation that a refugee experiences in her journey from the nation of origin towards the site of resettlement. Lastly, during the Resettlement phase, the refugee waits and endures stress due to the strenuous procedures of obtaining asylum and protection of an alien land. However palliative the resettlement maybe, it poses new sets of challenges frequently referred to as secondary trauma, whereby refugees have to undergo and withstand the acculturation processes of integration into an alien society, and are expected to adopt cultural norms different to theirs, all the while lamenting the permanent loss of their homeland.

Pearlman’s *We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled* is a powerful document of traumatic experiences based on real interviews of the author with more than 400 displaced Syrians in Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, and the United States, between 2012 and 2017. It records accounts of the Syrian resistance, war, and the crisis of refugees solely through the testimonies of individuals who have lived it. War time dilemma of a loved one lost or missing brings in insecurity, fear and

anxiety and thoughts of death and imprisonment become a foreboding. People are stripped of their agency in camps and prisons and deprived of the right to ask about their family members. Kareem, the narrator in one such testimony, belongs to a generation where dozens of his friends “didn’t know whether their fathers were dead or alive”(12). Incidentally, when the army kidnapped four of Abdul Rahman’s uncles, his father was clueless about the reason of arrest and uncertain about the fate of his brothers and went around asking people and searching for them. In a harrowing depiction of his trauma we read that he even went to the symmetry, where he saw mountains of shoes. “He dug and dug in the hope of finding his brother’s shoes, just so he could have some evidence that they were killed” (9).

Pearlman’s narrative portrays prisons as the most frightening sites of trauma in Syria depicting that human life was inconsequential. People were victimized without valid reasons, trail, lawyers and even without any specific charges of offence but only on the simple basis of suspicion. Prison guards manipulated and coerced Syrians into submission. They extorted money from families and took away all the gifts they had got for the inmate. The condition of hygiene and food were appalling. Tayseer shares his morbid prison memory narrating how difficult it was for him to live without his son and the anxiety of losing family members one after the other without being able to bid farewell to them. Children were tortured inside the prison and families were told simply, “Forget your children. Go home to your wives and make more children. And if you don’t know, bring your wives and we’ll show you how” (62). The narrator tells us that when Abdel Samed’s cousin was released, his body was full of cigarette burns and stab marks and that his neck was broken. His genitals had been cut off. Peace eluded people even when they were released as they were haunted by the memory of torture inside the prison. The “traumatic events often repeated, prolonged and interpersonal in nature, and have been demonstrated to have a deleterious effect on mental health”(ISTSS 3) by the International Society for Traumatic Stress

Studies (ISTSS2017).

The guards remove the clothes of the victims before the interrogation, mock and spit on them and thrash them which is extremely dehumanizing and humiliating leading to trauma and post-traumatic disorder. Anxious prisoners hear the sounds of other prisoners being tortured: “Every time you heard it, you thought, it must be my turn. And all others thought it must be my turn. Everyone was scared. The noise was harder than the torture itself. Sound enters you in a different way. It felt like the sounds themselves were killing you” (Pearlman130). We read that three different bells were used in the prison to indicate three different levels of torture. The ringing of the first bell indicated that the victim be taken to the room with the tire while the second bell was rung to take the victim to the room with the electric cables, and the third and final bell was rung to transfer the victim to the room enacting the most extreme form of torture, a near to death experience. They beat the prisoner twice a day; once in the morning and again in the evening and refused the prisoners permission to use the bathroom “You had until the count of ten to return in and out; if you didn’t finish in time, you got hit” (131). The Syrian regime tortured and killed people, mutilating their bodies beyond recognition. When Abu Firas got the dead body of his brother after 18 days, his family failed to recognize it: “His toenails were ripped out. His bones had been pierced with a drill. There were marks from being beaten and burned. His nose was beaten so severely that it was flat” (127). And three months later they learnt that the dead body they buried belonged to someone else and that his brother was still alive inside the prison. Uncertainty of life and death reinforces trauma.

Kinda, a woman narrator relates terrifying conversations between the officers that she has overheard. They demean women as whores and say, “Were they looking for someone to ride them?”(171). Paul Bloom in *The New Yorker* notes the cruelty of the perpetrators of State sponsored violence, “The inhibitions against murdering fellow human beings are generally so strong that the victims must be deprived

of their human status if systematic killing is to proceed in a smooth and orderly fashion.” The Nazis used bureaucratic euphemisms such as “transfer” and “selection” to sanitize different forms of murder” (*The New Yorker*; 27 Nov. 2017). In a similar fashion the Syrian military regime perpetrated terror and sanitized themselves by dehumanizing their victims.

After each protest, the Syrian government sent dead bodies to every village and each funeral became a terrorizing demonstration. Supply of water, electricity, and all forms of communications were stopped. Children starved to death in front of their parents. The regime took over the main public hospital creating shortage of medicine and bandages so that people died in front of doctors who failed to save them. Granaries were destroyed, cities divided into grids and checkpoints and snipers were positioned at public places to throw bombs at will. Soldiers arrested people from the streets and their homes and raided houses and raped women. People panicked from sound and for them the waiting was harder than the actual attack. Insecurity was rife and people finally decided to leave their country and find asylum elsewhere. In this context Rana’s testimony in the book states that, “We spent eight months living in different places. Sometimes we found places to rent and sometimes we didn’t. It was like a vacation, but with bombing” (176). This provides us an insider’s view of the traumatic predicament of the Syrians. “Packing, running, packing, sometimes running without even packing is their life” (176). The start of a new life abroad was a succession of traumas: the trauma of war followed by the trauma of death-defying journeys and the trauma of disappointment. Most refugees remained overwhelmed by the legal and economic problems of survival. Waiting became perpetual and integral and a definable trait of their life. The refugees fell prey to smugglers and traffickers who cheated people. The smuggled boats sank and many refugees succumbed. People got separated from their families during the journey. Asylum seekers were unwelcome and had to compromise their dignity in alien lands. Nur laments that, “We don’t have problem with death. Our problem is life without dignity. If we’d known what was in store

for us, we never would have come. But we did come, and now we can’t just return. There is no way back” (Pearlman 229). For Hakem, “If I’d known this was life here I would have stayed in Syria and handed myself over to ISIS. It’s better to die once than to die slowly every day” (252). Samar Yazbek ruefully comments, “Even in exile, people today were no longer cut off with such finality from their places of origin” (270) as are the refugees.

Pearlman’s book parades the chroniclers of trauma one after the other to accentuate the actual experience of the Syrians who sought asylum in foreign lands, cut off with finality from their homeland. In Lebanon, Um Khalid found a storage space where her family could live that had no water, no electricity, nothing; there was only just enough space to sleep. Safa too found life in Lebanon pathetic: the neighborhood of shacks, the lack of hygiene, and the germs making life miserable. The metal roof leaked whenever it rained. The heater puffed and filled the house with debris. The tap water was so polluted that one couldn’t even use it to wash vegetables. Children got allergy from the filth. The landlords used to hike rents at will. People spent all their savings fixing up the house which didn’t even belong to them. When Safa repaired the house she rented, the landlord increased the rent and told her, “If you don’t like it, go live on the streets” (216). Compelled to sell all the equipment of her office, Ghassan felt as if she was selling a part of her life. Severed from a dignified past the Syrian refugees had to endure dehumanization and the consequent trauma.

Conclusion

Refugees and asylum seekers experience significant traumatic events which can be related to generalized anxiety, sleeplessness, and nightmares. The victims are likely to exhibit neurological and behavioral dysfunction, including juvenile delinquency and criminal behaviors seen in most cases. They face discrimination in all quarters and live under the most severe traumatic conditions which according to the psychology of trauma is “understood as a displacement of the central axis of Self, in which the ego complex yields its position to

other complexes, with a deep change in the organization and functioning of self"(Luci 260). Pearlman's narrative describes how people and state machinery of the host country complicate the trauma of the destitute Syrians. They were cheated and deprived in all spheres including humanitarian aid. In the hospitals, their visits were registered without providing them with any treatment so that hospitals could charge the fees to the UN. Wendy Pearlman's book is a pointer to the atrocities suffered by people, here Syrians, who have been displaced from their homelands and have been dehumanized in a world posing to be sympathetic to fellow humans. The 'central axis of Self' is dislocated and psychological trauma is passed on to later generations as refugees try to find their bearing in adverse situations.

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Locating Homophobic Violence and Trauma in the Short Film *Touch*

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Abstract :

This paper analyses LGBTQ trauma as reflected in a short film Touch. It locates the spaces where homophobic violence mostly occurs – home, streets and educational institutions. Even after the scraping of Section 377 of the IPC, the LGBTQ community continues to be harassed by families and society, often impatiently with the intention of inculcating in them the virtues of heteronormative sexuality. The streets are not yet safe for homosexuals, and educational institutions have yet to decide the need for imparting education and knowledge on gender. The real presence of law that protects homosexuals from atrocities is invisible. Hence, homophobic hooligans still unleash terror, driving vulnerable people and especially LGBTQ community into trauma, at times towards suicide.

Keywords: violence, trauma, bullying, queer, homosexuality, suicide.

Until recently, homosexuality and all non-normative sexualities were either clubbed into religious blasphemy or clinical anomaly. The theory of sin associated with ‘sexual perversion’ was debunked by the early sexologists who claimed that humans were ideally bisexual. This shifted the perception of homosexuality from sin to an internal compulsion. Thus, there was a shift from viewing sexuality in terms of behaviour to

viewing it as central to our sense of self. Furthermore, the emergence of multiple human sexualities that are varying and diverse has brought the term ‘queer’ into the academic lexicon to acknowledge and describe this multiplicity of sexualities—sexualities that encompass both straight and gay but also the vast gray areas between them as well as the sexualities that might lie beyond them (Benshoff and Griffin 2).

Indian society still view homosexuals and queers as an aberration from normativity, thus labelled them as sinful, perverted and clinically ill. Homophobic discrimination plays out in the forms of bullying and harassment, social excommunication and attaching stigma to homosexuals who come out of their closets. Referring to this, Eckstrand states, “Individuals with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions are more likely to experience bias, harassment, discrimination, and violence compared to heterosexual, cisgender populations. They may also face unique internal challenges associated with the coming out process” (v). In India, along with peer-bullying and other forms of violence, expressions such as ‘gay bashing’ have come to be associated with homophobia. Thus, such forms of violence leave scars, if not outright rejection of life, engendering trauma in them, from which they rarely can come out. Recent development in psychological studies suggests that “traumatic experience can have epigenetic,

neuropsychiatric, and transgenerational effects that can persist over the course of a person's – or their offspring's – lifetime" (Eckstrand v).

Interestingly, cinema is considered to be the best medium to represent the violence inflicted upon sexual minorities and the ensuing trauma that swallows the community. The onscreen can have impact upon reality and reality can be represented onscreen. In the words of Sean Cubbit "If it causes no effect, however ornery or belated, cinema doesn't do anything" (1). Further Cubbit states that cinema like everything else has trouble existing "and the effects it produces—images and sounds, dimensions, durations, sensations, understandings, and thoughts—all share a quizzical and oblique relation to reality" (1). With these in mind, a short film, *Touch* (2019), which was produced by the Artistic Tribe Productions and released in Youtube, is analysed. Further, the paper attempts to locate the nature of homophobic tendencies, the spaces where homophobic violence usually occurs, and the traumatic effects upon them.

Does a film like *Touch* while representing the various homophobic acts and the ensuing trauma create a condition for its alleviation in our society? The researcher tries to establish homophobic spaces which are mostly public and most unlikely for violence, but where LGBTQ people in India are most vulnerable. By drawing from various trauma and queer theories, an analytical method is used in examining the visual narrative of *Touch*.

Written and Directed by Tanmay Jajoria, *Touch* is the story of a queer named Varun. The opening scene reveals an unrecognisable Varun in a room that is similar to a closet and dimly lit. A notebook and a pen lie in front of him. This scene is replicated in the end of the film when he sits again in a room with a notebook and a pen jotting down his last words. Varun alienates himself by repetitively recoiling back to the dimly lit room where he cathartically vents his traumatic stress in the form of writing. Writing about one's trauma is a therapeutic technique as "the act of converting emotions and images into words changes the way the

person organizes and thinks about the trauma" (Smyth 162). Varun dissociates himself from the world in his room and reorganizes his thinking to "construct a coherent narrative of the experience. Once in narrative formation, the event can be summarized, stored, and assimilated more efficiently, thereby reducing the distress associated with the traumatic experience" (Smyth 162). Talking and writing are considered expressive therapeutic unleashing of emotions. For many traumatized and stressed individuals "Writing is a form of therapy" (Greene 262). Varun discharges his traumatic stress by writing down his recollective memory, which entails the everyday bullying he faces as his cope-up mechanism.

Nevertheless, the film, *Touch* tries to make the viewers aware about the reality of intolerance, violence, injustice, etc meted out to queer community even after the repeal of the section 377 of the IPC. It also tries to build a consensus among the spectators on the necessity for affirmative action towards the queer community. Further, *Touch* invariably displays the suffering and frustrations of Varun, while convincingly portraying the homophobic society where the queer community seems to have no place. The visuals of performativity bring out the angst of Varun against the backdrop of a society which is homophobic, thereby curtailing the action of the young man for whom the sky was the limit. Simultaneously, the compelling narrative of the film engages the spectators with the vivacious life of Varun, who only because of his queer subjectivity is subject to violence, humiliation and injustice. The performativity in the film catapult the plight of Varun and his community in the imagination of the viewers. Thus, by displaying a version of reality, the film, *Touch*, manages to create awareness about queer community. Furthermore, the film, by creating tensions between Varun and the society, apparently upholds and communicates the social and cultural norms. It, thus, reinforces the moral fabric of the society, while reconfiguring the ethical functions of individuals.

In the screen space, Varun is harassed on several occasions at different places. The first harassment

takes place in a deserted alley of a neighbourhood where Varun is surrounded, and in blurred scenes he is seen sinking to the ground, while the others hurl their fist on him, his glasses flung away on the road. Acts of violence against queer occur even during the day, in streets that are isolated and not frequented by pedestrians. Interestingly, the background of the scene in the film is blurred to maintain the essentialist position of a moralist society. On the other hand, the camera is focussed on Varun's glasses, which are flung far off. Once the glasses fall off, one can't see clearly; everything becomes blurred. Thus, if one wants to live with dignity and individuality in the society, s/he has to reconfigure her/ his individual ethics in accordance with the social norms. Further, the individual space is usurped by the society as it has moral sanction over and across the social space.

In his book, *Criminal Love?* (2017), R. Raj Rao identifies 'monosexual single spaces,' which are practiced in "monasteries, nunneries, the state-run armed forces, educational institutions, and so on..." (Rao 46) as 'non-heteronormative male single sex spaces.' He further states that the monosexual or non-heteronormative male single-sex spaces in contemporary Indian towns and cities "are the nukkad or street corner, the public urinal, the beer and country liquor bar, the paan-beedi and gutkha stall, the gents' hair cutting saloon, the auto-rickshaw stand, the second-class local train compartment, and so on. In these spaces, mischief rules, the watchword is masti, and the idiom macho" (Rao and Sarma xx-xxi; Rao 46). The 'monosexual space' acts as a site where homophobic violence takes place. For instance, in *Touch*, the homophobic perpetrators victimise and violate Varun in a deserted alley.

These spaces which Rao identified as non-heteronormative spaces are also a special place for gay people as these provides them a space to 'cruise', without having the need to come out of the closet. Himadri Roy identifies parks, public toilets and bus depots as places for 'gay cruise' where many gay and bisexual men frequent with the intention of "deriving sexual pleasure from another person who falls into the

'type' category of fantasy for any gay or bisexual man" (Roy 2014). However such cruises could also take an ugly turn when they are intervened or caught by policemen or moral police. In this context, Rao observes:

In contemporary India, the public face of Section 377 of the IPC has been those very traps, threats, cops, and police spies that Foucault refers to in the context of Europe. When the petition for the revoking or reading down of Section 377 was being heard in the Supreme Court, an observation made by the government of India was that very few actual convictions had taken place under Section 377. (Rao 47)

The reason for this was that money changed hands at the constabulary level, so the matters never reach the Courts (Rao 47). The unprotected minority of queers and gay men are thus targeted in their own cruising spaces. The encroachment upon such non-heteronormative spaces can cause harm to the psyche of a gay, bisexual or a transgender, who has first experienced coming out, and engaging in a cruise or even a closeted gay man, who has first tried to surf the monosexual spaces. Sexual minorities who cover up their sexual identity face a greater risk of exposure which constantly throws them towards stress and anxiety. It is precisely because "The thing that moves us to pride or shame is not the mere mechanical reflection of ourselves, but an imputed sentiment, the imagined effect of this upon another's mind" (Cooley 96). The risk of being discovered in the case of a closeted gay cruiser thus leads to vigilance, suspiciousness, preoccupation, affective shame, guilt, anxiety, depression, social avoidance, ambivalence of identity, negative view of self and diminished self efficacy (Pachankis 330). While cruising (or not cruising) the compromised spaces, the constant need to be hyper-vigilant is fated to affect the gay or queer psychologically.

Another scene in *Touch* shows the culprits wrapping a *dupatta* (scarf) around Varun's head while another

one takes a video (*Touch* 2:55-3:24). The perpetrators try to feminize and shame Varun by wrapping a *dupatta* around his head and forcing him to face a camera. This is an act of homophobic bullying by which Varun's 'manliness' is effaced. It creates a feeling of guilt and shame in him. In this context, Halberstam states, "Shame is multifaceted and can be brought on by psychic traumas as brutal as physical bullying and as seemingly benign as mute indifference" (Halberstam 64). However, homophobic violence takes various forms either to disperse the non-normative individuals from the social space, or to coerce them into conforming social norms. In fact, non-normatives are attributed with deviant status and "cleanly stripped of many of his accustomed affirmations, satisfactions, and defenses, and is subjected to a rather full set of mortifying experiences" (Goffman 365). Interestingly, certain visible traits among trans demonstrate their non-conformity to heteronormativity, but people like Varun, who do not seem to display non-conformist look and behaviour, if found about their closeted nature, are equally targeted. In *Touch*, the unmentioned gender identity of Varun is conceivably one of the production tactics to indicate that he could be any queer who is vulnerable, regardless of his/ her heterosexual clothing and his/ her closeted nature.

In the classroom-bullying scene, the perpetrators take a dig at Varun's bisexuality in the classroom (*Touch* 3:45-4:20). A flash of uneasiness surges over Varun when he is tapped on his shoulder by one of the perpetrators. Suggesting his bisexuality they ask if he is going to spend the evening with a guy and analogically insults him as a doorknob with whom everyone gets a turn (4:15-4:18). Among other things they call him a mamma's boy when it seems he is about to break down. Referring to this, Nadal states that sexually and gender diverse (SGD) youths commonly face micro-aggressions that are "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward members of oppressed groups" (Nadal 23). *Touch* shows that,

apart from the monosexual spaces where homosexuals are targeted, even spaces which are recognised as safe, like educational institutions, are a horror to the LGBTQ youths. The LGBTQ students, according to Ghassemloou "hear more than twenty homophobic remarks a day". He, further, states that "Mistreatment of LGBT youth and a lack of protection are contributing factors to the issue of LGBT teen suicide" (Ghassemloou 2018). The film, *Touch*, makes a defining comment by visually displaying the incident of bullying in the classroom, which can be loosely stated, in the words of Knight thus, "Section 377 is history but young LGBT Indians need concrete policies to protect them from bullying" (Knight 2019).

The effects of the classroom bullying surface when Varun gets away from the perpetrators. It may be attributed to Post-traumatic Stress Disorder which "impair an individual's psychosocial functioning, resulting in mood vacillations, disorganized thinking, dissociation, impaired judgment, hyper-arousal, and the use of maladaptive coping strategies" (Alessi and Martin 3). As such, he is seen standing in the footwalk of the road as vehicles ply along the road. He stands there for a long time oblivious of the vehicles passing by in a state of numbness and helplessness (*Touch* 4:53-5:19). For Varun, the trauma is, in the words of Ruth Cohn "greater than what (he) the organism was designed to withstand and process by its usual means" (Cohn 33). In case of failure to resort to ultimate measures to stay alive, a victim like Varun often takes his own life. In the film, the camera focuses on Varun's body which lies face down at the end while blood oozes out of his head. Apparently, he jumps off a building after leaving a note saying, "I quit." Varun's suicide is the result of a string of traumatic experiences. The response to such traumas is "of necessity an aberration from the norm. To respond in a normative manner would not suffice in a situation that is too extreme" (Cohn 34).

In Indian societies where homosexuality is still non-normative, perpetrators like the ones in *Touch* find uncomfortability in Varun's desire for both "boys and girls". They are troubled by his "rejection of

dichotomous sexual orientation" (Meyer 128). *Touch* typifies a post-Section 377 India, where routine homophobia consisting of behavioural condescension among the greater populace is vented out in the form of micro-aggressions. This intolerance against the odd and the queer that transpires in assorted places, pushes the victim towards a self-annihilative end. *Touch* frames the inconspicuous narrative of the victimized individual who finds his peak of desolation unbearable. Varun is, thus, representative of all other victims, who succumbs to the trauma inflicted by homophobic society. Trauma is essentially an overwhelming experience, which can trigger disorientation, uncomfortability and recollective memory of the horror of the experience. Nevertheless, *Touch* successfully creates an awareness of how trauma experienced by the LGBTQ community can be alleviated through graded education on sex, gender and identity along with lessons on Human Rights.

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Introspecting Trauma, Sexual Violence against Women and Alienation of ‘Self’ as Portrayed in Partition Literature with Special Reference to *Pinjar*

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Abstract:

Amrita Pritam is known for her contribution towards the partition literature. In her writings, the readers can find the living history of the event of partition of India. Through her writings, readers can visualise and realise the actual trauma of the people during the partition of India. In the genre of partition literature, her popular novel Pinjar (The Skeleton) finds a remarkable place. Published in 1950 in Punjabi, it was subsequently translated into English by Khushwant Singh. Through the novel, the novelist shows how the women were subjected to sexual violence, trauma and alienation during the partition of India. This article is an attempt to show how the writer through the lens of Pinjar sheds important lights upon the issues of identity and sexuality of women. It is in this context that the paper would attempt to analyse the writer’s ways of depicting sexual violence against women, their trauma and about how they were alienated from the ‘self’- body as an aftermath of the partition.

Keywords: Partition, Sexual Violence, Women, Trauma, Alienation, Self

The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 was a glorifying event for the nationalists and for the people of the newly demarcated nations. Simultaneously, this event was one of the darkest moments in the history of South-Asia as well as for entire humanity.

Particularly for the women, the partition was an event of unbearable trauma- individually and collectively. Feminist scholars like Urvashi Butalia, Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin through their writings brought the issues of women’s sufferings and their trauma during partition but in the texts of history this chapter is neutral/absent due to the dichotomy of public and private. Since women are presumed as the outsiders of public and politics, consequently they are excluded from the history because history is the manifestation of politics (Dey 106). Thus it is necessary to locate the trauma meted out to the women in the history of partition. We can read or locate women’s trauma in partition engaging with the theoretical ground of ‘trauma’.

The term ‘trauma’ generally refers to repeated infliction of wound over body. But in medical and psychiatric literature, especially in Sigmund Freud’s text, the word ‘trauma’ suggests the infliction of wounds not upon body but in the mind (Caruth 3). In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud argued that the wound of mind is not like the wound of body. While the wound of the body is easily healable, the later is not. The wound of mind appears repeatedly in nightmares and inflicts again the same wound to the survivors as they pass through the original event. Thus the trauma is not located simply in the past event of an individual but it repeats again and again to haunt the survivor later on (Caruth 4). Though Freud concentrated on wound of mind as trauma, but we cannot exclude the wound on the body, while discussing

trauma of individual. Because, if we link trauma with its etymology, we will find that wound of mind is explicitly linked with body and its injuries. Radhika Mohanram, in her article “Trauma, Cultural Memory and the India Partition” argues that bodily injury inaugurates trauma and is linked to the notion of identity within a psychoanalytic framework (Mohanram 926). Thus by linking the nature of the trauma of women in partition with the theoretical ground, it can be said that the trauma experienced by women during the partition are of two folds- bodily wound and wound over the mind. While analysing women’s trauma in this chaotic partition, the author suggests that it is impossible to proceed by relegating bodily wound from the wounds of mind. We need an integrated approach as Radhika Mohanram too suggests. Now the question that comes to the mind is, “How bodily wound leads to the wound of mind?” Here the author argues that it is violence over the women’s body that leads to the process of the wound over their mind i.e. trauma. Trauma theorists such as Cathy Caruth, Judith Lewis Herman suggest that while there is absence of coherency and control over life and body of the victims, trauma occurs (Mohanram 918). As during partition of India and Pakistan, the women had neither control over their lives and bodies, nor they could resist the infliction of violence over them, thus they were made victims of trauma. The nature of violence on women was two folds during the period of partition - the violence inflicted on women by the males of the opposite religious faith and violence inflicted by their own family members (Dey 104). Abduction, rape, mutilation of genitalia, public humiliation, ripping out the wombs, branding sexual organs with religious symbols or tattooing religious symbols on the private part of the women’s body, naked parade on the streets, amputating breasts, burning vaginas –were the sinister violence inflicted on women’s body during the partition of India and Pakistan in general as the form of ‘violence inflicted by the opposite religious group of men’.

Apart from these, in some cases the family heads compelled their women to commit suicide; many girls and women were beheaded by their own men folk

due to the faith on the notion of ‘purity and pollution’. They held the view that the body, mind and family name would be polluted if their women were touched by the males of the opposite religious group. Moreover, it is believed in the patriarchal society that the honour of family and society rests on the hands of their women. So if their women are defiled by men of opposite religion then it would affect their family and social honour. Therefore, the men folk of the society inflicted violence until death over their own women so that they could save their family and social honour. The trauma meted out to the women through the bodily wounds took the form of cultural trauma as Jeffrey C. Allexander argues in his book *Trauma: A Social Theory*. Allexander suggested that when a number of people collectively feel that they are subjected to a horrendous event that leaves inalienable marks upon their consciousness, making their memories forever change their identity fundamentally, cultural trauma occurs (Allexander 6). Thus, from the perspective of Allexander it can be argued that the trauma of the women during the partition is cultural trauma which can be equated to collective trauma. As collective trauma suggests, a blow to the basic framework of social life of the people that damage the bonds shared by individual with other and ruin the sense of community (Erikson 187).

In partition, there was an important cause of women’s trauma, i.e. extension of the motherhood. Women are usually equated to the nation. For instance, India is commonly referred to as “*Bharatmata*” or “Mother India”. Thus, the protection of nation i.e. mother from the external threats and protection of her honour and purity is deemed the prime duty of each and every individual of India. Here the women or the mother has no control over her ‘self’- body and sexuality. It is the men who are the sole protectors of women. Therefore, women were the worst sufferers of trauma during in partition. Moreover, this extended concept of motherhood made the men of both sides keener towards revenge. Hence, violence and counter-violence on women were in extreme level. For example if Hindu women were raped by the Islam men, then it

was perceived that Mother India was raped and to take revenge of polluting the womb of *Bharatmata*, the Islam women were raped by their Hindu male counterparts.

This was the greater scenario of women's trauma (collective or cultural trauma) which was initiated by the infliction of violence over women. The aim of the author here is to bring the collective trauma and to connect it to the individual trauma of women. Further, the individual trauma of the women is not properly documented as the collective trauma. Hence, it is difficult to access to the individual trauma without knowing the greater view of that turbulent period. A few scholars are engaged to penetrate to the individual trauma of the women experienced during partition through oral history but it is not accessible to all. Thus, its contemporary literary works are important source to study individual trauma of the people. The novel *Pinjar* is a contemporary fiction of partition. Therefore, *Pinjar* is worth analysing while studying sexual violence against women and trauma unleashed by partition.

Apart from the medical and psychiatric connotation, Trauma can be described as individual's experience in life. But the nature of experience must be catastrophic so that the individual cannot respond to that immediately. Further such experiences are uncontrolled and their repetitive appearances are like that of hallucinations, as Cathy Caruth argues (Caruth 11). Following the same tract, Kai Erikson argues that trauma means a blow to the psyche that destroys one's capacity of defence against the blow. Further, the victim can't react to the blow effectively (Erikson 187). Thus trauma signifies a state of helplessness, lack of 'the fight-or-flight response', loss of 'volume control', activation of 'on-or-off' switch of the trauma experienced by individual (Bloom 1-14). In the novel *Pinjar*, the female characters are exposed to such experiences in their lives, and the novelist crafts all these quite faithfully.

Pooro, a Hindu girl, from the 'Shahukar' family was abducted by Rashida, a young Islam boy of 'Sheikh'

family to take the family revenge before her already fixed wedding with Ramchan. Though one night Pooro successfully escaped to her natal family, her parents refused to accept her. The next day a 'maulvi' performed Rashida's 'nikah' with Pooro. The name of Pooro was changed into Hamida and it was tattooed in her arm. With the passing of time Pooro became the mother Javed. During partition, their village Sakkar got included in Pakistan and Pooro's entire family remained in India. In case of Pooro, the novelist shows that she had no control over all these circumstances. Though she entered into 'nikah' with Rasida, there was not her consent; rather she was helpless. Her family refusal compelled her to do so and consequently she was alienated from her family and birthplace. The traumatic cause behind her family refusal was in religion and the notion of being polluted. If her family accepted her, they would be killed.

Apart from this, Pooro's new identity i.e. Hamida left her in a trauma of dualism. She had no control over her body when her new name was tattooed. It so happened as directed by Rashida. Her dual identity confused her to determine herself actually "who is she?" Whether a Hindu or Islam. Within herself she was a Hindu but for the society, an Islam. "Hamida by day, Pooro by night" (Pritam 25).

The novel also depicts how motherhood is turned into trauma. When Pooro became the mother of her husband's son, there was absent of her will. Thus, she felt her son as a slimy slung, she would not take care of him if in his veins, he doesn't carry her parents' blood (Pritam 34). Further, when her son tugged her breast, she felt as if he was draining her milk forcefully as his father forced her. She felt that Javed only belonged to her husband as he planted him forcefully inside her and nourished in her womb against her will (Pritam 35).

During partition, many families lost their sons, daughters and other members. In the novel, the novelist describes how Lajo, Pooro's sister-in-law, was dislocated from her family during partition when she was in her maternal home at Rtoval. She was abducted

and confined in her maternal home by a Muslim family as they occupied her home. Lajo was alienated from herself in her own house as she was forced to do every household work. Every time she was in the surveillance of them so that she couldn't escape. She was forced to cohabit with the man of her own house but she refused to do so. She thus compares her own house with a coffin (Pritam 105). Though she was rescued by Pooro, she refused to join with her husband's family. She felt as she became polluted. Hence, no one would welcome her in her husband's house. But Pooro ensured her that she would be accepted by her brother and in-laws in India.

Apart from Pooro's own experience of partition violence and trauma, she heard that Hindu girls were abducted by Muslims and Muslim girls by Hindus. Many girls were forced to get married, some murdered, stripped and paraded naked in the streets (Pritam 85). Hamida was a witness of such violence against women and their trauma-helplessness, lack of 'fight-or-flight response', and loss of 'volume control'. One day she saw how a band of a dozen or more *goondas* pushed a naked young girl before them. The *goondas* beat drums and danced about the naked girl. This trauma shaped a thought in Hamida's mind- "it was a crime to be born a girl" (Pritam 87). This thought reflects her trauma, the situation of helplessly watching the girl in torment. Further, at that evening she rescued a young girl from their sugarcane field. She was forced to spend nine nights with different men. Pritam described that from the refugee camp the Pakistani soldiers picked out women according to their choice, took them with them for the night and returned them to the camp (Pritam 88). In other word, women were forced i.e. raped by the soldiers. In such situation the women had no control over their own bodies and sexuality.

The women who experienced sexual violence and trauma unleashed through the partition, were challenged by self-alienation too. Self alienation or alienation of self can be experienced by self-loathing, internal struggle between vulnerability and control, and love and hatred (Fisher 5). Women were more vulnerable and they had no control over their own bodies, sexuality

and even their identity. The identity, both self and national, was determined by the border and culture. In *Pinjar*, it was seen that Pooro's identity was determined by the Redcliffe line and Muslim culture. Similarly, Lajo, the naked girl and the girl rescued by Pooro-their bodies were controlled by others. Further, Lajo was in the internal conflict between love and hatred. Though her 'self' love pushed her to come out from her containment, she started the felling of self-loathing as she said "I am not good for anyone now. No one will accept me." (Pritam 118). In other word, Lajo had a strong and abominable feeling of being polluted by the Muslim.

In conclusion, it can be said that *Pinjar* gives us a means to have a look at the gory pictures of sexual violence against women, their trauma and their alienation of "self" during partition. Besides, the writer through the lens of *Pinjar* also sheds important lights upon the issues of identity and sexuality of women. The work is the writer's ways of depicting sexual violence against women, their trauma and about how they were alienated from the 'self'- body as an aftermath of the partition.

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Trauma and Survival in *Jangam* by Debendranath Acharya

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Abstract:

Trauma is a mental condition caused by severe shock, especially when the harmful effects last for a long time. Freud's writings in the 1890s are important for tracing how trauma accrued new physical meanings. An important theme in the novel Jangam, which depicts the colossal wrack and tragedy caused by the second World War in South East Asia, is trauma. The Novel Jangam by Debendranath Acharya depicts a story of mass exodus on the backdrop of a war and civil unrest that is unparalleled in its style of narrative and characterization. The usual element of trauma theory is utilized to see the core drive of the novel. The author has sampled sections of the story which tells the human sufferings and trauma on an individual and on a community of people under such a mass exodus. A key element of the trauma theory is the cultural trauma that has a silent footprint on the collective loss of identity which the writer has successively constructed and carried forward in the novel. The paper tries to understand the different aspects of trauma in the novel, their establishment through the events and the extent to which the existing trauma theory complies.

Keywords: Trauma, survival, exodus, literature, journey, history.

Literature creates an impact on the minds of the readers as it gives both textual and imaginary world to dwell upon. When trauma is narrated in literature it verbalizes the incidents and memories which are usually resisted. Stressing the contributions of the trauma writers, Vickroy stated it is "witnessing or testifying for

the history and experience of historically marginalized people" (Schönfelder, 29). In this background the novel *Jangam* (The Movement) it has been extensively explored. The novel *Jangam* is an Assamese novel which is based on the backdrop of Indian Exodus from Burma in 1942. It started from February 1942 and lasted till June and July of 1942. The refugees struggled alone in this land route, there was no help coming either from the Burmese or Indian sides. The air and sea exit routes were controlled by the British and Indian owned steamship company. The trek by land was undertaken by at least 400,000 refugees; the figure might have been 450,000, or more (Tinker, 2). War trauma has been a part of cultural history, psychology and psychoanalytical theory, gender studies, trauma studies and literary theory (Mackinnon, 2). It has been an integral part of medicine and psychiatry, in fact it originally belonged to these two domains. However, over the past decades, trauma became a part of literature and cultural studies. It became an emerging field in humanities. Trauma has crossed boundaries between various fields and discourses, and it has become extremely complex (Schönfelder, 28). Literature can perform therapeutic function for writers as well as readers (Eyerman, 49) and in this context through this novel, writer Debendranath Acharya takes up the fictional depiction about a 'historical exodus (event)' which took place. In any trauma, the 'event' is the central focus whether it is 'psychological trauma' or 'cultural trauma'. This novel takes into a historical event and portrays a trauma a group of people experienced. In this paper I have tried to explore and understand trauma experienced in collective and

individual forms in the context of Ron Eyerman, Kai Erikson and Cathy Caruth. The term ‘trauma theory’ first appeared in Cathy Caruth’s *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History in 1996* (Radstone,10). Ron Eyerman has spoken about cultural trauma experienced by individuals. Whereas Kai Erikson has spoken about trauma and how it disrupted and damaged a community at the same time bringing the community together. He talks about a collective trauma from sociological as well as historical perspectives.

There are many novels which have depicted war trauma of both the World Wars. Some of them are based on true stories and some fictional. They have talked about love, loss, devastation and horror of war and the after effects experienced by the survivors which can be termed as post-traumatic stress disorder. The novel *Jangam* is explored in the context of a trauma text through the themes and narratives with the help of the work of Caruth, Erikson and Eyerman.

In *Jangam*, Acharya had spoken of a group of people, keeping the story simply revolving around the long march carried out by Ramgobinda, a peasant, his wife Lachmi heavy with their second child, their first born Thanu and Ramgobinda’s mother along with few more characters. The novel eventually gives a picture of an entire group of people who took this journey from Burma to India without any help from any of these two countries. There were many Indians who went to Burma with their free will and many were taken by the Britishers as contractual cheap labourers. Ramgobinda’s father migrated to Burma like many other Indians for a better future to get away from his poverty. Besides the labourers there were *chetiers* from India who started business of moneylending and they were despised by the Burmese. The journey of this group of people started from ‘Manku’ a small village situated near Mandalay. Somehow these Indian origin population represented the colonial British hegemony in the eyes of the Burmese people. This group of people decided to take this challenging journey to save themselves from the Japanese invasion and

growing dislike and unwanted feeling from the Burmese community. The novel very subtly shows that Indians were not wanted by the angry Burmese, as they viewed them as a replica of Britishers who were there to exploit them. This narration of exodus of the group in the novel can be termed as cultural trauma which is related to collective identity consisting religious and national identity as discussed by Ron Eyerman. According to Neil Smelser (2004) cultural traumas are made not born, and the hatred the Indian origin Burmese people felt can be experienced in the novel in instances like when Nungnao a Burmese youth involved in freedom fighter group of Burma was killed as for his act he showered onto Ramgobinda and his group members to cross Irrawaddy River so that they could reach Hukong valley. Cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people who have achieved some degree of cohesion (Eyerman, 160). This cultural trauma can be experienced in the novel where the Indian origin Burmese were living like a family with the people of Burma. However, with Japanese invasion and the hostility of the Burmese people towards Indians made Ramgobinda question his own identity and existence when he was about to become a refugee. The shock and sadness Ramgobinda felt looking at his home in ‘Manku’ one can feel the crisis of identity and meaning of life as talked by Ron Eyerman. In the novel, Ramgobinda questions one of his fellow Burmese “*are you asking us to run away, where should we go? We are the citizens of Burma, we were born here, we have our property here the way you people have. Is there no one to make the rebellious Burmese understand that we are from here?*” (Acharya, 25). Cultural trauma questions and shakes a collective identity and this can be seen in Ramgobinda and his fellow Indians as his family prepares to leave their home with barely enough food for the long journey. This group of people were going to a country which would be alien to them. For Ramgobinda, Burma was his country not India, losing his home in *Manku* was the first straw of trauma for him and his fellow group members.

The journey they carried out was full of sufferings and loss as they had to take the jungle and mountain route infested with ferocious animals, insects, and ravines to be safe from the Japanese and looters. They simply kept on walking and during that Ramgobinda lost his mother, his wife went into labour, gave birth to a child, and had to be separated from the rest of the group and her health deteriorated. He was about to lose Thanu, who was half dead due to lack of food and infectious fever. In the works of Caruth, trauma has been defined as an experience so intensely painful that the mind is unable to process it normally. In the immediate aftermath, the victim may totally forget the event. And if memories of the trauma return, they are often nonverbal, and the victim may be unable to describe them with words. Caruth claims that trauma is amnesic and unspeakable. This was experienced by Ramgobinda, as he felt a sense of grief and guilt of not being able to give a proper cremation to his mother after her untimely death. In fact, he could not even look after 'Thanu', his first child who was suffering from high fever as he was too numb with pain of his mother's loss. It was Ma-Pu an Anglo Burmese girl and Father Berry, a missionary who took care of Thanu and managed to bring him back to life. These two people joined the group with a third character on the way to Hukong valley and played a pivotal role in the narratives. Their companionship on the journey was a testimony of Kai Erickson's claim that "otherwise unconnected individuals who share a traumatic experience can seek one another out and develop a form of communalism on that". The novel beautifully depicts this shared communalism till the end. Cathy Caruth also talks about 'shattering of prior forms' and 'psychic numbing' which can be seen in *Jangam* when Ramgobinda could not take care of Thanu and at last he lost his mental balance as he could not find his wife and the newborn child once they reached Nampong. It happened with Lachmi too, his wife who could not remember or recognise anything when she was found by Father Berry. Ramgobinda kept on moving with his ailing son along with the group but he could not take care of Thanu and felt miserable when he saw Ma-Pu

nursing him with the help of Father Berry due to the shock and prolonged exposure to the hostile situation.

Here I would like to quote Kai Erikson who spoke of trauma as

"(...) trauma can result from a constellation of life's experiences as well as from a discrete event—from a prolonged exposure to danger as well as from a sudden flash of terror, from a continuing pattern of abuse as well as from a single assault, from a period of attenuation and wearing away as well as from a moment of shock."

This can be found throughout the narratives from the beginning to the end. Erikson also spoke of spiritual kinship, a sense of recognition, even when feelings of affection are deadened and the ability to care numbed. This is seen in the novel when Father Berry begged food for Thanu by saying "*we just need a morsel of rice to feed this dying child*" again without luck as none of the group members offered except Ma-Pu, who offered few slices of stale bread she carried in her pouch. Ma-Pu was attacked by Harisaran, one of the group members for the bread but he was overpowered, and slices of bread were saved by Chinti, a peasant youth in the group (Acharya, 144. 145). The group members could not feel anything, even for the child who was suffering from high fever. Except few characters in the narratives most of them were numbed with trauma as on their way they saw death and devastation from a close quarter. There were many dead bodies lying around, some of them were with expensive cloths, jade stones, bags full of money, and at the same time poor people's bodies were there too with their ragged cloths and little belongings. None of the refugees even casually looked at those expensive things lying there as they kept walking to their destination.

Conclusion:

The novel has given a fictional account of a historical event which happened in 1942. Trauma is the ubiquitous part of *Jangam*. The trauma experienced by this group of people was collective as well as individual. The narrative strategy of silence concerning the end of

Ramgobinda in novel leaves the readers to imagine what could or might have happened after he lost his mental balance. Both Ramgobinda and Lachmi survive the journey with pain and loss. *Jangam* talks about trauma and enigma of survival (Caruth, 24). As the title of the novel suggests the lust for life continues however traumatic the experience might be. The survival instinct does not leave a man even when he faces devastation. It is the journey that matters. Man's determination will never accept defeat. Amid trauma also there is a will to live. The presence of Thanu's pet cat in the most unexpected places during the journey in the novel is the metaphorical representation of the human hope one can experience in the novel. Acharya narrates a tale of people who belonged to nowhere, unwanted and their lone journey against all odds and surviving with a cost of trauma which was only experienced and endured by them.

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Violence and the Floating Self: A Critical Study of *A Time of Madness: A Memoir of Partition*

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Na main arabinalahori
Na main Hindi shehar Nagaori
Na hindunaturkpushauri
Na main rahndavich Nadaun
Maethonhorna koi siyaana
Bulleyakijaana main kaun
Bulleya!oohkhaddahaikaun
Bulleyakijana main kaun (Shah sufipoetry.
wordpress.com)
(Not an Arab, nor Lahori
Neither Hindi, nor cosmopolitan
Hindu, Turkish, nor Peshawari
Nor do I live in Nadaun
I am the wisest of them all
Bulleya! To me, I am unknown
Bulleya! Do I stand alone?
Bulleya! To me, I am unknown)

When Bulle Shah wrote this poem, the words came out with an understanding that to completely know oneself is an impossible task. This understanding wherein he goes onto to describe the various parameters that human beings usually use or depend upon, to define themselves, are nothing but broken pieces of self which can only define a part and not the

whole. The self, he realised, breaks into fragments because of the violence that is wreaked upon, by the society and sometimes the self; thereby making it impossible to hold on to the totality of the self. However, these fragments, which are all complex use simple rhetoric to unfold them. How violence leads to this fragmentation and how these fragments entangle with each other will be looked at in the paper.

Benedict Anderson calls the nation as an imagined community wherein, despite the members not knowing all the members of the community, they all have an idea of how the members are to be (3). This idea becomes problematic when all of a sudden a line is traced on a piece of paper dividing the community into two with the members given a different parameter as to how the new members of the two pieces are to be. People who had been up until now living together as one unit, assuming commonalities between each other are suddenly given different identities and are ordered to assume differences instead between each other. How this simple tracing of a line on a piece of paper created violence, which resulted in the suffering of millions, is what Salman Rashid writes about in his memoir, *A Time of Madness: A Memoir of Partition*.

He begins the memoir by writing that he was fifty-six years old when he first headed home. Though born in a family, which migrated, to Pakistan during the Partition, yet he always identified himself as an Indian. For him, the nation is the land, where his ancestors

chose to live and were not forced to live because of the circumstances. It is a place both geographically and metaphorically located in the memories of pain and loss as suffered by his family. He is unable to adhere to the identity as given forth by the State he was born in, the one where he is expected to hate the enemy, which he has grown to locate, to identify as his home, and not the enemy. It becomes problematic for him when his idea of his identity gets questioned and rejected, thereby losing it in the subjectivity of others. The ‘thrownness’ -in Heideggerian sense of the word of Rashid’s being, lost its meaning the moment his feet touched the land in India. All the conditioning regarding his self and being, which gave meaning to his identity, became conflicted when he begins to identify with the ‘enemy’. This struggle of identifying himself through emotional and historic space is a struggle not just experienced by him but by million other Rashids whose family were forced to leave their homes and through it themselves behind. When talking about the history of the geographical space of Pakistan, he says, “If I am anything, I, a child of MahaSapta Sindhu, am the truest Hindu” and he explains that it wasn’t until the middle ages that ‘Hindu’ came to be associated with the religion(Rashid, 5). For him, it still means the area of Sindhu River. Rashid in his quest for finding an identity for himself comes across as an example of the Heideggerian*Dasian*. His potentiality –for being– comes from his engagement of the past that exists as not merely as what was but also in the possibility of having been, with his present (Heidegger 63). His present, which is defined as a Pakistani, also sets course for his future as a being who understands the pain and struggle to exist for those who witnessed the trauma of Partition. This can only happen since his present self, interacts continuously with his past and merely his lived past, but the possibilities of what has been of the collective past of his ancestors too. It thus becomes important to understand what it means for him to be an Indian, living outside of India in Pakistan. People always associate themselves from the place they call home, and therefore identifying himself as an Indian is his attempt, at claiming the legacy of his ancestors

through the land they called home. Rashid’s father can be seen as an entry point to understand the violence behind the loss of home, whose wounds never healed. While describing his father, the author writes that his father never built a single house in his entire life. To lose a house wherein one sees a thousand dreams and hopes to achieve those aspirations that he had since childhood, broke the carefree, boisterous man to such an extent that he never again dared to build another house in fear of losing more. When asked about it he would always say that fools build houses and wise live in them.

The father, throughout the memoir exists not as one coherent self but as somebody caught up between the two selves- pre partition and post partition. The Chicago School of Symbolic Interactionism argued that the identity is a result of the nominal interaction of the self with the society at large (Cote and Levine, 50). They further argue that through the interaction with the society human beings attach meaning to these interactions and this is later gives meaning to their own identity i.e human beings infer their own identity through their interaction with the outside world and thereby giving meaning (symbols) to these interactions. When seen through this lens, the identity of the father becomes flawed because of Partition and its resulting trauma. Due to the Partition, people like Rashid’s father, lost meaning they attached to various interactions with society at large –which we may call the various parameters they used to define their identity such as geographical location, homeland, etc- thereby losing the grip over their identity. The man who lost everything and began anew had to take up the role of the omerta of the house, one who never laughed or cried, one who always remained stoic. This happened with not just the father but also the uncle of the author. Theirs is a family, which never talked about what happened during that fateful summer and to what extent did they lose. This attempt to bury the memory was the only way the family could survive and move on in a land that never was really theirs. This silence that was maintained by them was not only for the younger generation of the family, to spare the children of the

horrors seen by the elders, but at the same time it was also a way to spare themselves of re-living those horrors. It was only when Rashid's aunt, Zubeda was murdered by her own servant that his uncle, fondly called Chan spoke about the past “we lost two sisters in Jalandhar during the partition riots, and she who made it through virtually from under the swords of rioters got to Pakistan only to be murdered in her own home by her servant” (45). The family lost the certainty of their lives, their selves, when they first migrated to Pakistan and then again when Zubeda was murdered. Their selves like broken pieces of mirror, showed only fragments of what was. The assurance that the land they own, the house they own is what defines people and that these certainties will continue to provide meaning in their lives; was taken away by the ‘Other’, the State which until the Partition, did not hold much meaning in their lives. After the sacrifice of the blood of their loved ones, their own flesh and blood, those, who were left behind were again given hope by time, that somehow things could again get better, their lives could move on. However, just like the last time, these hopes were once again dashed, forcing Chan to break his silence over the tragedy. Thus begins the cycle of trying to find the anchor to root oneself, all over again.

Through the journey that he takes, Rashid tries to bring to life his grandfather and his family home, who until now existed only through a sepia photograph. The unified self that he always identified his grandfather with slowly starts to crumple as the journey moves on. Rashid discovers that how the atmosphere of hatred had affected his grandfather who was always known as a just man. He is unable to comprehend at first how his grandfather who is known to everybody as a man who will take the utmost care of his patients, irrespective of their religion, would ask his friend to not wake him up from his afternoon sleep to tend to a Sikh man or how a man who abhorred the taste of cow meat decides to sacrifice a cow publically for Eid. Only as his journey advances and he hears stories from people who witnessed the carnage, does he come to his own realisation as to how the normative

understanding of identity and its associations change during time of crisis. Identity has always been defined in contrast to the other, which makes it uncertain and unstable. Just as soon one idea of a certain aspect of identity is thought to be true, crisis arises and changes the understanding just the same. This is the reason that while neighbours were killing neighbours during the Partition riots, there were people who risked their own lives for the sake of the others and perpetrators themselves stood silent and refused to harm anyone simply because the victims pleaded for mercy.

Martin Heidegger in his work, *Being and Time* talks about the experiences of human self that are unique to them. This experiential being whom he calls, *Dasein* is crucial to understand the concept of self. *Dasein*, the ontological being is always pre-subjective. It exists before the ‘inauthentic’ self that we encounter in our lives daily (41). For him, our endeavour should be to transcend from the ‘inauthentic’ self -which is in simpler terms existing without realising about the existence of a nobler self, the real self- to the ‘authentic’ self (53). However, the temporality of *Dasein* that Heidegger insists upon, lost in case of various characters of the memoir. The unity between the past, present and the future on which rests the harmonious existence of the temporality is broken the moment, the past, or the ‘existence’ of various characters of the memoir clashes with the present, the ‘thrownness’, thereby resulting in the incoherent encounter with each other.

Through the lives of various people in the memoir, one sees a struggle between the multiple selves of their lives, which though arose during times of crisis, now constantly entangle and detangle with each other. The Father, who though maintains a stoic personality, has never been seen shedding tears, even when his family members were butchered; but tears his eyes remembering how his father used to eat boiled potatoes.

From the moment human beings develop some understanding of the self, do they struggle to transcend the ‘I’ness of the I, however this is made impossible because this stability is yearned for in a specific time-

space curvature, which is unfortunately not in one's control. Thus, Partition trauma changed the understanding of self, because the factors affecting it were not in the control of the victims. What they did have in their control was their silence, which spoke volumes.

A Time of Madness: A Memoir of Partition is not only a memoir of broken selves, but also a metaphorical journey that takes place alongside the physical journey of the author. This is a journey to discover the past and through that discovery, re-discovering, re-defining his own self and trying to make some semblance of his existence. From the moment Rashid started his journey from the Indian High Commission in Pakistan, to finally going and seeing the village of his ancestors, seeing his house, where he could have been born and lived, he is faced with not only the past but alongside the past an understanding of the present as well. When he was told by the commissioner at the embassy to take the application for a visa back, he is as displaced as his ancestors were. His identity being defined as somebody, whom he does not relate to and being denied a chance to go and be at one with his homeland, he relives the struggle of his father at the time of Partition. This journey not only unites Rashid with his past but also affects his understanding of his own self. Therefore, when he meets the son of the man who led the mob which killed his grandfather and other relatives, he can be nothing but sympathetic to the misery of the son. The idea of revenge or anger does not even arise in his mind because he realised just as he was carrying the albatross of the mystery of his family history, Mohinder Singh, was carrying another albatross around his neck. At the end of his journey, he becomes at one with the collective pain and suffering and realises the only way to move forward and find the stability that he had been looking for is to forgive. Because, he finds

the 'I'ness of his I in the 'We' of the partition trauma, was he able to cross the metaphorical 'Iron Curtain' of anger, revenge and stand besides other victims.

At the end, one can only hope the way Rashid does, to find the anchor or the certainty of being in the collective and not in the self. It is only through the realisation of the suffering and the pain felt by the others that one can absolve him/herself of the pain and find happiness. Ultimately, when Bulle Shah realised that the being is much more complex and layered than the shallow masks of caste and creed did he truly find himself and therefore 'Maethnsayanahorkon?' (Who is wiser than I?).

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Political Trauma among Common People Reflected in Selected Stories of Temsula Ao

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Abstract:

This paper tries to explore the pattern of political trauma inflicted upon common people during Naga insurgency and the situation which brought fragility to socio-political life of the people. Nagas of Northeast were the first to oppose the concept “idea of India”. On the eve of 15th August 1947, Naga extremist leader Angami Zapu Phizo declared independence from Indian Union. The conflict between India government and Naga extremist under the leadership of Angami Zapu Phizo began. In this juncture of time, the political history of Nagaland took a new turn. Though the bullets riddled history of Nagaland has not attained much importance in political writing and in journalistic discourse, yet it got reflected largely in literary exercise of the land. For the preparation of this paper, a methodological study of the secondary sources was made and these secondary sources were found in forms of books and journals. Among these, the writings of Temsula Ao and of some other eminent writers of Northeast and some published journals are mention worthy. The methodological study of all these secondary sources gives an insight of the happening of the then Naga society. Specially, the stories of Temsula Ao record the traumatic political experience of common people those who lived in the midst of conflict. These are terror stories, an untold history of Naga people

for which the land cried over and over again. Though the sub-nationalistic fervor was common in Naga psyche yet the stories echoes neither justification nor condemnation. All the section of the society irrespective of men and women, young and old were the victim of the political violence and they lived a chaotic phase of their life under this intense trauma. The ten stories of Temsula Ao’s short story collection entitled “These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone” aptly depict the plight of common people who lived under chaotic socio-political environment during conflict. Three out of ten stories namely ‘The Jungle Major’, ‘The Last Song’ and ‘An Old Man Remembers’ are selected to focus the political trauma which is exposed in these terror tales.

Keywords: political trauma, conflict, juncture, fragility.

Introduction: Northeast India has witnessed numerous socio-political issues in recent times, where insurgency, problem of illegal migration, ethnic conflicts and natural calamities such as flood, draught are very common. Insurgency issue has dominated the political history of this land to a large extent. Massive human suffering during insurgency has featured in various literary works of this region. Tillottoma Misra in her “Introduction to anthologies on Northeast Indian Writing” writes “Violence features as a recurrent theme because the story of violence seems to be never

ending one in this region and yet people have not learned to live with it.....writers across the states of Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura are deeply concerned with about the brutalization of the societies by the daily experience of human right violation and the maiming of the psyche of a whole people by the trauma caused by violence.” (Misra: xix). In the recent frontier literature of Northeast; the works of Temsula Ao echoes socio-political upheaval of Nagaland, Naga separatist movement has largely found to be featured in her stories. Her short story collection “These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone” consist of ten stories; the genesis of all these stories is the historic Naga movement which was in its zenith during 1950s and 1960s. A study of these terror stories steers the attention of readers towards Naga Insurgency and unfold the inhuman act and brutality that scattered the entire socio-political order of the land for which common people were exposed to political trauma. In the prelude of her short story collection, Temsula Ao has discarded the historical facts of the stories “These stories however, are not about ‘historical facts’; nor are they about condemnation, justice or justification of the events which raged through the land like a wildfire half a century ago. On the contrary, what the stories are trying to say is that in such conflicts, there are no winners, only victims and the results can be measured only in human terms. For the victims the trauma goes beyond the realm of just the physical maiming and loss of life—their very humanity is assaulted and violated, and the onslaught leaves the survivors scarred both in mind and soul”. (Ao: ix-x). Before going through the short stories and the political trauma that were exposed to its characters, it will be worthwhile to have a look at the Naga Insurgency that the land experienced during recent times.

Naga Insurgency: Nagaland came under British annexation in 1886. Nagas were independent tribe of Northeast India which had their rich tradition, culture, customs and rituals. During World War-I, Naga youths

were employed by British to fight for them; thus a section of young generation of Nagaland practically came to the contact of western philosophy of life. When this employed generation was equipped with new western ideas and philosophy and came back to their native land after their retirement, they formed an organization in 1918 and named it as Naga Club. This Naga Club is the first civil organization of Nagaland which did a lot to create political consciousness among the tribal people. Under the supervision of the Naga Club, the people of Nagaland formed their own political identity. Looking at their political consciousness and integrity, the Government of India Act of 1935 was implemented in the Naga Hills, which demarcated Nagaland as “excluded area”, this Act allowed the Nagas to continue their traditional government with a little interference of British rule. Naga National Council (NNC) was formed under the leadership of Angami Zapu Phizo. On 15th August 1947, Nagaland became a part of Indian Union along with the other parts of the country. Representing Naga people, Phizo met then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and demanded for sovereign Nagaland. The Prime Minister instantly rejected the demand of sovereign Nagaland and the negotiation between Phizo and Nehru nipped at the bud. Phizo returned from Delhi after this unsuccessful negotiation and mobilized people against the government. As a part of their protest, Nagaland boycotted the 1st general election of India in 1952. Naga Federal Government (NFG) was formed in 1954 which was coupled with Naga Federal Army consisting of a large number of armed guerillas outfit. “The wave of dissidence and open rebellion was heady wine for many of them and they abandoned family, school careers and even permanent jobs to join the band of nationalists to liberate the homeland from forces, which they believed, were inimical to their aspirations to be counted among the free nations of the world. It was however not only the people from the urban areas who joined these forces. Through a method not dissimilar to

‘conscription’ based on clans, many rural adults had to abandon family and fieldwork and were inducted into the ‘underground’ army of freedom fighters.” (Ao:10). Government of India deployed arm forces to douse the flame of dissidence from the mind of the people. Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) was deployed in Nagaland in 1958. AFSPA provided special power to the armed forces to fight against the underground outfit. It was unfortunate enough that armed forces took undue advantage of this special power and restored physical atrocities, mental torture, rape and even murder. Many cases of human rights violation came to light and this war like situation which created trauma the mind of common people. Temsula Ao records this untold history of pain and suffering of Naga people which prevailed during the time of conflict, most of the characters of her stories are the victims of this political conflict. People those who survived in this crucial juncture of time had to live their lives under intense traumatic political situation.

Trauma during Insurgency: Khatila, the woman character of the first story ‘The Jungle Major’ of the short story collection “These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone” was mentally assaulted by a captain of Indian army because her husband joined underground Naga outfit. Paying a lascivious look at her young beautiful body, the captain said that she would be punished in a very special way if she would not disclose her husband’s hideout. Punishment against women in conflict zone was always found to be in the form of sexual harassment where rape was the most serious crime against the women folk. Young beautiful Khatila was the object of lascivious look of the captain, who was in search of an opportunity to fulfill his sexual desire. She was mentally disturbed in this traumatic situation which affected her daily life a lot. Apenyo and Libeni are the two tragic characters of the terror tale ‘The Last Song’. Brutality of Indian army has exposed in a large extent in this story. The pathetic plight of the two women characters of this story was

enough to hurt entire Naga psyche and create a political trauma among the tribal people those who lived during that period. Apenyo, the young beautiful girl of eighteen was raped in a sequence by Indian army.” The young Captain was raping Apenyo while a few other soldiers were watching the act and seemed to be waiting for their turn” (Ao:28). When Libeni made a futile attempt to rescue her daughter from the clutches of brutality, she too was raped in a violent manner. Rape as a weapon of dominance is found to be used in various conflict zones of the world. During World War-II, Soviet army raped German women indiscriminately in a sequence. In Nagaland too women like Apenyo and Libeni were raped indiscriminately which created trauma in the mind of women folk. There may be numerous reasons behind this brutal act; among which the prime is either to challenge the existence of the underground force or to take revenge upon the people those who disobeyed them. “One reason often advanced for sexual violence based on increased wartime incentives that does account for targeting of enemy civilians is that of revenge. During war, combatants target enemy civilians with violence in revenge for the violence suffered by themselves, their family, or community members. However, why revenge takes the form of sexual violence rather than other violence should also be addressed. Sexual violence is sometimes said to occur in retaliation for sexual violence previously suffered (or rumored to suffer) by co-ethnics” (Wood: 325). Whatever may be the reason behind, but the gravity of this obnoxious act signalize the increase rate of wartime violence meted upon womenfolk, for which they had to live under a traumatic situation. Imlikokba and Sashi the two school going boys of the story “The Old Man Remembers” lost their childhood happiness at the very early age and they had to live under intense traumatic political situation. “We, too, were young and carefree like you once, but all of a sudden our youth was snatched away from us, and instead of school books

we were carrying guns and other weapons of destruction and living in the jungle like wild creatures” (Ao:98). Old Sashi unfolded the untold story to his grandson Moalmba, he explains how violent socio-political condition compelled them to be adult without enjoying their childhood. Horror, bloodshed, murder, violence became the part of their everyday life, inhuman torture of Indian army against their clansman made them revengeful. During their schooldays, Sashi and his friend Imlikokba became the witness of heinous torture inflicted upon the people of their village. The most horrible sight which created post traumatic conflict in their psyche was that, one day when Sashi and Imlikokba were in school a village sentry was running towards them, shouting at the top of his voice, the sentry asked them to run to the village to save their lives. The Indian army caught the village sentry; beat him mercilessly in front of the crowd. No one from the crowd dared to come forward to rescue the helpless sentry, little Sashi and Imlikokba were shocked at the inhuman treatment inflicted upon the poor man. The incident was even more painful for Imlikokba because the man who was on village sentry duty was none other than his father. Situation compelled both the school going young boys to take arms and ammunition instead of books.

A close reading of the three stories shows how people in the terror land had to live during the war like situation. Brutality in war zone appeared to be a global phenomenon irrespective of time, place and circumstances, where molestation, rape, physical and mental torture were very common. Besides Nagaland, such type of brutality of Indian army was also seen in some other terror zones of Northeast region where the places like Assam and Manipur can be counted in the list. Common people were threatened and a sense of fear psychosis was created in their minds. In this regard, Tillottoma Misra has rightly mentioned that violence appeared here as never ending phenomenon. Though such brutal act created a sense of political

trauma among common people, yet such nefarious activities could not douse the quench of freedom from the mind of most of the indigenous people.

Conclusion: Trauma occurs when a person or group of person of a society is overwhelmed by situation and responds with intense fear and horrors caused by helplessness. In Nagaland too, people became helpless during the then prevailing situation, the wave of political trauma affected everyone’s life and psyche. Young Khatila lost the rhythm of her life, she was neither involved nor aware of the rebellious activities of her husband, yet the wave of political trauma affected her a lot. In such conflict zone, women easily became the victim of violence because the enemy targets this weaker section of the society and inflict physical and mental torture upon them, the story of Apenyo and Libeni bears true testimony of it. It is a war rape narrative where rape is used to insult and dehumanize the existence of the opponents and create a political trauma among the common people. This story is akin to the novel “Two Women” originally titled *La Ciociara* of Alberto Moravia’s where Moroccan soldiers raped both mother and daughter in a church and God remained just as passive witness. The unstable political situation of Nagaland snatched away the youthful dreams from the young generation, where Imlikokba and Sashi are mere representative. The sight of his father’s pain and suffering and the battered body made Imlikokba hysterical. Intense mental torture compelled him to be revengeful. Both Imlikokba and Sashi discarded simple tribal life style and became loyal to the underground outfit. It is observed that children who often witness conflict, violence and war became the victim of trauma, likewise the duo witnessed community violence and developed post traumatic stress and became rebellious. Through her short sorties, Temsula Ao has expressed common people’s narrative which is often suppressed by the meta-narrative of conflict. Both Internal as well as external conflict are predominant in the conflict zone, where

the former can be measured in terms of human suffering which was caused by political instability and all pervasive internal traum

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Void, Alienation and Bereavement: Traces of Traumatic Experiences in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*

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Abstract:

*Human life is an incomprehensible phenomenon. Beneath the blissful appearance of harmonious human subsistence, there lurks the unremitting traumatic veracity of inescapable suffering, pain, violence, expulsion, terror, loss, misfortune, dishonour, oppression and mortality. Hopelessness, anguish and dejection have become the most illustrative experiences of modern man in contemporary era. Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* (1957) brings to light this trauma of destabilized human existence which remains inhibited and veiled under the false pretensions of society and its norms. The present paper studies the unprecedented dynamics of shattering traumatic experience of absence of the human other in Beckett's *Endgame*. The four characters of the play, Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell put up with their deformed bodies and mental agonies. They witness each other struggling on their own. Beckett shows how the trauma repercussions originate in their bodies, haunt through memory and pass to a stage where there remains no longing to live. The most traumatic experience is the absence of the human other in the drama called 'Life.' Becket conveys that there is no dissimilarity between 'being present' and 'being mute witness' because in both conditions it is the absence of the human other. In *Endgame*, Beckett's artistic vision gives a compelling view of*

futility of human life and the inevitable frustration inherent to it. This analysis of traumatic repercussions takes its hypothetical context from the insights of trauma theorists Cathy Caruth, Susan J. Brison, Kai Erikson, DoriLaub, Judith Herman; and literary critic Martin Esslin.

Keywords: Trauma, Void, Alienation, Death, Absence

Human life is an incomprehensible phenomenon. Beneath the blissful appearance of harmonious human subsistence, there lurks the unremitting traumatic veracity of inescapable suffering, pain, violence, expulsion, terror, loss, misfortune, dishonour, oppression and mortality. Hopelessness, anguish and dejection have become the most illustrative experiences of modern man in contemporary era. Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* (1957) brings to light this trauma of destabilized human existence which remains inhibited and veiled under the false pretensions of society and its norms. The present paper studies the unprecedented dynamics of shattering traumatic experience of absence of the human other in Beckett's *Endgame*. This analysis of traumatic repercussions takes its hypothetical context from the insights of trauma theorists Cathy Caruth, Susan J. Brison, Kai Erikson, DoriLaub, Judith Herman; and literary critic Martin Esslin.

Esslin argues that absurdist drama has two characteristics, first, there is an integration of content and form; and second, it does not simply describe the

absurdity of the human state but rather demonstrates it in actual form (Esslin 25). Beckett's *Endgame* fits flawlessly into this genre of theatre of absurd because firstly, the interrelation between its content and form is discernible as there are recurrent narrative repetitions, thematic discontinuity and linguistic collapses in framework of the play (Georgiades 22). Secondly, the play presents a poignant picture of meaningless human existence seeking salvation from unrelenting desolation and the hopelessness. This amalgamation of form and content is knotted with the fibre of trauma. All the four characters of the play; Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell are haunted by the trauma of their futile existence. Their life is confined in the four walls of a room where they spend time discussing about their declining health, deteriorating world conditions and the climate. Nell's statement "Nothing is funnier than unhappiness" (Beckett 118) reveals passive acceptance of her traumatic existence. Hamm, Clov and Nagg live the same experience.

Susan Brison's views shed new light on theory of trauma. According to her, the distinctive feature of traumatic memory is that it is more attached to the body than its narrative recollection. The fusion of mind and body is evident in proliferation of traumatic memory in the whole body. It extends its influence in all the five senses of the body, mind and skin. The slight remembrance of traumatic past or external stimuli fuels its impact and becomes a reason of its re-emergence. This phenomenon keeps on resurfacing (Brison 42). In *Endgame*, none of the four characters has fit body. Hamm is blind and paralysed; his servant Clov is unable to sit. Hamm's parents Nagg and Nell have lost their legs in an accident and live in dustbins. The play depicts an extreme form of trauma possible in human sensibility and physicality. For a blind and crippled man like Hamm, life is double torture. His inner pain is visible in conversation with Clov: "One day you'll be blind, like me. And when you open them [eyes] again there'll be no wall any more. [Pause.] Infinite emptiness will be all around you" (Beckett 109).

Although Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell share single room, yet the presence of void space of absolute absence of the human other remains evident in their

relationships. Seeing no possible escape from the impenetrable trap of nonbeing, Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell are seen silently waiting for their deaths in a world which has lost its meaning for them. Even their existence has reached the level of nothingness. For Hamm, the "whole place stinks of corpses...outside of here it's death" (Beckett 114, 126). Hamm's comparison of living beings to 'corpses' signifies his recognition of growing emotional sterility among humans. Becket suggests that this world has two linear dimensions; inside and outside, the former has become a desolate stinking place of suffering, torture and isolation; and the latter, occupied by 'death,' can only deliver escape to man. Nagg's story about the tailor and the buyer reveals this paradox of creation again: "Look at the world—and look at my TROUSERS" (Beckett 107). The tailor sarcastically weighs world [creation of God] against Trousers [creation of man].

Kai Erikson equates trauma to a form of shocking recognition that the society has turned out to be an unproductive source of assistance. Though 'I' and 'You' have managed to maintain their remote and dented existence, but the bond of 'we,' the principle of unified existence does not exist anymore in the society. Erikson explains that the connection between an individual and the society has been shattered leading to an adverse influence on the individual identity (Erikson 154). In *Endgame*, Beckett highlights an excruciating impact of disintegration of human relations and conduct on human beings. Hamm is blind and crippled, whereas, his servant Clov cannot sit. Mutual dependency binds them in this compulsive and selfish relationship. Clov serves Hamm because the latter provides him food and shelter. He believes that love and companionship are just beautiful words in this superficial world of stern emotions. Clov's apprehension of ephemeral human relations is evident from his following declaration to audience: "That order! They said to me, Come now, you're not a brute beast, think upon these things and you'll see how all becomes clear. And simple!" (Beckett 131-2)

The secluded living of Hamm's parents Nagg and Nell in the dustbins is symbolic illustration of deprivation of

human empathy and concern. Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell struggle to sustain their isolated and shattered lives, but the bond ‘we’ has nowhere to be found. The scale of their relation lingers on the simple level of “I” and “no one else” (Beckett 95). Clov discerns that he should learn to endure suffering inflicted upon him by others. He is internally conscious of the fact that there is no redemption for him from his inner turmoil, exploitation and isolation. Clov’s monologue highlights this dilemma: “Then one day, suddenly, it [suffering] ends, it changes, I don’t understand, it dies, or it’s me, I don’t understand that either. [...] I say to myself that the earth is extinguished, though I never saw it lit. (Beckett 132)

Cathy Caruth defines trauma as a delayed response to an overpowering incident. According to her, since there are various forms of an individual’s persistent response; such as recurring illusions, dreams, feelings or behaviours stemming from the event, the pathology is not eventually determined by the event itself but lies in the constitution of its experience or acquisition (Caruth 4). Caruth’s views help us to understand the disparity in Hamm’s behaviour. His external response generally seems dominating outwardly, but a traumatic repentance looms in his mind as a spectre of shame. Hamm’s memories fill his inner consciousness with remorse for his egocentric temperament: “All those I might have helped. [Pause.] Helped! [Pause.] Saved. [Pause.] Saved! [Pause.] The place was crawling with them!” (Beckett 125)

Sometimes traumatic experience constantly reiterates itself in subconscious memory in such a way that it overturns victim’s resistive ability and renders him inexpressive of his inner turmoil. Silence, defiance, inner conflict and oppression are other underlying impediments. The distressing past enclosed in the impermeable shell of memory isolates itself from the present and leads to involuntary amnesia. The conversation between Hamm and Clov highlights this memory collapse:

HAMM: Absent, always. It all happened without me. I don’t know what’s happened. [Pause.] Do you know what’s happened? [Pause.] Clov! [...]

CLOV: When? Where? (Beckett 128)

Nagg occasionally remembers his happy time spent

together with Nell. But Nell, on the contrary, tries to keep the reappearance of her happy memories away from her conscious mind because it perturbs her mind immensely. Judith Herman explains that normal reaction of most of the human beings to turmoil or tragedy is to drive the depressing reminiscence out from alert mind (Herman 1). For them, this is an escape way from emotional turmoil and breakdown. This may be rationale when once Nagg asks Nell if she remembers the time when they had crashed on their tandem and lost their shanks, the latter simply denies to memorize. Later on, Nagg again shares with Nell their trip to Lake Como where they had enjoyed rowing. Nagg’s motive is to make Nell cheerful and relieved of their traumatic present. On the contrary, grave disparity between their present situations (derogatory confinement in a dustbin) to past happy events fills Nell’s memory with resentment and unconscious withdrawal to such an extent that she is unable to bear the trauma of her disparaging existence. This mental repression and shock ultimately leads to her death to which Clov finally confirms: “She has no pulse” (Beckett 102-3)

Hamm and Nell’s negligible concern and forgetfulness are the signs of their helplessness to escape from their physical detention and mental torment. For them, any recollection of past is not sufficient, because it is disorderly and lacking in nature. It no longer provides any entrance into “one’s past but only return, involuntarily, to remind of one’s absence” (Georgiades 121). Traumatic experiences have brought Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell to a limbo state of ‘being and non-being,’ a state where ‘Sense of Self’ neither stays alive, nor dies fully. This is the extreme level of ‘victimisation’ as the sufferer is double entrapped without any possible escape except death.

Dori Laub argues that this inner traumatic pressure remains ineffable because there are no sufficient and precise words to express it. Sometimes, according to Laub, due to non-availability of right time or the listener, the enunciation of the narrative is not “fully captured in thought, memory, and speech” (Laub 178). Clov’s statement in the opening of the play brings to light this inexpressible dilemma: “Finished, it’s finished, nearly finished, it must be nearly finished Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, suddenly, there’s a heap, a

little heap, the impossible heap" (Beckett93). Repetitions in his proclamation become the evidence for his failure to find suitable words to articulate his inner mayhem. Beckett employs the repetition of words 'finished' and 'heap' to emphasize the inseparable merger of every beginning and its end. Every beginning [heap, grain upon grain] of existence also substantiates the certainty of its extinction [finished] in this mortal world. Becket's philosophic vision finds solitary certainty in final and eternal moment of life i.e. 'Death.' In *Endgame*, Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell anticipate 'Death' as their eventual salvation from physical deformity and mental agony. When Clov glances out from the window, he finds not greenery but barren earth, a symbol of his resting place after death. Clov dreams for a place "where all would be silent and still and each thing in its last place" (Beckett120). In another incident Hamm reprimands Clov for not replying properly to his question. Hamm is asking Clov about which previous day the latter is referring to. Clov reminds his master that all the days of their lives are appalling and disgusting; no matter entitle them 'today' or 'yesterday.' Clov replies aggressively: "I use the words you taught me. If they don't mean anything any more, teach me others. Or let me be silent...." (Beckett113).

Through Clov's statement, Becket suggests that human race is destined to never-ending suffering since the beginning of civilisation. Thus, the real schism exists between *Beginning and End*, and not between *Past [yesterday] and Present*. Here 'silent' signifies death which permanently brings an end to this unfathomable traumatic drama of *Beginning and End* called 'Life'.

To conclude, Beckett's *Endgame* displays traumatic experience of humanity seeking deliverance from void, alienation and suffering since time immemorial. The four characters of the play; Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell are trapped in an agonised existence with no possible escape. Trauma manifests in their cynicism, intentional self-denial, unrelenting and obsessive desire for the death. Beckett shows how the trauma repercussions originate in their bodies, haunt through memory and pass to a stage where there remains no

longing to live. The most traumatic experience is the absence of the human other in the drama called 'Life.' Hamm, Clov, Nagg and Nell put up with their deformed bodies and mental agonies. They witness each other struggling on their own. Becket conveys that there is no dissimilarity between 'being present' and 'being mute witness' because in both conditions it is the absence of the human other. In *Endgame*, Beckett's artistic vision gives a compelling view of futility of human life and the inevitable frustration inherent to it, as Hamm's comment in his story, "You're on Earth, there's no cure for that!"(Becket 125).

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Namita Gokhale's Selected Novels Studied in Light of Dr Brian Leslie Weiss' Parapsychological Studies

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Abstract:

The present paper is a qualitative study aimed at exploring unconventional healing through hypnosis. To achieve the aim, three novels of the Indian author Namita Gokhale namely Gods, Graves and Grandmother (2001), The Book of Shadows (2001) and Shakuntala: The Play of Memory (2005); are investigated from the standpoint of Dr Brian Leslie Weiss' research on the paranormal. Weiss' books Same Soul, Many Bodies (2004) and Many Lives, Many Masters (2012); on psycho spiritual practices of hypnosis and meditation prove the efficacy of healing through these methods. The objective is to assuage fear by providing an understanding about the continuity of life after death and reincarnation, and the soul's existence. Additionally, Yogic meditation helps in cleansing the energy centres in the body enabling it to heal and reach higher planes of consciousness, similar to those reached by Weiss' patients upon healing.

Keywords: Unconventional healing, hypnosis, paranormal, meditation, reincarnation, soul

Dr Brian Leslie Weiss' researches showed that therapeutic hypnosis could heal. Knowledge of immortality through regression and progression provides hope and tranquility (Weiss, *Many Lives* 164).

Weiss' treatment regressed patients to several years in the same lifetime, but in case of Catherine, his patient, it went thousands of years back (Weiss, *Many*

Lives 105). The Masters induced a telepathic bond between Dr Weiss and Catherine (Weiss, *Many Lives* 153-4). Catherine became increasingly psychic, precognitive and intuitive (Weiss, *Many Lives* 46). Catherine's super conscious insights transferred to the conscious mind. She radiated tranquility once cured. Catherine experienced psychic phenomena, provided insights and Godly wisdom (Weiss, *Many Lives*). Weiss too became intuitive, empathetic and aware. He evaluated psychics and mediums, and on meditating received guidance from the Masters (Weiss, *Many Lives* 207-9). Gods and Masters are probably the evolved souls or highly advanced aliens (Weiss, *Same Soul* 143-4).

In *Gods, Graves and Grandmother* (2001), Gudiya and her grandmother fled to Delhi in absolute penury. The ingenuity of Ammi, a Muslim singer, a Kothewali, enabled her to set up a temple, which flourished due to her singing. The supernatural is established as Gokhale implores to suspend disbelief (*Gods*). Witness to traumas of separation from her mother and death of acquaintances (Gokhale, *Gods* 7-107), Gudiya feared the supernatural and death (Gokhale, *Gods*). Gudiya saw ghosts and spirits on the branches of a peepul tree who reassured her (Gokhale, *Gods* 3) and helped her emerge stronger.

Ammi, portrayed as an evolved soul performed miracles and healed a patient of coma (Gokhale, *Gods* 42-7). Scientific evidence proves that healing by praying for the patient has a higher recovery rate, than medical treatment (*Same Soul* 53). Mysterious things happened,

as Gudiya and Ammi, felt invincible(Gokhale, *Gods* 13-4). Ammi, uneducated in Hindu scriptures and rituals, preached these (Gokhale, *Gods* 3). Through hypnosis, a patient of Dr Weiss, corrected the guide on artifacts of Egypt, though she had never studied these (Weiss, *Many Lives* 24).

As a medium Lila's featured arranged like Ammi's, she conveyed Ammi's message about continuity of life after death, impersonated for a lifelike sculpture of Ammi, and spoke in a garbled Ammi like voice (Gokhale, *Gods, Graves* 142-3). Lila, Ammi's aid, had endeared herself to Ammi. Psychic powers can develop through relationships. When regressed, Catherine's spoke in the Masters blissful voices(Weiss, *Many Lives* 84). Catherine became an extremely talented medium, channelising sublime knowledge from the Master Spirits. (Weiss, *Many Lives* 64).

God is within each human and is accessible through divine wisdom. Weiss used regression therapeutically, upon disillusionment with modern medicine (Weiss, *Many Lives* 54-7). Transcendental knowledge made Weiss peaceful. Fortified he lost the fear of death and of losing others (Weiss, *Many Lives*). Prior to her regression Catherine had never read about occult and metaphysics; neither did she believe in reincarnation (Weiss *Many Lives* 47).

Shakuntala: Play of Memory, weaves religion, history and philosophy. *Shakuntala* (Gokhale, *Shakuntala*) identifies with Shakuntala the protagonist of the ancient classic *AbhijnanaShakuntalam*, by Kalidasa, thus is bound in the cycle of death and rebirth (Gokhale, *Shakuntala*). A rock-demoness sowed the seed of independence in Shakuntala (Gokhale, *Shakuntala*) and gave her strength (Gokhale, *Shakuntala* 37) by introducing her to the powers and grace of the mother Goddess. Rebellious Shakuntala leaves home when her husband brings home another woman; and finds solace in the company of a Greek. Restless, she forsakes the Greek and dies in Kashi, on the banks of holy Ganga, without attaining liberation. Her accumulated *Karmas* prevented it (Gokhale, *Shakuntala*). Weiss' writings similarly state that sins of ancestors affect their children

as humans are their own fathers (Weiss, *Same Soul* 55). A recurrent need of the protagonists of Gokhale to attain liberation culminates in the efforts of Shakuntala.

Genetic transmission of Catherine's memories was remote, as this requires an uninterrupted chain of passage from one generation to another. Additionally, there were unexplained, bodiless, after life and in between states. Carl Jung's collective unconscious was too vague; moreover, messages from the Master Spirits were too specific to be out of conscious memory (Weiss, *Many Lives* 105-6). Life is endless; humans just pass through different stages (Weiss, *Many Lives*).

Hypnotic regression enables feeling the pain of past lives. This reframing leads to healing (Weiss, *Same Soul* 55). Gokhale's Shakuntala, abandoned and dying had visions of holy men, benevolent *Kali*, the fierce Goddess, scavenger of desires, who provided hope; the God of death, *Yama*; and *Yami*, the guardian spirit (Gokhale, *Shakuntala* 3,190-1). Weiss' patients too exhibited feelings of calm and hope, in the in between stages. They realized the effect of *Karma* (Weiss, *Same Soul, Many Lives*). Near death, Catherine saw a bright energizing light, in a previous birth (Weiss, *Many Lives* 46). Dying people saw a bright, powerful magnetic force that attracted and energized (Weiss, *Same Soul, Many Lives*).

Dead Shakuntala's soul had a glimpse of the years that might have been (Gokhale, *Shakuntala* 208). Out of the seven planes that souls have to pass, in one, souls recollect the life just left behind (Weiss, *Many Lives* 172). People come back with unequal powers from each plane. They accrue abilities, talents, powers, and debts from previous lifetimes. Lessons learnt progressively, purify and heal humans. This may take several lifetimes (Weiss, *Same Soul*).

Catherine's regressions spread over millennia, causing improvement progressively (Weiss, *Many Lives* 115). One Mastertold Weiss, that he should strive to eradicate fear. Physical state was abnormal, whereas the in between stages were for renewal. Both Weiss and

Catherine renewed. This incredible message confirmed the efficacy of hypnosis and regression (Weiss, *Many Lives* 128).

Knowledge about the endlessness of life, help of spirits in the physical and the in between stage of renewal, presence of loved ones in the intermittent stage would comfort and remove fear. Thus, reduced acts of violence and desire for worldly possessions will bring peace. People need to be acquainted with parapsychological experiences. Initially, apprehensions prevented Weiss from sharing authentic revelations. Some people shared out of body experiences, ESP, past life phobias, dreams etc. with Dr Weiss. (Weiss, *Many Lives* 128). Catherine too validated her past lives through a psychic astrologer (Weiss, *Many Lives* 199-200).

The Book of Shadows depicts the supernatural, magic and sorcerers. Blamed for her fiancée's death, Rachita Tiwari suffers an acid attack at the hands of his sister. Claimed by other dimensions, she seeks sanity while recuperating in a hundred years old house, cared for by the mysterious estate manager, Lohanju. Depicted is the history of the house and ghosts of its previous inhabitants (Gokhale, *The Book*). A strange shadowless woman deepened Rachita's dementia (Gokhale, *The Book* 203-4).

Rachita believed that she and her uncle's house had united against the world (Gokhale, *The Book* 19). On reaching the house, she had a feeling of déjà vu (Gokhale, *The Book* 10). Weiss realized that the past, present and future are connected, occur simultaneously and influence the future positively, as the soul can take a life form in any place besides the earth. *Karma* connects the past, present and future (Weiss, *Same Soul* 13). Catherine witnessed bright light and many souls around in a particular dimension. She experienced planes of higher consciousness progressively (Weiss, *Many Lives*).

Rachita was clairaudience, clairsentience and hallucinated (Gokhale, *The Book* 11, 26, 67). Rachita felt a benevolent stalker, a ghost pursuing her. Petrified, she believed that the house had begun to speak with

her (Gokhale, *The Book* 61). This presence was encouraging Rachita to get over her fears (Gokhale, *The Book* 64). A patient of Dr Weiss was clairvoyant and clairaudient and possessed telepathic skills (Weiss, *Same Soul* 82).

Rachita in mental turmoil, felt infiltrated (Gokhale, *The Book* 25-6) by presences who awaited retribution, hence release. Psychiatrists used medication, and intensive individual and group psychotherapy for treatment. Deficiencies of brain chemicals cause phobias. Weiss treated hallucinations, delusions, schizophrenia, etc. (Weiss, *Many Lives* 103-4) but Catherine was free from these illnesses, rather she produced credible, specific material from her own and Weiss' past that were beyond her conscious experience (Weiss, *Many Lives* 104).

Healing happens through empathy, by forgiving oneself and others. Understanding one's present condition and reaction of others, helps achieve progress towards immortality (Weiss, *Same Soul*). When regressed, Catherine's fears diminished on remembering suffering traumas (Weiss, *Many Lives* 65).

In advanced therapeutic stage, Catherine saw life from a higher perspective; called Higher Self. Catherine's reaching this state, was a powerful therapeutic technique, as she exhibited insight, spectacular knowledge and wisdom; previously restricted to spiritual states, suggesting that there was an accessible super consciousness or Higher Self, in every human. This was similar to Carl Jung layers of consciousness and collective unconscious (Weiss, *Many Lives*).

In *The Book of Shadows*, (Gokhale) belief that the ridge on which the British missionary had built his house was haunted, made people reluctant about its construction after the death of a mountain girl (Gokhale, *The Book* 55). Villagers believed that at that spot, was buried the arrow of God Airee, the guardian spirit, which the hill people protect (Gokhale, *The Book* 208-9). However, visitations of Airee, were dreadful events that brought death, despair and dishonour to those who incurred His wrath (Gokhale, *The Book* 54). It was due to the Lord's strength that the villagers

lived at the sacred but forbidden spot. These spots, conjunctions between worlds were passages of entry and exit. (Gokhale, *The Book* 208-9). Some of the angelic guardian spirits were omnipresent (Weiss, *Many Lives*).

Lohaniju, connected with the other world. Unintimidated by alien airs, he was familiar with the mysteries of the house (Gokhale, *The Book* 150-1). Lohaniju believed that respect and tolerance was necessary to handle the spirit world (Gokhale, *The Book* 16). Souls from all dimensions have created *Karmic* debts for evolution. A patient of Dr Weiss, an inhabitant of another dimension, was able to communicate with the dead. Similar to humans, his species were far more intelligent; and could navigate realms and consciousness. Consciousness separates from physical existence for spiritual healing (Weiss, *Same Soul* 143-69).

Ghosts view things in a manner completely unfamiliar to the humans. The presence entered the space of linearity as it slipped into Dona Rosa (Gokhale, *The Book* 85), symbolically Rachita. Dona Rosa and the ghost talked, though, communication is rare between ghosts and humans (Gokhale, *The Book* 91).

The ghost, the insecurities, resolved to find another dimension and await transition (Gokhale, *The Book* 87). As the ghost transitioned towards the end, Rachita healed. The immortal soul takes birth repeatedly to learn and evolve spiritually. People accomplished what they sought to achieve, then died, and once rested the souls are reborn (Weiss, *Many Lives* 83-4).

Perverted sexuality of the previous middle-aged inhabitants of the house (Gokhale, *The Book* 98), made them shed reason and dignity for sensual gratification (Gokhale, *The Book* 175). Fear of impotencies made them exploit virgins and sacrifice an evolved male child; setting in motion an incomprehensible *Karmic* cycle (Gokhale, *The Book* 107). Panthers mauled them to death (Gokhale, *The Book* 113-4). Excessiveness and over indulgence destroys happiness. Hypnotic progression revealed that altered state of consciousness caused happiness (Weiss, *Same Soul*).

Souls return in physical form to repay *Karmic* debts.

One out of the seven planes of transition enables the souls to recollect the life just left behind. The soul's progress through spiritual wisdom leads to a euphoric connection with God (Weiss, *Many Lives* 172-3).

Father Benedictus, the medium, and the ghost communicated (Gokhale, *The Book* 130-1) through osmosis by permeating each other's consciousness and experienced a complete understanding (Gokhale, *The Book* 139). Through Dona Rosa, the ghost entered the consciousness of the other inhabitants of the house (Gokhale, *The Book*). Cryptic messages enable one in spiritual stage to contact another who is in the physical stage. Weiss was aware of the physical and spiritual world, connected with them and the energy between them. Masters use psychic abilities to communicate with people in the physical form (Weiss, *Many Lives*). There is dialogue between the protagonists of Gokhale's novels and strange beings.

Upon the death of Osborne, another dead inhabitant of the house, past life phobia disturbed the ghost. Trapped in a long illuminated tunnel, the ghost was determined upon release. Devoid of memory, the ghost suspended in time and space, cried out at the injustice, the unfathomable reasons and circumstances that caused the exile (Gokhale, *The Book* 123-4-5).

On Osborne and Father Benedictus' death, presences from other planes arrived to aid transmigration. Father Benedictus stated that the past belonged to the past and that the future was free and fearless (Gokhale, *The Book* 140-1). Immense freedom and forgetting, accompanies the transportation of the soul between dimensions. Good *Karmas* determines this. However, presences deny passage, seize and suspend the defaulters (Gokhale, *The Book* 179-180).

Rachita saw dead Lohaniju, her dead fiancée (Gokhale, *The Book* 228) the dead inhabitants and the panthers (Gokhale, *The Book* 222-4) as she healed. During her sessions with Dr Brian Weiss, on leaving the body, Catherine saw wonderful familiar and unfamiliar people coming to help her (Weiss, *Many Lives*).

Lohaniju, stated that "People neither live nor die, they just

move houses, and bodies, and dimensions.”(Gokhale, *The Book* 209) Hindu and Buddhist mystical writings are full of references to reincarnation and in between stages (Weiss, *Same Soul* 9) (Lanza, *Biocentrism* 34).

For spiritual, psychological and bodily healing, consciousness separates from the body in phases reaching the higher stages progressively to unite with the One. The progress of the soul to higher levels depends on free will(Weiss, *Same Soul*). Metaphysical healing, hypnosis and meditation access the subconscious, to the source of the symptom, to heal.Hypnosis occurs when the conscious and the subconscious converge, but the subconscious plays a dominant role. Humans experience this stage of hypnosis between wakefulness and sleep called the hypnagogic state.(Weiss, *Same Soul*22-4).Beyond the painless higher planes of pure consciousness, all souls are connected (Weiss,*Same Soul*12-3).

Weiss'Healing

Weiss advocates eliminating mental and physical pain through mediation, by imagining exhalingnegativity and inhaling pure energy.Weiss' method of healinginvolves questioning a symptom on how it affects the body and imagining swimming with dolphins, playfully. In another method, after being lead through a beautiful temple andthen a room with healing crystals, the patient sees images of past life that connect and heal. Paired patients heal by receiving impressions from exchanged objects. Dr Weiss cured serious, chronic illnesses by the aforementioned methods. (Weiss, *Same Soul* 46-53)

Yoga

Yogic healing arouses the *Kundalini Sakti* or Supreme Serpent Powerin the human body, whichcleanses the six regions or *Cakras*,the principle centers of consciousness (Woodroffe, *The Serpent Power* 1, 3). The awakening of energy at the bottom of the spine arouses the centers progressively. Arousal of the sixth center leads to clairvoyance. This stage activates the pituitary gland, enabling hearing the voice of the Master. The sequential arousal of all the *Cakras*enables leaving

the body in a fully conscious state by awakening of the seventh center (Woodroffe, *The Serpent Power* 10). At this stage, the purified soul unites with the Lord.

Biocentrism asserts that the mind consciousness is eternal and infinite (Lanza185-6). Scientifically, everything has indestructible energy, which only changes form. Therefore, everything is immortal (Lanza, *Biocentrism* 191)Quantum mechanics seeks to evolve a theory on consciousness by including studies onneuroscience and consciousness; and integratingbiology, physics, cosmology and their branches (Lanza, *Biocentrism*195-7).

Conclusion

Science, psychology and spirituality merge (Weiss, *Same Soul*17) to heal the human body and soul. Gokhale too writes about the supernatural and healing.Hypnotic delving into the subconscious, called the collective consciousness by Carl Jung,enables accessibility to memories of the entire human race (Weiss, *Many Lives*11).Hypnosis and meditation can heal and bring peace.

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Recording the Refugee: Jatin Bala's Legacy of Persistent Subcontinental Marginality

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Abstract:

This paper seeks to situate the literary expressions of Bengali Dalit refugee writer Sri Jatin Bala amidst the paradigmatic terms ‘refugee’ and ‘exile’, and their political, humanitarian, cultural and literary ramifications. His autobiographical novel “Shikarh-chheñra Jibon”(My Uprooted Life) is one of the few Indian Refugee Dalit Autobiographies in existence. In what way does JatinBala’s claims of uniqueness of refugee narrative answer to the present debates of marginality centred inside and outside the Indian national boundaries? - is a question this paper goes on to explore. The exile in Edward Said both distinguishes between the refugee and the exile, and yet agrees to their interdependence for a meaningful existence. On the other side of the spectrum, exiled critics like Hannah Arendt raise humanitarian doubts about the forced speechlessness and amnesia of the refugee community for the sake of rehabilitation. How does JatinBala’s literary expression negotiate the interstices of these marginality theories and to what gains, is a dilemma this paper persistently seeks to unravel. In conclusion, this paper juxtaposes JatinBala’s contemporary existential narrative against the persistently-ticking Rohingya humanitarian time-bomb that threatens to engulf the Indian sub-continent, and seeks to discover certain common parameters of analysis. This article is divided into three parts. The first part enquires the implications of ‘Refugee’ versus ‘Exile’ theories.

The second part finds its way forward by exploring how JatinBala’s works reflect the exigencies of these theories. In the third part, it then investigates very briefly how the similarities and challenges inherent in this discussion respond to the Rohingya crisis which is reaching explosive proportions in Bangladesh, with devastating consequences for the entire Asian subcontinent.

Keywords: Marginality; Refugee; Exile; Literary Narrative; East Bengal; Dalit; Rohingya.

The spatial and social displacement of people is accelerating all around the world. In such a scenario, words like ‘refugee’ and ‘exile’ have become common parlance. However, subtle differences exist in their configuration. They are certainly not synonymous terms. Firstly, the term ‘refugee’ is supported and monitored within a legal architecture and framework. There is no legal support for the term ‘exile’, but the latter has powerful cultural ramifications. Secondly, the ‘refugee’ lives in a situation of extreme physical threat. The ‘exile’, on the other hand, signals psychic and social distress more than physical threat to existence. Thirdly, the figure of the ‘refugee’ is invoked more in geo-political discussions, as a victim of sectarian, communal or border conflicts. The figure of the ‘exile’ enjoys more literary sympathy as an uprooted and detached person uniquely able and eventually obliged to synthesize. Exile scholars go beyond boundaries to read, discuss, debate and compare transnationally. Fourthly, the status of the ‘refugee’ is always forced. But for an ‘exile’, his/her status can be forced or

unforced. For Edward Said, the status of the ‘exile’ is a condition of permanent sorrow. Fifthly, the ‘refugee’ can go back or can be repatriated. In contrast, the ‘exile’ is forever handicapped by the loss of something from the past now permanently out of reach. This condition can be seen in the desperation Said (1986) felt as a Palestinian in the USA.

Said observes (1979, 1986) that the ‘refugee’ and the ‘exile’ can co-exist. He finds a similarity between the legally certified bereft figure of the refugee, and the exile who speaks of his loss through narrative and memoir, a characteristic sometimes also shared by the refugee. The muteness of the refugee is a defence mechanism against losing his identity into the mainstream and merely exist as a sample of “good reads”. Thus, the journey from the refugee to the exile, according to Said, is a journey from mute suffering to expression, but not reconciliation. It is definitely an uncomfortable and humiliating experience. Important exile writers include Caribbean Nobel Prize winners V.S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott.

The interesting observation is that Refugee Law, elaborated in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, is grounded in Article 14 of the UDHR or Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees to those who are persecuted the right to seek asylum in another country, but not necessarily the right to enjoy shelter and to be received as citizens.

Anthropologist Lisa Malkki (1992) says that refugees are silenced subjects introduced to the mainstream. In order to make this merger successful, refugees are coerced to give up their history, their politics, and their narratives of the past. This is precisely what happened in the case of the East Bengal Dalit refugees.

A refugee is a figure in flight, and in denial of his identity. On the other hand, the exile is a rebel who seeks to assert his past and his roots through his narrative. As both Said (2000) and Hannah Arendt (1973) stress, amnesia is never the answer to a legacy of domination.

Born in 1949 in East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, Bengali Dalit writer JatinBala has several poetry

anthologies, two novels, a collection of short stories, a series of research articles on the Namashudra and Motua communities in Bengal, and a slew of awards to his credit. Having lost his parents at a very early age, Bala survived with his brothers’ support and was forced to eke out a treacherous living in post-Partition refugee camps in West Bengal. In this life full of struggle, education proved to be his only succour. His major works include several anthologies; a short story collection; *AmriterJibonerKathaa* (A Life of Elixir), a novel; *Dalit SahityaAndolan* — a collection of research articles; *Shikarh-chheñraJibon* (My Uprooted Life) - his autobiographical novel; and, A History of the Namashudra and Motua Communities. Apropos the categories of the ‘refugee’ and the ‘exile’, that co-exist yet have important diverse characteristics, the following observations come to arise upon a close analysis of these texts by the author —

1. Documentation of the Partition effects upon Bengal and Bengalis is very less, unlike in the other partitioned state, the Punjab. In Bengal, it is mainly limited to academic books and research articles, with only two prominent non-fiction texts - Urvashi Butalia’s *The Other Side of Silence* (1998) and Rupkumar Barman’s *Partition of India and its Impact on the Scheduled Castes of Bengal* (2012) - and RitwikGhatak’s film based on the book TitasEkti Nadir Naam (1973) discussing the phenomenon of the Dalit refugee. The two proposed Kolkata Partition Museum Projects are totally oblivious as yet of the Dalit angle. As Sri JatinBala says in an interview to Dr. Jaydeep Sarangi, “...the partition of India has been particularly tragic for the Namasudras.” He clarifies that he gives importance to description of life at the three refugee camps over personal history in *My Uprooted Life*, but regrets that none of the Dalit refugee narratives are yet part of the canon.
2. We tend to visualise refugees as a homogeneous group of people, what can be termed as “the myth of homogeneity”. However, the caste-segregation of East Bengal refugees was present even before

the Partition. The Namashudra Community of JatinBala performed menial tasks, signifying the physical and social boundaries of their villages in East Bengal. Thus, words like *chandal/charal*, *chamar* and *chasha/chashare* came to signify entire communities.

This politics of segregation was carried forward post-Partition, when upper-caste refugees secured respectable rehabilitation with their relatives in West Bengal, education and jobs, while the lower-caste refugees were rehabilitated in the inhospitable terrains of the transit camps, the Andaman Islands and the Dandakaranya forests of Odisha.

Thus, the entire process of crossing over is marked by dual caste and refugee identities – a Double Identity.

3. The history of the Namashudras and their role in spreading the boon of education among the backward communities can be known by reading the works of Sri JatinBala - particularly the contributions of Sri Harichand and Sri Guruchand Thakur; his own family's role in establishing schools for backward caste children, and his own struggle to gain education even by studying under railway station lights, that sustained him several times when he contemplated suicide. Thus, the seeds of the transition from refugee to exile, and also a refusal to be the silent subject a.k.a. the refugee are sown early on. The self-educated exile refuses to let his narrative disappear and pens his thoughts with dogged and disturbing tenacity.

4. There is the persistent trauma of the exile which Sri JatinBala says has poisoned every moment of his life despite his journey from education to expression to a government job to recognition to translation. "Those camps may well have been demolished but horrifying memories of those days still haunt me....That's why you find it in my creative writing." (Interview with Jaydeep Sarangi)

5. Sri Bala's works highlight the contrast between mainstream Bengali refugee narratives and Dalit refugee narratives (all emerging between 2010 and 2018), just as Manoranjan Byapari, another Dalit refugee autographer, points out the difference

between Manik Bandyopadhyay's Brahminical narrative *Padma Nadir Majhi* and Adwaita Mallabarman's *TitasEkti Nadir Naam*. Thus, a unanimous or homogeneous narrative of refugee trauma is not achievable. Sri Bala mentions in the same interview : "There were some who did not want to go out of Bengal to be rehabilitated at the Balagarh camp at Dandakaranya....the refugees embarked on a hunger strike and I got directly involved in it.....Naturally my autobiographical novel stands out for being more of a realistic portraiture of the larger Dalit condition than a projection of the plight of an individual Dalit."

6. Sri JatinBala's works also focus on a fabricated story of self-respect; they reveal how upper-caste Bengali refugees have been called enterprising for settling themselves through independent efforts, while the Dalit Bengali refugees are labelled as lazy for depending on government dole, psychologically branding them as uncivilised and lacking the will to excel — in short, creating an Other of the Other.

7. Sri JatinBala's works also help us to understand the political rise of the Namashudra and Motua communities. The alienation from Left politics after the Marichjhapi (1979) and Nandigram (2007) incidents, and a definite leaning towards the Trinamul Congress camp has resulted in splitting the two communities ideologically and politically. Also, Left-leaning refugee activists have been accused of sidelining their Dalit identities, as Leftist politics denies caste problem in West Bengal. Sri Bala also wonders how they should situate the dual identity of Dalit and refugee within the wider caste movement in India.

8. The notable interstices in Sri Bala's refugee narrative, especially with regard to gender, need a special mention. There is only passing reference to sexual labour of Dalit refugee women as something perhaps unpalatable to the author. The dual labour of Bengali Dalit refugee women both inside and outside their homes to sustain their families is ignored. Though the plight of Bengali Dalit women in the pre-Partition era is highlighted through descriptions of some of the author's female relatives as also descriptions of camp

torture on Dalit refugee women, there is no psychological profiling of these women. His narrative is also absolutely silent about patriarchy in refugee Dalit homes.

The paper takes a brief look at the Rohingya exodus taking place into Bangladesh, which presents a terrible tragedy comparable in scale and effect to the East Bengal refugee crisis, with certain similarities and contrasts in the displacement of marginal communities. The Rohingyas are Muslims unaccepted by the predominantly Buddhist community of Myanmar, and labelled as illegal Bangladeshi settlers. Currently there are more than one million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The problem originated in 1970s and came to a head in August 2017; and once again, Bangladesh is the backdrop to this unfurling human tragedy, described by the U.N. Secretary-General AntónioGuterres as “the world’s fastest-developing refugee emergency and a humanitarian and human rights nightmare.”

“The partition of a country, of a nation, did not signify merely political or geographical division — it also bisected, rather tore apart, the Namahshudra nation’s society, culture, ethos, language and way of living....For the brunt of the Partition is borne by the countless homeless people of the Namahshudra community to this date.” (Bala; *My Uprooted Life*; pg.36; translated by this author.) Just as the East Bengal refugees were escaping from a communal backlash in Bangladesh, the Rohingyas are also escaping religious persecution. However, as Sri Bala describes in his autobiographical novel, it would be too simple to consider only the religious angle; primarily, the Rohingya crisis is also a backlash against economically and socially backward minorities who have been turned homeless and rootless again and again.

The social and economic ramifications of the Rohingya refugee crisis are horrific. The Rohingyas have been involved in serious clashes with the locals over land. Crops and the tourism industry have suffered considerable damages due to these animosities. Petty crimes and smuggling are on the rise in the Teknaf region due to lack of education and jobs, which was

not the case for the East Bengal refugees. Bangladesh, however, lacks a Refugee Commission to deal with such issues.

Militarily, the influx of Rohingya refugees has caused changes in the demographic composition of the settler areas. Security fears are also being fanned because of ARSA’s (ArakanRohingya Salvation Army, the militant arm of the Rohingya population) links to terrorists. To cite just one example, in India the 2014 Bodh Gaya bomb blast case was erroneously linked to Rohingya refugees. This indicates that there is an upper-caste majoritarian backlash against these refugees in India too, just as against the Dalit refugees from East Bengal.

The struggle against environment is immense too, as elephant corridors have been destroyed in building the Rohingya refugee camps. Because of these issues and constant bickering with the local populace, the administration has pondered upon shifting these refugees to an inhospitable island - Bhashan Char - of Bangladesh. Similar settlements of East Bengal refugees on inhospitable terrain and the hardships involved to merely survive and eke out a living have been described graphically by Sri Jatin Bala in his autobiography. His resolve to become the exiled narrator came from his humiliation as worse than a second-class citizen in refugee camps of the nation he was supposed to call his own because of his religious identity.

Childhood and its struggles against a hostile world, form a large part of JatinBala’s narrative. Rohingya children, too, are affected by malnutrition and trauma, used as distributors of “Mad Drugs” and for child-trafficking. BRAC, the Bangladesh NGO, and UNICEF are setting up temporary schools and *madarsas* for these displaced children. The lack of any formal education among these children and their parents signals the loss of a major chunk of historical narrative of persecution. But the steely resolve of the exile never to forget, as when Sri Bala describes surviving similar persecution as a child, remains something to hope for. “Just think of it - a boy, just about four and a half years of age, walking into a

refugee camp in India...I was uprooted, I was a Dalit...The day I had fallen to the ground with a headload of hay, I had sworn that I would educate myself and that was the day I wrote my first letters." (Interview with Jaydeep Sarangi). Perhaps, when better educational opportunities emerge for the Rohingya refugees, they too would shame violators of humanity with experiential narratives.

Lack of expression is the most problematic aspect of the Rohingya crisis. Though a number of research papers and news articles are being written about their humanitarian plight, no first-person authentic narrative accounts are emerging, primarily due to lack of education among Rohingya refugees. The only major literary expression so far has been at the Dhaka Literary Festival of 2017, where concerns about their plight were raised by European film stars and journalists alike. In this context, Sri Bala's scathing criticism is particularly memorable. "The life lived by Dalits in Bengal in particular and in India at large, is very different from the way it is portrayed in modern Bengali literature. It is a make-believe world." (Interview with Jaydeep Sarangi) The *bhadralok* Bengali intelligentsia on both sides of the border needs to take note of this criticism of its complacency. It needs to stop looking the other way whenever the Rohingya refugee looms on the horizon, and instead approach the new marginal identity with empathy and recognition in its discussions and literary endeavours, and more importantly empower the Rohingya 'Other' with narrative rights.

In the absence of refugee laws in Bangladesh - and without the right to freedom of movement, education and employment - the Rohingya refugee narrative is effectively silenced through five decades of informed institutional and intellectual neglect. In conclusion, we may note, that as we see the Bengali Dalit refugee break free of his clandestine status and pen the pain of an exile in solidarity with marginalised and displaced people all over the world, we hope that the subcontinent comes to grips with history and with its subhuman treatment of the Rohingya refugees, and charts the course to a new dawn.

"Tell me, what is my country?
The country where I was born
Why am I a foreigner?
I have only one name : refugee.
I have no nationality
I carry my baggage as a refugee
Tell me,
What is my land?
Where can I stand for a while?....

(Extract from *REFUGEE*, by JatinBala, translated by Jaydeep Sarangi)

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Role of Logotherapy in Developing Resilience: A Study of Gabrielle Zevin's novel *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*

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Abstract:

The novel The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry by Gabrielle Zevin, portrays the life of a man named Ajay, referred to as A.J., who faces a series of mishaps in his life. The aim of this article is to elucidate the manner in which he developed resilience despite the gruelling problems he had to face. A.J. applied logotherapy, which is a meaning-based therapy propounded and promulgated by a neurologist and psychiatrist named Viktor Frankl. Frankl advocated three different ways to discover meaning in one's life. Developing valuable relationships is one of the three ways, and this aspect has been researched upon in this article. According to Frankl, a human being is not an assortment of drives, instincts and desires as stated by several leading psychiatrists. A man tends to find his life meaningful only when he ceases living a self-centered life and attempts to reach out to fellow human beings. The individual would eventually develop the resilience to overcome the traumatic thoughts that might be haunting him/her, thereby enabling himself/herself to lead a meaningful life. The paper reflects on the importance of developing valuable human relationships and its role in fortifying a person from his traumatic past, through the life of A.J., the protagonist of the novel.

Keywords: Trauma, Love, Meaning, Resilience, Logotherapy.

Trauma is the outcome of shocking and disastrous events in life that affects a person psychologically. Terminal illness, death of loved ones, war, genocide, etc, are some of the prominent causes of trauma: "In its general definition, trauma is described as the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena" (Caruth 104). Experiencing trauma for a prolonged period of time can seriously impair the emotional and psychological well-being of an individual. However, the theory of resilience assures that trauma can be overcome by adopting a thought process that is conducive to mental health: "Resilience theory is a multifaceted field of study that has been addressed by social workers, psychologists, sociologists, educators and many others over the past few decades. In short, resilience theory addresses the strengths that people and systems demonstrate that enable them to rise above adversity" (VanBreda 14). According to resilience theorists, the magnitude of trauma is not proportional to the traumatic event, but to the manner in which the individual responds to it. An individual who fails to combat his problems with resilience eventually develops existential

vacuum, wherein, life appears to be meaningless.

Dr. Viktor Frankl, a neurologist and psychiatrist, who was an inmate of four different concentration camps, proclaimed that every life is meaningful, despite having experienced the horrors meted out in the camps. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning* he delineates the horrors he encountered in the concentration camp and the methodology he adopted to remain resilient and battle existential vacuum. He stated that it is the individual's responsibility to discover the meaning of his/her life by actively participating in it and being resilient in the wake of traumatic experiences. Frankl named his theory as logotherapy, wherein, the Greek word *logos* denotes "meaning" (MSM 104). He suggested that in order to discover the meaning of life, one should cease being self-obsessed and contribute to the wellbeing of others alongside fostering healthy relationships.

Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him. By his love he is enabled to see the essential traits and feature in the beloved person; and even more, he sees that which is potential in him, which is not yet actualized but yet ought to be actualized. Furthermore, by his love, the loving person enables the beloved person to actualize these potentialities. By making him aware of what he can be and what he should become, he makes these potentialities come true. (Frankl, MSM 116)

The aim of this article is to prove that a meaningful life can be led only when an individual stops being obsessed with his problems and learns to be resilient and accept difficulties and challenges as an integral part of life. However, to do so, he ought to participate in life, as withdrawing from society and brooding over his misfortunes will only magnify the problem and aggravate the pain. Meaning eludes the person who chases it fervently and also the one, who thinks only

of his own betterment. However, when a man shifts the focus from himself and begins to devote all the activities of his life to a loved one, he discovers the inner strength to overcome his own trauma and begins to find life meaningful. The attitude adopted by an individual also plays a vital role in his battle against trauma. Frankl has categorically stated that, suffering which cannot be evaded must be embraced gracefully, as life tends to impart a message using suffering as a channel: "Logotherapy teaches that pain must be avoided as long as it is possible to avoid it. But as soon as a painful fate cannot be changed, it not only must be accepted but may be transmuted into something meaningful, into an achievement" (Frankl, WTM 51).

The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry is a novel by Gabrielle Zevin. The protagonist of the story is a bookseller named Ajay Fikry, who is referred to as A.J. A.J. had discontinued his PhD and settled down in a remote place named Alice Island along with his wife to become a bookseller, a vocation that the couple found exciting. After her untimely death, he withdrew from society and became disillusioned with everything. He lost interest in running the bookshop and operated it in a perfunctory fashion, only to earn his livelihood. He was not bothered about replenishing his supply of books, to cater to the requirements of his readers. He drank heavily and ate unhealthily, which began to affect his health. The fiasco was complete when his extremely rare copy of *Tamerlane*, a book authored anonymously by Edgar Allan Poe when he was eighteen, was stolen. The cost of that book was estimated to be around four hundred thousand dollars and A.J. had pinned all his hopes on it to attain financial independence and thereby obtain his release from that Island. However, the theft had shattered all his hopes in an instant and he had no other choice but to live in the island and replenish the bookshop which was his sole source of income. This is when his resilience came into play and he decided to alter his shoddy lifestyle and bring his life back on track: "A person is free to shape his own character, and man is responsible for what he may have made out of himself. What matters is not the features of our character or the drives and instincts per se, but rather

the stand we take towards them. And the capacity to take that stand is what makes us human beings" (Frankl, WTM 5).

A.J. thereby decided to maintain his health as it was deteriorating rapidly due to his debauched lifestyle. He left his shop unlocked when he went out to exercise, as it contained nothing precious anymore. On his return, he found a toddler in his shop with a note pinned to the child's doll, which revealed the fact that it had been deliberately left there as the mother was unable to take care of it. The child was twenty-five months old and was named Maya. Initially, A.J. considered sending her away with a social worker. However, when the social worker arrived, he found it impossible to part with Maya as he was worried that the child might end up with the wrong kind of people much against the last wish of her mother, who desired that her daughter must be brought up by people who loved books. He thereby decided to adopt Maya and that decision gave him a new lease of life.

His bookshop inadvertently turned into the hub of Alice Island's social life because of Maya. People began frequenting the shop to check out the little girl, and in order to entertain them, A.J. began stocking books of their choice. A police officer named Lambiase, who had investigated A.J.'s wife's accident, *Tamerlane's* robbery and Maya's whereabouts; volunteered to be her godfather. He requested A.J. to organize a christening ceremony for Maya, which A.J. refused to do, stating that he was not a Christian. Lambiase insisted that a party should be organized at least, to formally announce the adoption of Maya to which A.J. agreed. A.J.'s sister-in-law Ismay was chosen as Maya's godmother. These new relationships made A.J.'s heart swell with love.

A.J. watches Maya in her pink party dress, and he feels a vaguely familiar, slightly intolerable bubbling inside of him. He feels drunk or at least carbonated. Insane. At first, he thinks this is happiness, but then he determines it's love. *Fucking love,*

he thinks. *What a bother.* It's completely gotten in the way of his plan to drink himself to death, to drive his business to ruin. The most annoying thing about it is that once a person gives a shit about one thing, he finds he has to start giving a shit about everything. (Zevin 99)

A.J.'s love for Maya made him more receptive to the emotion and he fell in love with Amelia, a woman working for the publishing house and married her. A.J. thereby found happiness and love once again after his wife Nic's death. However, his happiness was shortlived as A.J. was eventually diagnosed with Glioblastoma multiforme, which happened to be a rare form of brain cancer. However, A.J. was not shattered by this predicament. He was contented with the manner in which he had carried on with his life despite all the challenges that life had thrown at him: "What counts is not our fears and anxieties as such, but the attitude we adopt toward them. This attitude is freely chosen" (Frankl, UCM 49). He evaluated his own life on his death-bed and realized that he had successfully overcome every traumatic event and emerged as a better human out of every challenge. From being a selfish, embittered man, he had evolved into a loving father and husband. He had also carved out a niche for himself as the key figure of the society due to his vocation, as it is a widespread conception that a bookshop is the hub of social activity and it adds life to the place it is located in.

Maya's life had turned out beautifully owing to A.J.'s decision to adopt her. Amelia found the love of her life in A.J. since he decided to give himself another chance to experience happiness and opened himself to giving and receiving love. His decision to replenish his bookshop and keep it functioning added character to the island. This realization was tantamount to an epiphany and he was thoroughly convinced that the attitude that one adopts during crisis is what enables a man to overcome the trauma that he experiences, and the contribution that one makes towards the upliftment

of fellow human beings and the society at large is what makes a life worthy and meaningful: "In accepting this challenge to suffer bravely, life has a meaning upto the last moment, and it retains this meaning literally to the end. In other words, life's meaning is an unconditional one, for it even includes the potential meaning of unavoidable suffering" (MSM 118).

A.J was thoroughly convinced that he had lived a meaningful life as he not only managed to overcome his own traumatic past with immense resilience, but had also added value to the lives of his loved ones. Thereby, his parting advice to his daughter Maya was: ""We aren't the things we collect, acquire, read. We are, for as long as we are here, only love. The things we loved. The people we loved. And these, I think these really do live on." (303)

Abbreviations:

MSM- Man's Search for Meaning

UCM- The Unheard Cry for Meaning

WTM- The Will to Meaning

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A Literary Study of Third World Feminism, Sexual Victimization and Social Injustice towards Bangladeshi Women in Tahmima Anam's *The Good Muslim*

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Abstract:

The inceptive concept of feminism propounded by Western feminists focused on procuring equal rights for women in European countries. Later on, realizing the homogenous consternation of women globally, it aimed to embrace them by coining the term 'Global sisterhood'. But postcolonial feminists rejected this strategic alliance based on sexist oppression and urged to intersect it as ethnic-racial-nationality based sexual oppression i.e. multiracial feminism. The present study aims to analyze such sexual violence and social injustice towards third world females, who were violated and victimized due to regional tensions between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The modern People's Republic of Bangladesh is a recently emerged South Asian country. It was separated from Pakistan in the year 1971 but with it came enormous physical, social and economic chaos. The political conflict between the two nations tremendously traumatized and distressed the women of the present-day Bangladesh. The present research aims to study hegemonic Eurocentric feminism vs. Third World feminism to exhibit the struggle and activism of multiracial third world women who have received

*insufficient attention in Eurocentric feminist approach in the backdrop of Tahmima Anam's *The Good Muslim* published in 2011.*

Keywords: *Hegemonic Feminism, Third World women, Social Injustice, Pakistan- Bangladesh conflict.*

The concept of the Third World emerged when western navigators discovered the 'New world', impoverished and disadvantaged than the western industrial and capitalist world. The discovery led to an extrapolated mission of imperialism and colonization encompassing hegemonic control over this new world, labelled as the 'Third World'. Similar kind of distinction is perceived between feminist interpretations of the 'First World' and the 'Third world'. It is observed that initially the inceptive concept of western feminism focused on procuring equal rights for women in the European countries which further led to the realization of universal subjugation of women and an embracing attitude towards the Third World women calling it 'Global sisterhood'. But this attempt to portray women as a universal homogeneous powerless group is openly rejected by postcolonial and Third World feminists, who urged to intersect it as an ethnic-racial-nationality based

oppression,

If such concepts are assumed to be universally applicable, the resultant homogenization of class, race, religious, cultural and historical specificities of the lives of women in the third world can create a false sense of the commonality of oppressions, interests and struggles between and amongst women globally. Beyond sisterhood, there is still racism, colonialism and imperialism. (Mohanty, 1988: 77).

Therefore the Third World feminists emphasize to analyse racial, religious and ethnic differences and conflicts which have always been detrimental to feminine sexual purity and further societal acceptance. In the same context Tahmima Anam in *The Good Muslim* attempts to portray heart wrenching episodes of war time sexual assault and the consequent social injustice towards Bangla women. The first section of the present research article depicts a brief review and comparison between the Eurocentric and Third World feminisms. The second section presents theoretical insights and textual analysis of Third World feminine sexual trauma. The article concludes objectively highlighting the importance of individual Third World feminine concerns as quite distinctive from the First World cry of equal gender rights.

In order to understand the above-mentioned distinctions in feminism, two theoretical terms i.e. '*Hegemonic feminism*' or white First World feminists vs. '*Multiracial feminism*' of Third World women of colour are compared. Chela Sandoval calls '*Hegemonic feminism*', a Eurocentric approach dominated by white feminists and mentions in her book *Methodology of the Oppressed*, "This logic of hegemonic feminism is organized around a common code that shaped the work of a diverse group of feminist scholars, including Julia Kristeva, Toril Moi, Gerda Lerner, Cora Kaplan, Alice Jardine, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Gayle Greene, Coppélia Kahn, and Lydia Sargent." (Sandoval, 1985: 65) This category of feminism emphasizes sexism as the only and ultimate oppression with an intention to secure equal gender rights. However during late 1960s, feminist

organizations like National Organization for Women (NOW), Women's consciousness raising (CR) groups, Hijas de Cuauhtemoc (Chicana group), Women of All Red Nations (WARN) and Asian Sisters initiated diversified feminist concerns related to Third World females. These exclusive Third World feminine groups included Black feminists, Latina feminists, Mexicans and Asian American feminists' alliance groups and instead of considering sexism as the supreme and ultimate oppression they talked about racism, classism, and color based sexual oppression. Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill attempted to encapsulate this distinction by suggesting a single term i.e. '*Multiracial Feminism*':

"While we adopt the label "multiracial," other terms have been used to describe this broad framework. For example, Chela Sandoval refers to "U.S. Third World feminisms," while other scholars refer to "indigenous feminisms." In their theory text-reader, Alison M. Jagger and Paula M. Rothenberg adopt the label "multicultural feminism." We use "multiracial" rather than "multicultural" as a way of underscoring race as a power system that interacts with other structured inequalities to shape genders." (Zinn and Dill, 1996:324).

The conceptual framework of multiracial feminism concentrates on the struggle of Third World women (belonging to a particular race) against sexual racial oppression being inflicted upon them from people and structures belonging to a different race. Thus the primary concern in this situation is not fighting for equal rights but calling for justice against physical and mental oppression/molestation because of the difference between their races. In the words of Becky Thompson: Multiracial feminism is not just another brand of feminism that can be taught alongside liberal, radical and socialist feminism. Multiracial feminism is the heart of an inclusive women's liberation struggle. The race-class-gender-sexuality-nationality framework through which multiracial feminism operates encompasses and goes way beyond liberal, radical and socialist feminist priorities- and it always has...Teaching Second Wave

history by chronicling the rise of multiracial feminism challenges limited categories because it puts social justice and anti-racism at the center of attention. (Thompson, 2002:349).

Here the centre of attention is the Third World Bangla women who had to face dual oppression and trauma caused by external forces as well as internal national policies.

The resident Bangla women were sexually victimized and traumatized during the 1971 political national conflict between East Pakistan and West Pakistan which was caused primarily due to distinct religious and cultural practices, language, food habits, physicality and aesthetic sensibility wherein Bengali Muslims were considered ‘Indianized’, ‘unreliable co-religionists’, ‘half converts’ and ‘nominal muslims’ (Ali. 1983, Roy.1996) The East Pakistanis influenced by Bangla culture and language were shunned by the West Pakistanis who preferred Urdu and Punjabi. The situation became explosive when Muhammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan declared Urdu as the sole national language which disappointed the citizens of East Pakistan and led to a language movement (1952). Secondly, Bengali women were advised to give up the practice of wearing *Sari* which was considered improper and immoral clothing style as per Muslim religious norms. The politically dominant West desired to modify the language and cultural practices of the Eastern region which seemed to be derived from Hinduism.

The final attempt to degrade East Pakistanis was the refusal of the West to accept the Bengali leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who won the general election of 1970. In spite of sharing power, West Pakistan initiated a secret mission named ‘Operation Searchlight’ and attacked Dhaka University which was a centre of civil movements. Describing Pakistani soldiers’ attack on female dormitory of Dhaka University, the US General Consul Mr. Archer K Blood (Present in Dhaka at that time) sent a secret telegram to his officials and informed, “Rokeya Hall, a dormitory for girl students, was set ablaze and the girls were machine-gunned as

they fled the building. The attack seemed to be aimed at eliminating the female leadership since many girl student leaders resided in that hall.” (Blood, 2014). This was the beginning of the nine months Liberation War of Bangladesh (1971) where two groups- Punjabi soldiers of West Pakistan and *Mukti Bahini*, Bengali guerrilla army clashed with each other.

In the above mentioned national political conflict Bangla women were treated as instruments in the apparatus of national honor and were ultimately deprived of discrete identification. Cynthia Enloe identifies it as licensed sexual violence or ‘militarized rape’ (Enloe, 2000) which acquiesces mass rape of women belonging to opposite race. In the words of Jyoti Puri, “Precisely because women represent the external and internal boundaries of nations and national identities, they are especially vulnerable to violence. In these cases, violence toward women is an attack on the nation or ethnic group that they represent. Indeed, the use of rape as a means to simultaneously violate women of enemy groups and the group itself led feminists to call rape a war crime.” (Puri, 2004:120) Tahmima’s novel *The Good Muslim* delineates appalling portrayal of ‘wartime sexual violence’ where Bangladeshi females were treated as ‘comfort women’ with eugenist stratagem by Pakistani nationalist soldiers, “Some had been raped in their villages, in front of their husbands and fathers, other kidnapped and held in army barracks for the duration of the war.” (Anam, 2011:69). During the war, Pakistani soldiers established horrific rape-camps for Bangla women and around 2, 00,000 women were sexually exploited. Piya, an eighteen-year-old rape victim in the novel narrates her trauma,

I was captured by the Pakistan Army on 26 July 1971. They came to raid my village...I was put on a truck. Our neighbour’s daughter was with me; She was only fourteen...We were chained to the wall. Someone had been there before us- we saw her name scratched into the wall. She hanged herself, so they shaved our hair and took our saris. Twenty, thirty (men). They took turns. After the other girl died, it was just

me...Until the war ended. (Anam, 2011:293).

In addition to Enloe's classification, another less contemplated *fons et origo* i.e. 'eugenicist approach' is observed here which violates feminine chastity and effectuates selective breeding of a specific race, ethnicity, and nationality: "Eugenistic constructions of national reproduction concern much more than the physical 'health' of the next generation: they concern notions of 'national stock' and biologization of cultural traits." (Davis, 2008: 33). In addition to corrupting National honor, another objective was to plant Punjabi Pakistani 'gene' in the wombs of Bangla women which will evolve an entire Pakistani nationalist future generation on Bangladeshi terrain. Bina D Costa reveals shocking facts interviewing Dr. Geoffrey Davis of Australia who met prisoners of war in Bangladesh:

B: How did they justify raping the women?

GD: They had orders of a kind or instruction from Tikka Khan to the effect that a good Muslim will fight anybody except his father. So what they had to do was to impregnate as many Bengali women as they could. That was the theory behind it.

B: Why did they have to impregnate the women? Did they tell you?

GD: Yes, so there would be a whole generation of children in East Pakistan that would be born with the blood from the West. That's what they said. (Costa, 2010).

A distorted version of nationalistic illusion led eugenicist approach coalesced with mass rape of autochthonous Bangla females ensued as the most horrendous crimes committed against women in the 20th century. The physically, mentally, financially and socially incapacitated women perceived no fortification on the Post Liberated Bangladesh in which the first venture of the newly constructed nationalism was to terminate Pakistani fathered foetus. The entire manoeuvre was well contrived in the veneer of national rehabilitation program first by bestowing the title *birangonas* or 'war heroines' to rape victims, "We will rehabilitate you. Back into society...Sheikh Mujib said...you were heroines, war heroines." (Anam, 2011:69) Secondly

by establishing Women Rehabilitation centres for *birangonas* to recuperate and reunite with families so, "that their lives would soon return to normal, that they would go home and their families would embrace them as heroes of the war." (Anam, 2011:69) The bonafide aim was to persuade Bangla women to abort antagonist nationalist foetus in the hegemonic patriarchal nationalism endorsed structure. Maya narrates about her volunteer services at Rehab centres, "You thought I was just helping the sick ones but we had a whole clinic at the back...What Sheikh Mujib said? That he didn't want those bastard children in our country." (Anam, 2011:243) Piya, the face of rape victims refuses to abort her child and disappears, "They forced her. And she is not the only one. Some of the girls don't want to. But they're ashamed; they're told that they're carrying the seeds of these soldiers," (Anam, 2011:142) those who were born were already in wretched condition, "The war babies, the children of rape, had been left to junior doctors, the volunteers in ragged tents on the outskirts of town." (Anam, 2011:244).

The twin endeavours of Bangla political leaders to reintegrate *birangonas* in the mainstream society were inefficacious. The male freedom fighters enjoyed status and opportunities in public sectors whereas these *birangonas* received public humiliation and societal disowning. In spite of Sheikh Mujib's appeal to the nation to accept these *birangonas*, family members did not welcome them, "They said they don't want us. Where are we supposed to go?" (Anam, 2011:69). Finally the ultimate appeal of these *birangonas* to be called *muktijuddhas* (freedom fighters) was also neglected, "We don't want to be heroines. We are ashamed. We want to leave our shame behind." (Anam, 2011:69)

The racial hatred of West Pakistanis decimated these bangle females' pride as many of them are still struggling to get rid of sexual shame forcibly imprinted on their forehead, "Right now, across the country thousands of women live with the memory of their shame." (Anam, 2011:213)

Conclusion

Thus, we see that the incidents of xenophobic sexual assault of Bangladeshi women by Pakistani soldiers are irredeemable and the consequent struggle of these multiracial females is much more than a plea of equal gender rights propounded by Eurocentric feminist agenda. The multiple issues in the day to day lives of third world women of color, physically challenged women, poor women, old women, working-class women, Dalit women, lesbians, heterosexual women, and even financially privileged women need to be recognized: "In the first (essay) I wrote, 'I believe that the oppression of women is the first impression'... Now what matters most is more abstract and totally specific: the closest word to it, justice." (Segrest, 1985: 12).

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A Passage to Redemption in Anita Nair's *The Better Man*

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Abstract :

The paper traces the journey of a disturbed individual in Anita Nair's The Better Man by exploring the emotional boundaries confronting him. The trauma of having to negotiate between one's fractured inner self as well as the need to camouflage the non-existence of such a self becomes appallingly apparent. In the process it delineates the subtle shades of an individual's inner being and his existential anguish. It probes Mukundan's psyche, bruised and battered by his childhood experiences owing to the tyranny of his father. He is, thus forced to shun society and live a secluded life. The views of the Indian psychoanalyst and author, Sudhir Kakar are applied to shed light on how the protagonist's infantile experiences become the basis of his underlying personality.

Keywords: Psyche, inner self, childhood experiences, personality

Culture constitutes the psychological mindset of an individual and forges his identity. Studies have validated that abuse in early childhood shatters a child's self-esteem and confidence. This casts its gloomy long shadow on an individual and affects his cultural consciousness. Early Indian psychoanalysts like Girindrasekhar Bose and others adapted the western classical mode of approach having incorporated the principles and values of Indian culture. In recent times, Sudhir Kakar relates his theoretical concepts to the Freudian psychoanalytical tradition and is one of the most reputed scholars in the field of psychoanalysis

and culture, along with George Devereux, Geza Roheim, Abram Kardiner, Erik Erikson, and others. He resonates the views of his mentor Erik Ericson who considered the process of identity formation as an ongoing one and as one that was inseparable from his cultural and historical factors.

While western ideology stresses on individualism with minimal familial ties, the Indian context is quite different wherein the individual is entangled in the symbiotic womb of the family system. Though the family supports him in braving the vicissitudes of life, it later leaves him unprepared to take decisions and handle life. To face the challenges that confront him, he develops various strategies to construct an outer social self. He grovels in uncertainty thus distancing himself from his true inner identity. Kakar's ground breaking work, *The Inner World: A Psycho-analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* published in 1978 entails a scholarly and comprehensive account of the question of Indian identity from a psychoanalytic perspective. Speaking of an Indian identity, Kakar states:

Identity as used here, is meant to convey the process of synthesis between inner life and outer social reality as well as the feeling of personal continuity and consistency within oneself. It refers to the sense of having a stake in oneself, and at the same time in some kind of confirming community. (2)

Kakar has aligned psychology, anthropology and religion, three separate disciplines in the history of Western thought with distinct genealogies to interpret

the Indian psyche. In his *Inner World*, Kakar conducts a psychoanalytic analysis of the role of the father in the Indian child's socio-emotional development during its early childhood. Anita Nair is one such contemporary Indian English writer whose works have dealt with themes of introspection and self-discovery. Her novels impart an intimacy having been written from her first-hand experience of the locale and events. Her debut novel, *The Better Man* (1999) set in the fictitious village of Kaikurussi is moulded on the lines of her ancestral village of Mundakottukurussi near Shornur in Kerala and reflects the minutiae of day-to-day social activities there. *The Better Man* delineates the subtle shades of the individuals' inner being and their existential trauma. Tracing the life of the protagonist, Mukundan, the paper attempts to explore how our adult development has its foundations firmly rooted in the inner life of the child within us. This will be reinforced by applying Kakar's views that an individual's infantile experiences become the basis of his underlying personality. The narrative unfolds with the protagonist, Mukundan Nair, a retired government employee and a bachelor returning to his native village Kaikurussi. On his forced return to his gargantuan house (*tharavad*), he is haunted by the ghosts of his mother and his ancestors and a sense of failure. He constantly reproaches himself for abandoning his mother to the mercy of his father and finds himself unable to measure up to his still alive and domineering eighty-nine year old father, Achuthan Nair. The novelist narrates the struggle of the protagonist, Mukundan Nair through the political and social reality of his time to become a better man.

The paper investigates how patriarchy works psychologically and co-relates patriarchal culture and the caste system in carving out an Indian identity. Though patriarchy has common features across societies, it combines with other dominant structures and acts differently in each society. Patriarchy is described as a system of social structures and practices "that privilege some men over all others, including other men, and enable their automatic access to intellectual, spiritual and material resources" (Geetha 8). In the

Indian society, the male child's subordination to the father is temporary as he takes up the father's role as the head. But in the case of some men, they remain brutalized throughout their lives fighting a psychic battle as the case in point. *The Better Man* delineates the picture of a matrilineal joint family system of Kerala in its transition to a modern nuclear family structure. Though the old joint family system has begun disintegration, vestiges of former practices linger. The uncle's position (*karnavar*), vested with supreme authority in the *tharavad* (ancestral home) has been occupied by the father/husband, Achuthan Nair who wields authority on his wife and son. Rather than resorting to construct a matrilineal *tharavad* in Malabar writhing under the agonies of a patriarch as in O. Chandu Menon's *Indulekha* (1889) or M.T. Vasudevan Nair's *Nalukettu* (1959), Nair's narrative lays bare the psycho-social insecurities and instabilities that impinge the minds of the marginalised lot (the women, children, servants and men of the lower caste) due to patriarchal dominance. The gargantuan *tharavad* is not presented as a site of the former glory and resplendence of Mukundan's family. Nor is there any of the sentimental attachment usually associated with one's ancestral home. Nair's trope of the *tharavad* and its dark rooms, long corridors lined with portraits of fierce faced gods and goddesses and the steep teakwood staircase provides a metaphor for a mental state and the disturbing memories that have been coursing through the mind of Mukundan. The tyranny of the father from whom he wanted to escape lay hidden in every crook and crevice. The foreboding space of the *tharavad* emerges as Mukundan staggers around at night chased by the bellowing ghosts of his mother and other relatives. Metaphorically it signifies the protagonist's groping through the dark alleys of his past and guilt ridden memories of abandoning his mother. The house could also symbolise the Indian society in general and the Kerala society in particular, shackled by the fetters of patriarchal dominance. The sixth chapter of the novel appropriately titled 'The Echo of the Clogs' marks the entry of the patriarch, Achuthan Nair. The "tap tap"(72) of the wooden clogs

communicated his presence and authority, his moods of impatience, annoyance and wrath; in short the very man himself. As he moved over to his new house with his mistress, he left the clogs behind “as they had served their purpose.” Another strategy employed in asserting his position was the use of rhetorical statements which the listener was meant to answer. This was for Achuthan Nair to be convinced that “the gospel truth of his words had been understood by the inferior intelligence of the person standing before him” (51). The following quote illustrates this:

‘You [Mukundan] will never make anything of your life. All you will be fit for is ploughing the fields!’ he [Achuthan Nair] would bellow, pausing only to question, ‘Tell me, what will you be fit for when you grow up?’

And Mukundan would reply, hurt and shame thickening his voice, ’To plough the fields.’ (70)

The turmoil in Mukundan’s mind finds no solace in his home or the idyllic landscape of Kaikurussi. On his return, Mukundan cocoons himself to the new section of the *tharavad* where he is free from his tormenting memories of the past. His life in the government quarters in Bangalore “in no way resembled the hell he had been exiled to” (13). Away from his village, Mukundan interacted freely with his colleagues and was successful in building up his career. He ruled the Club Library as the librarian, a job which he took up with zest not owing to his love for books or reading (a desire wiped out by his father) but the library took the place of a family and Mukundan donned “the role of head of a household” (14). The *karnavar* in traditional Nair families of Malabar managed the daily affairs of the *tharavad* and was responsible for the well-being of its members (Gough 339). Simulating the role of the *karnavar*, Mukundan showers his attention on the books as “unlike human beings it demanded little from him and claimed no rights” (14). Mukundan’s dream of assuming the role of his father (which he was

incapable of in Kaikurussi) finds release in the form of a librarian. Throughout his life he yearns for the approval of his father who is never satisfied with him. The novel probes Mukundan’s psyche, bruised and battered by his childhood experiences and the tyranny of his father which forces him to shun society as he is unable to emotionally identify with his own village and the people. The titles, “The Reluctant Native” and “Seeking to Escape”, given to the second and third chapters of the narrative are indicative of the mindset of the protagonist. In *The Inner World*, Kakar offers an interesting explanation of the father-son relationship in the Indian Hindu family and its consequences on identity formation. Kakar maintains that the boy in the Indian context, experiences two births. The first, after his biological birth, when he finds himself “enveloped in, and often overpowered by, his mother’s protective nurturing and love” (127). As his world of childhood widens, he is evicted from the “intimate cocoon of maternal protection” and plunged headlong into an unfamiliar masculine world (126). This second birth or “entry into society” takes place in the fourth or fifth year in a child’s life for which he is totally unprepared for. The abruptness of the separation from the mother and the virtual reversal of everything that is expected of him, according to Kakar, may lead to traumatic developmental consequences. This transition is then for him one which involves extreme bewilderment, uprootedness and misunderstanding. His narcissistic vulnerability to be protected and adored, soon seeks reinforcement by trying to identify with the father. Kakar’s views aptly account for the traumatic existence of Anita Nair’s protagonist, Mukundan Nair who longs to be a better man. As Kakar evaluates:

In the childhood setting of the Indian extended family, the boy’s ensuing feelings of helpless rage and anxiety, unmitigated by the active presence of a helpful father, represent the prototypal narcissistic injury, one that requires militant psychological effort to repair.

(156)

The ambivalence of the mother-son bond further

intensifies the need for the father's touch, "the necessity of oedipal alliance often outweighing the hostility of Oedipal complex" (Kakar 131). Instead of offering him emotional access, the father withdraws into "a plane of aloof perfection or preoccupied authority "thus leaving the son bewildered and disappointed when his perceives that his father can never be an ally in his boyish struggle to cope with his new-life circumstances. These traits are predominantly evident in the case of Mukundan. He sees his father for the first time on his return from Burma when he was four years old. At the very first sight of the father, the boy cuddles close his mother thereby setting the tone of their relationship. In the case of Achuthan Nair, he is not only the "aloof" father but the epitome of tyranny. The corporal punishments and abuses showered on him as a child leaves painful memories like scars on the mind of young Mukundan which he carries with him even as a fifty-eight year old man. In such a situation, the boy may turn to other men for models. For Mukundan, the caretaker of the *tharvad* becomes the 'surrogate father', friend and confidant of his childhood. Even later in life it is the caretaker who boosts his low spirits and consoles the remorseful Mukundan for not rescuing his mother from his domineering father.

Throughout his life we find Mukundan striving to earn his father's respect and approval: "He was always trying to measure up; trying to please" (79). He brings him gifts on every visit but Achuthan Nair fails to reciprocate his love and accepts them as "a god accepting homage to his greatness." Mukundan loathes the village community that had let an upstart usurp the position of the most honourable and influential man in the village. His childish longing for approval is obvious and it becomes the obsession that fetters his life. When he is made a member of the Community hall committee—"a chance to be at the helm of village affairs"—Mukundan feels his greatest desire of taking his father's place come true (322). He wonders how his father could still claim respect and acceptability among the people of Kaikurussi. After his demise,

Mukundan's bitterness spills over: "He was the worst father anyone could have had" (342). Now realisation dawns on him that he was no better than his father. He feels that the community hall would be a grim reminder of the weakling that he was as it entombed his failure as a friend, lover and eventually as a man. The unfinished community hall he plans to put to blaze was the image of his own greed "for recognition and acceptance, importance and adulation" (349). He realises that he had sacrificed his integrity and left unheeded the whispers of his conscience. The words of his lover reverberates in the recesses of his mind: "You are a coward. A smug and completely self-absorbed coward who puts himself before anyone else and then uses his own feebleness of character to excuse it. . . You disgust me" (323). Mukundan finally makes the choice between individual and society having been convinced that the individual's conscience, free from the ugly craving for recognition and power is the chosen path to become a better man.

The present study has made an attempt to look at the extent and form of subordination conditioned by the social and cultural environment in which the protagonist has been placed. The trauma of having to negotiate between one's fractured inner self as well as the need to camouflage the non-existence of such a self becomes appallingly apparent. It heralds the birth of a new being or the rising of a better man from the remains of his cloistered self.

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Projecting ASD: A Study of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of The Dog in The Night Time*

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Abstract:

The human mind is one of the most complex organs when it comes to defining humanity. It is the mind that shapes not only the behaviour of a person but also gears up the society as a whole. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) estimates that almost 28.47% of the human population has disorders when it comes to mental health as compared to other health-related problems. Besides science and psychology, literature is one field which has been dealing with the problems of psychology since times immemorial. This paper focuses on Autism Syndrome as projected by Mark Haddon in The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time (2003). The main aim of this paper is to analyze how this concept of mental health, psychology and developmental disorder-ASD is projected by Haddon in the novel.

Keywords: Abnormality, Asperger, Disorder, Mind, Psychology.

Asperger syndrome is an Autism Spectrum Disorder-ASD which is also known as 'dash of autism'. It is basically a developmental disorder which is "characterized by significant difficulties in social interactions and nonverbal communication, along with restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviour and interests." (Biomedical Journal of Scientific and Technical Research) Asperger syndrome however, is considered to be a milder form of autism. However,

within the spectrum of the disorder, it can range from mild to severe. This paper will focus on the aspect of autism syndrome as projected by Mark Haddon in his book *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003). The novel presents a first person tale of the Christopher Boone a fifteen year old with Asperger's Syndrome- a form of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Pervasive Development Disorder (PDD) characterized by abnormalities in social interactions along with restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviour and interests. Major events of the book are narrated through the eyes and point-of-view of Christopher. The narrative style of the book and the overall structure of the novel reflect Christopher's mindset and how he continues his life amidst all chaos. Thus, the main aim of this paper is to analyze how this concept of mental health, psychology and developmental disorder with reference to Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Based on a close reading of the text, this paper also takes into account aspects of abnormality as a social construct outlined by O' Reilley and Lester and a take on 'Theory of Mind' outlined by Tony Atwood, as the basic methodology to support the arguments.

In the opening, we see Christopher, in the mid-night hours, his attention caught to a particular situation, the death of his neighboring dog named Wellington. Christopher narrates, "It was 7 minutes after midnight. The dog was lying on the grass in the middle of the

lawn in front of Mrs. Shears' house. Its eyes were closed." (1) Thus, Christopher embarks on a journey, a journey which he calls a 'murder mystery' only to solve the case of the dog that has been murdered that night at Mrs. Shears' house. Solving the murder mystery is taken up by a child who has 'abnormalities' in his mind. This makes the narration equally interesting. Tony Atwood in his book *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome* (2007) points out that children with Asperger's though are socially defective, yet they may possess interests in various fields. Though their linguistic and communicative abilities may be lacking yet they have a taste for some specific subjects and areas of interest in which they excel compared to normal children. Christopher finds mathematics and astronomy equally fascinating.

Christopher has been living with his father ever since his mother has been dead. "Mother died two years ago." (28) However, his neighbor and father's companion Mrs. Shears has been keeping them company. Mrs. Shears too has been living alone in the house ever since her husband had divorced her. Christopher's father starts developing a soft corner for Mrs. Shears only to know towards the end that she loves her dog Wellington more than anyone else. Matters become worse when Christopher figures out the actual mystery behind the murder of the dog and what actually happened to his mother. This gives the narration a new turn. We move from the 'murder mystery' narration towards a 'bildungsroman' narration.

Christopher being the first-person narrator, the readers are plunged into the ideas, thoughts and feelings of Christopher directly and this makes the story-line interesting. However, there are many complexities while we try to understand a child suffering from Asperger's or ASD. One interesting fact that Haddon puts forward is the 'normal' - 'abnormal' dichotomy. In the book entitled *Examining Mental Health Through Social Constructionism* (2017) by Michelle O'Reilly and Jessica Nina Lester observes a social constructionist position when it comes to distinguish the 'normal' from the 'abnormal'. These are mere

constructs through the use of language. Mark Haddon in the book not only presents the problem of Christopher as a child having serious developmental issues but also subverts the way Christopher thinks about the world. In the eyes of Christopher, the entire world, except him is abnormal. Thus, Haddon shapes not only the way the readers are able to sympathize with Christopher but also subverts what constitutes 'normalcy'. Thus, by subverting what is normal, the readers get to know interesting facts through the mind of Christopher. An interesting example that Christopher cites in the text is regarding the constellation Orion. Orion, according to 'normal people' is Orion because the constellation somewhat looks like a hunter. "People say that Orion is called Orion because Orion was a hunter and the constellation looks like a hunter with a club and a bow and arrow." (156) Whereas, Christopher finds this has no meaning at all. According to Christopher, this is 'silly' because it is just a group of stars. Thus, one can join the dots of stars and form a figure like anything they want. The meanings that we assign to different set of objects in this universe, is not fixed always, meanings always defer. This is just one way of looking at the world and observing the world through the mind of Christopher. And according to Christopher, that is the 'truth'. (157)

A major part of the novel focuses on the activities of Christopher, his interactions with others and his voice as the sole story-teller. Readers are thus, automatically drawn towards the cognitive and corporeal space of Christopher through the layering of various perspectives and reactions. He finds people confusing. According to Christopher, people talk a lot without using words. Any child with an Asperger's Syndrome or ASD is unable to understand the non-verbal gestures that people make. This can be explained with the concept widely known as the 'Theory of the Mind'. Tony Atwood in *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome* states about this phenomenon in details. According to Atwood, "The psychological term Theory of Mind (ToM) means the ability to recognize and understand thoughts, beliefs, desires and intentions of other people in order to make sense of their behaviour

and predict what they are going to do next." (112) A 'general' person will understand others through their voice, tone and non verbal communications which cannot be perceived at all by someone who has an Asperger's Syndrome. Secondly, Christopher finds the use of metaphors equally confusing. This is because he sees the world as it is and cannot understand the complexities that language and language ornamentation has to offer in this case. It happens purely in the imaginary level and when Christopher tries analyzing what is and what is not, it confuses his understanding. He is not able to distinguish the real and the imaginary. Whatever is said is perceived by his brain in the exact manner of expression. Language, which provides the base for communication and understanding, here becomes a medium of obstruction and impediment for Christopher to understand the world as it is.

Christopher's inability to unable the nuances of language and communication become more vivid when he reaches the railway station to collect the ticket for London. There is a constant struggle in Christopher's mind to fit the signifier with the signified and it very often slips off. Social connection in the case of Christopher becomes very different and difficult. He is unable to reach out to others and is unable to understand the expressions made by others as well. Christopher has only a handful of people with whom he interacts properly. Besides his parents, especially his father, his school-teacher Siobhan serves his needs, understands him and Christopher too can interact with Siobhan with comfort. It is Siobhan who teaches Christopher the various interactions and human emotions although Christopher is not able to comprehend everything. When it comes to meeting and talking with others in the society, there comes an impediment on the way.

Events take a turn when the so called 'murder mystery' is solved at the middle part of the novel when he finds out that it is his father who killed Wellington. From this point onwards, his focus shifts from solving the mystery to gaining independence. He wants to leave the home; he wants to leave his father because he feels no longer at ease with his father. The sense of comfort and

safety has finally weakened and diluted. "I had to get out of the house. Father had murdered Wellington. That meant he could murder me." (152) From this point of the text, the novel takes a different turn in case of the genre. From a 'murder mystery novel', it becomes a 'bildungsroman' novel, focusing on Christopher's running away from the house for the first time, all alone. In general, by changing the genre mid-way, Haddon adopts a different method of narrating the story.

One important aspect of the novel is Haddon's portrayal of the contemporary family with someone having an abnormality. The novel presents a micro-family structure that is shattered in its being. Christopher's father is Ed Boone, the primary caretaker and caregiver of the family who is characterized by a dark temper but is a delicate father when it comes to parenting. Christopher relies heavily upon his father. He trusts and depends upon Ed for his living. For Christopher, a young boy with ASD, his father becomes the sole nurturer. He feels safe in father's company. But when Christopher realizes two mistakes committed by his father, which according to Christopher are 'crimes', the bond finally starts fading off. Christopher figures out that it is Ed who killed Wellington the dog and Ed reveals the actual truth which led him to murder the neighbouring dog. Secondly, Christopher too figures out about his mother's whereabouts and realizes that his father had lied to him regarding his mother being dead. Christopher finally confronts with Ed and decides to leave the house which brings in the major shift in the novel. However, Ed remains compassionate towards his son even after the hurdles that he had to face. Moreover, when the parents of Christopher were having a tough time, it was Ed who took up the charge of taking up and looking after Christopher, rather than Christopher's mother.

The character of Christopher's mother, Judy Boone is equally important. Haddon, through the characters of Ed and Judy, shows the way of parenting when it comes to handling a child with a disability. Judy's narrative voice is the only actual narrative voice in the text that we have besides that of Christopher. As

mentioned earlier, Haddon adopts a multiple genres to deal with the text. Here he brings in the epistolary form while dealing with the thoughts, words and speeches of Judy Boone. According to Christopher, his mother had died two years back, which was not the case. Through the epistolary form, Judy speaks directly to the readers as well as Christopher. She narrates about the problems she had to go through while trying to rise up Christopher and thus failing to do so. Judy comments in one of the letters addressed to her son,

I was not a very good mother, Christopher. Maybe if things had been different, maybe if you'd been different, I might have been better at it. But that's just the way things turned out. (113)

This shows her negative concern about her 'disabled' son. Out of some other reasons, this is one of the reasons for which Judy decided to break off the marriage with Ed and elope with Roger. The letters portray her simple, yet powerful emotional conflict, the dilemma that she underwent. She loves her son, has a concern for him but still unable to cope up with his daily tantrums. Judy is presented by Haddon as a mother who loves her son but is an inadequate caregiver, unlike Ed, who serves the purpose till the end. Towards the latter part of the letters, she justifies her act of leaving

the son and the husband behind and moving ahead of the situation.

Mark Haddon, in the novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* thus tries to develop the idea of what it is to live with a disability. Ranging from personal to societal interactions and day-to-day communications, it creates an impact in the life of Christopher Boone. Yet, Haddon tries to subvert the notions of 'normal' 'abnormal' dichotomies through the character portrayal of Christopher.

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Death as a Passage to Permanence: A Study of *Porphyria's Lover* and *A Musical Instrument*

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Abstract :

Death has generally been equated with the cessation of life, as an ultimate end in the biological idiom. This understanding of death has also permeated into quotidian discourses and through practice has rendered other implications of death almost invalid. In this context, the paper aims at unraveling the artistic significations of death and thus read the same as a part of cultural experience, in this case literature. Instead of reading death solely on biological terms, the paper probes into the artistic dimension of it through the utilization of the theories of Eros and Thanatos as given by Sigmund Freud in his work Beyond the Pleasure Principle. The paper established life as an interjection in the process of union with the primal matter thus contradicting the fundamental goal promoted by many spiritual communities across the globe. In order to explicate the same, the paper analyses two poems by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning and titled A Musical Instrument and Porphyria's Lover respectively. The poems are examined as depiction of the excruciatingly agonizing process of creation which inevitably commences with embracing death. To sum up, the paper by affecting a departure from the common usage of the meaning of death opens up avenues in which its significance in other discursive and ontological realms can be appreciated. It establishes as a creative force with immense powers

to raise the subject to the level of sublime.

Keywords: Death, Freudian Drives, Creative Force, Primordial Matter, *A Musical Instrument*, *Porphyria's Lover*

Death has been a ubiquitous and enigmatic presence in the history of mankind. The history of art, literature, and philosophy would establish the incessant struggle of mankind to understand, conquer, or even cheat death. The fact that death still largely occupies and challenges artistic sensibilities is sufficient proof of its certitude and invincibility. The paper will seek to explore death as an artistic phenomenon directly connected to the conflicting nature of mankind which seeks immortality through embracing death unconditionally. The studies conducted by Sigmund Freud on death-drive or Thanatos will be considered to establish death drive as a constructive, productive force which liberates human beings from the imposed conditions of repression to allow union with the primordial matter. To explicate the aforesaid notions Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *A Musical Instrument* and *Porphyria's Lover* by Robert Browning will be taken into account. The former will be studied for the unique property of art to enrich lives through death and in the second case, the much maligned artist lover will be studied as a creator of permanent art.

Homo sapiens can be understood to be the most intellectually evolved species in the history of animal kingdom. Its desire for preservation, procreation, and

continuation in the has conditioned its responses towards adopting best practices conducive to its survival. These instincts have evolved through ages to give rise to several superstructural advancements which includes profound intellectual potentials of reason and judgment with which the species attempts to overcome or neutralise the fear of death. A desire for anarchy and chaos coupled with a constructive inclination towards self-preservation has been the subject of study of Sigmund Freud, and forms the kernel of his work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). Freud's tenets are largely based on speculations drawn on the anatomical structure of organisms and the contemplations upon the coming into being of the psyche in response to the symbolic realm external to it.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud enumerates dual drives (Eros and Thanatos) dictating the psyche of an individual – former seeking to preserve and delay the goal of human existence whereas the latter aiming at restoring instantaneously the original order through the destruction of the physical self of the organism. During the course of explanation, Freud on Darwinian terms asserts the presence of rudimentary protoplasm which through circumstantial stimulus metamorphosed into extremely complex organisms, in this case human. The surroundings and factors sustaining life altered their courses which had corresponding effects on the protoplasm, forcing it, over an extended period of time, to grow or shed appendages in order to sustain the cycle of life. This however, had little bearing on the traces of memory constituting the subconscious which strives to retrace the primordial state of simplistic existence. This is the function of Thanatos which seeks to restore the organism to the state of non-existence or oneness with matter (30). Thus, it can be said that drawing a watertight demarcation would result in an incomplete appreciation of his ideas pertaining to Eros and Thanatos. The dual drives aim at destruction of biological self with the former only active in delaying the pleasure of achieving this absolute goal whereas the latter strives to fulfill the same instantaneously.

The above explanation of Freud problematises the

nomenclatures of life and death by questioning the properties which define life and death of an individual. Common usage would define death as a cessation of the physical processes causing the shutting down of vital organs, loss of body heat, and a sudden discontinuance of the capacity to respond to sensory stimulations in a locomotory organism. These explications are contextual and pertain solely to the biological state of the organism, obliterating in its way psychological, social, or philosophical dimensions of life. If it is assumed that the end of biological life is death of the physical frame and return to the inanimate then biological life, ephemeral as it is, should be deemed as a rupture in the great cycle of eternal life. Consecutively, it would follow that biological death, lamentable as it is, should be seen as a resumption of life in its actual form. This should establish Thanatos as a more constructive force than Eros seeking to restore order and continue the cycle of eternal life almost instantly. Death-drive hence, can be seen as more desirable state owing to its creative dynamics as through repetition it elevates the organism from linearity of biological existence, consequently empowering it with unceasing opportunities to be active, both physically and intellectually.

This essential paradox of art by which it bestows immortality positing physical annihilation as the inevitable rite of passage, comprises the determining thread of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem *A Musical Instrument* (1860). The poem narrates the exploits of the Greek god Pan as he ravages the pristine environment of a river bed in search of the one reed fit to be metamorphosed into a musical instrument producing divine music. On being successful in locating the desired reed, Pan pulls it out of the ransacked river bed and violently drawing out all signs of life from it, turns it into a musical instrument. After the completion of this exercise, he plays fine music which restores harmony of the lifeless and plundered river bank.

At the start of the poem, the poet sets out a tone of unbridled violence through the use of phrases like “spreading ruin”(3) and “scattering ban”(3) which is

further supplemented by the description of the torn down abode of the dragonfly. The mention of broken golden lilies lying dead, floating on the surface of the river and the turbidity caused by the “splashing and paddling” (4) of Pan in the latter accentuate the estimate of the plunder. The image of Pan, as used by the poet is ambivalence epitomised where he on one hand is described as a ruthless plunderer with hooves as hard as steel, and on the other as the maker of sweet, blinding music. On a closer scrutiny, it can be established that the scenes of unrest painted at the start of the poem are a depiction of the turmoil raging in the poet’s mind during the search of an appropriate subject for allowing a vent to artistic faculties. The poet’s mind being extraordinarily inspired cannot be bound by wordly ethical concerns and is free to delve into the deepest recesses of psychological, philosophical, or social norms. This process involves extensive, agonising search that often amounts to existential crises in diverse forms and hence, cannot be regarded as an orderly or tranquil endeavour. The irrevocable damage to the scenic beauty of the river bed can be said to be an expression of the same tormenting quest for a pertinent subject – either sublime or mundane, which forms the indispensable prequel to the production of any work of art.

The proliferation of the literary scene with treatises pertaining to the creation of art are ample evidence that the painstaking selection of the subject alone does not sum up the tortuously excruciating process of creation of art. Since, the objective of art is to overcome physical death and death being an individual experience, all artists are entitled to explore, experiment, and devise their exclusive methodologies largely drawn from the individual negotiations with the meaning of life and the reverse. Pan’s process of creation of the musical instrument by drawing the pith can be equated to art in the process of becoming and is described by Barrett Browning as:

Then drew the pith, like the heart of man,
Steadily from the outside ring,

And notch[ing] the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river. (20-23)

The image of dragonfly is a vital symbol serving to fortify the subtle messages comprising the major theme of the poem. As a totem animal dragonfly represents joy, creativity, and a lightness of spirit required to perceive the complexities of the realm beyond the tangible real. Therefore, the dragonfly is seen to leave its abode amongst the waterlilies when Pan is struggling to find the suitable reed for his artistic creation and return when the creation is accomplished. After the fourth stanza Pan is treated no more as a destructive force but as a creator. As he sat by the river playing the musical instrument creating the most divine music, Barrett Browning describes the manner in which life erstwhile lost was restored, “The sun on the hill forgot to die,/ And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly/ Came back to dream on the river”(33-35). The reed as an anatomical reality was fixed in temporal coordinates of linear time and immovable space whereas reincarnated as a musical instrument its significance was magnified as original force qualified to be iterated in multiple forms uninhibited by past, present, or future.

It has been noted earlier that the artist, in order to pick his subject and modes of expression, delves into deepest strata of the psyche, the appearance of which is a cause for discomfort to the well-knit social structures under which the art is produced and consumed. It is for this reason that artists are branded as eccentric, irrational beings and are therefore relegated to the psycho-social margins of civilisation. Such an instance can be studied in Robert Browning’s poem *Porphyria’s Lover* where the endeavours of the artist to create perfect art is equated to murder and misogyny. The dramatic monologue, *Porphyria’s Lover*, narrates the actions of an artist who strangles his beloved with her own tresses to seal her pristine beauty against the polluting influence of class structure and its expectations of habitual, unquestioned obedience.

The poem opens on a chaotic note with Robert Browning’s vivid description of tumultuous weather

outside where rain and storm are wrecking disaster when Porphyria comes to meet her beloved:

The rain set early in to-night,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake: (1-4)

The instance of climatic rampage can be used analogously to represent the conflict between unrestrainable creative force deranging the ego of the artist and the monolithic demands imposed by the sane society on all individuals indiscriminately. This sequence is followed by Porphyria's proclamation of love for the artist and the manner in which she had preferred to honour her undying love for the artist instead of conforming to the proprieties of her social standing. This is followed by the artist being enamoured by the enchanting web of her tresses, rolling them into a cord to strangle her.

The aforesaid section has been interpreted at various levels, more often on psychological lines branding permanently, the artist-lover as a maniac having little respect for the life and choices of his beloved. However, on a close perusal, a contrary event can be unearthed. Art involves exaltation of the subject to the sublime and a subsequent transformation of physical matter into a form miscible with primal consciousness governing the process of creativity. Hence, the moment in which Porphyria rested by his side giving sincere testimonies of her unflinching affection were according to the artist the perfect subject, qualified for permanence. Thus, in order to preserve the uncorrupted beauty of Porphyria, her original innocence, and to elevate the moment to the dimensions it deserved, liberated her from all concerns which could have disfigured all those attributes that endeared her immensely to the artist. The artist confirms, "That moment she was mine, mine, fair, /Perfectly pure and good" (36-37).

Literary and artistic conventions should refrain from socio-legal considerations while interpreting this event and regard it not as an act of insanity, but as a selfless deed of self-effacement and self-mortification.

Deliberated on quotidian terms of sacredness of life, and the desire to aspire for happiness in socio-cultural terms, the act would reveal the immensity of the personal loss caused to the artist who would be deprived of the lone source of love in the course of his existence in the terrestrial mould. Hence, the process of creation of art, as undertaken by the artist, should be understood as synonymous with supreme sacrifice and self-imposed death. It is perhaps for this act of self-mortification on the part of the artist, that he is condoned by God, who "has not said a word" (60).

A brief glance into the Christian religious doctrines which forms the basis of the above discussion of death would emphasise that the advent of human race on earth is a result of Original Sin expressed as an act of transgression committed against the Will of God where the first parents tasted the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The theory further assumes that mankind being the scion of Adam is a natural heir to the ancestral sin, which is compounded by acts of personal lapses. The religious tenets of Hinduism, on the other hand, are largely ordained by the doctrine of Karma where humans are free to frame their own destiny through Karma which would determine the form the soul would assume in its next incarnation. The cyclical progression continues unhindered till the soul attains transcendental state of liberation from corporeal emergences and expirations (moksha). Buddhism too observes that sorrow forms the loci of theological discourses – sorrow and the purgation of it through knowledge, virtue, and meditation. The lifespan of a human, becomes a formative ground of action expected to have a bearing on the transmigration of the soul towards God, Moksha, or Nirvana. This entails an acquisition of fundamental knowledge of omnipresent matter that inspires constructive attitude towards non-existence or infinity in the subject and construes life as a transient interjection in the sovereign process.

The universality of death and the ephemerality of human existence in the face of it has induced imaginations to ascertain the continuance of self even after the cessation of life processes in non-material forms. Philosophical probes into the nature of death occurring

through the course of history has trained human minds to believe in the futility of tangible existence and stress on the profoundly transcendental values determining it. European philosophy, material in nature, adopts a regressive cognitive pattern where philosophical conception of death presumes the existence of a palpable material existence. On the contrary, Hindu, Buddhist, and diverse Eastern cults are grounded in the concept of infinity, a semiotic presence devoid of beginnings and ends. The above discussions highlight the fact that the mundane demarcations between life and death are mere biological conveniences, motivated by discourses of culture. This also strengthens the role of the artist who strives to touch the higher dimensions armed only with mundane tools to glorify existence in the world. It truly reinforces their stature as supremely inspired beings who embrace death, then transcend it to aspire to the state of impeccable forms to provide a taste of divine through art.

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Transnationality and Intergenerational Transformation of Indian Middle-Class Family in Jhumpa Lahiri's

The Lowland

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Abstract:

*Familial ties, in the context of the Indian middle-class, are continually being re-shaped with transnational movement in search of better material opportunity. The conventional practice of living with parents and siblings inside the domestic space of the Indian family along with kith and kins around the neighbourhood is fast fading away, and the collective mutual support of the community is also getting lost. Rapid intergenerational transformation of the traditional models of Indian middle-class family and kinship often results in the dissolution of traditional values. It paves way for a kind of negotiation with new cultural practices. To bring home the point, I have selected Jhumpa Lahiri's novel *The Lowland* as a case study. The novel spins the saga of four generations of the Mitra family of Calcutta. The portrayal of the elderly parental generation represents the iconic traditional Indian family whereas the dislocated nuclear family of Subhash and Gauri (who settle in the US) shows the transformation of the traditional ethnic middle-class Indian family. Their daughter Bela—the third generation Indian who is born and brought up in the American cultural space, believes in single motherhood and represents a further transformation. This article primarily investigates how the conventional notions of 'family' and kinship transform through time and space; how*

issues like transnational movement and the New Economy contribute to the change of values in the questions of family and kinship.

Keywords: New Economy, Transnational dislocation, nuclear family, single motherhood, intergenerational transformation

In the nucleus of this research article, are the typical Indian middle-class family and its transformation by two important vectors—New Economy and the resultant transnational movement. Before the discussion of those vectors, it is necessary to clarify the oft-asked question—what do we mean by the Indian middle class? Is it any group within the society representing any specific economic condition or a specific lifestyle and values? It is a general tendency to place the middle class between the rich and the poor, though over time this oversimplification is questionable. The Indian middle class has now become iconic of the ‘common person or every man’, the “aspirational, proud, and acquisitive citizen” (Jodhka and Prakashix). Since the 1970s, “in the post-colonial context... the middle class has been historically linked to the question of development” (Lobo and Shah 1). In recent times, the concept of the middle class in India refers precisely to a population—urban, educated, affluent, multilingual, ambitious men and women, “seeking white collar jobs” (Lobo and Shah 1); “a society with the chance of upward mobility and achievement beyond subsistence”

(Landry and Marsh 374). With the concept of the Indian middle class, the notions of ‘traditional’ Indian household and family are intrinsically connected. A strong sense of cultural heritage indeed foregrounds Indian middle-class families. It is the idea of a family where along with the elderly parents, the younger generations stay under the same roof and thus becomes a “multigenerational household” (Lamb 32). Such traditional Indian family is considered a “key site of care, involving relationships of love, support and nurture” (McCarthy et al. 17), as the members of the family enjoy the harmony of cohabitation, the responsibilities of marriage, parenting and care.

However, the introduction of economic globalization or the New Economy has opened up multiple opportunities to the young people across the world and has set the Indian middle-class families in transition. As a result of the New Economy, one could witness the vehement progress in communication, mobility of human beings across countries and continents. The steadily increasing transnational movement has challenged the notion of stability, and diasporic dislocation has become a shared experience. Whether it be forced migration (inspired by a feeling of insecurity, crisis, poverty, corruption and political hostility) or deliberate migration (with the hope of acquiring a more safe and stable economic existence), a large number of people are getting “separated from their family by distance and national borders” and are “experiencing transnational family lives” (Baldassar and Merla 6). The conventional practice of living with parents and siblings in the domestic space of the Indian family full of kith and kins around the neighbourhood is fast fading away. With it, the collective mutual support of the community is also rare. Rapid intergenerational transformation of the traditional models of Indian middle-class family results in the dissolution and often a rejection of the ethno-cultural values and paves the way for negotiation with familial ties and cultural knowledge. In the context of transnational dislocation and intergenerational transformation of Indian middle-class families and values, Jhumpa Lahiri’s novels stand exclusive as they

“picture the breaking of traditional joint families into cellular, single, recomposed or transnational families as a result of ideological change” (Ganapathy-Doré 102).

Jhumpa Lahiri’s second novel *The Lowland* (2013) showcases the intergenerational transformation of an Indian middle-class family following transnational dislocation and the eventual dissolution of ethno-cultural values and identity. Set primarily in Calcutta around the 1940s, and then in Rhode Islands in the US, *The Lowland* is divided into eight sections—subdivided into thirty-six chapters, narrating the saga of multiple generations of the Mitra family, outstretching itself to almost six decades. Lahiri’s literary oeuvre includes not just the cultural spatiality of America but also of India and especially the city of Calcutta—the origin of most of her characters. It is a truism that the “families across generations and cultures” and “difficulties of transnational migrant families” (Hai 188) are major thematic concerns in her works. In an interview with Cressida Leyshon, Lahiri admits: “I often think the novel is among other things, very much about what a family is, and what a family means.” (n.p.) Lahiri also talks about a ‘series of triangles’ in her novel, where each triangle stands for a family unit: the father, mother, and the children making the three points of a triangle. In the first family triangle of *The Lowland*, Mr. Mitra—a clerk in the railways, deeply concerned about the future of his family, “even before having children” (*TL* 222), is ambitious of building a house—a dream of almost every middle-class Bengali family. His wife Bijoli, Subhash and Udayan’s mother, extends her support by contributing “her only resource” (*TL* 222), her gold. It becomes their joint venture to secure the third point of the triangle—their children. As Bijoli’s husband belonged to a low-income middle-class family, he had to seek for a job only at the age of nineteen and had to sacrifice his college education. Therefore, it was their earnest longing to safeguard the future of their children from the economic hardships of a low-income middle-class family. They wanted their sons to get the best education in well-known academic institutions in Calcutta. The parents of the Mitra family

also hired a tutor for their sons during the college entrance tests, and to “offset the expense”, Subhash and Udayan have seen “their mother taking in extra sewing” (TL 17). Lahiri shows how strong parental support worked in a traditional Indian middle-class family in the mid-twentieth century. As the boys achieve a good result and get admission in two of the best colleges in Calcutta, the family celebrates the success: “To celebrate, their father went to the market, bringing back cashews and rosewater for *pulao*, half a kilo of the most expensive prawns” (TL 18).

The whirlwind of the post-colonial political scenario in Calcutta—the Naxalbari movement of the late 1960s, with its ideology of anti-state violence draws the younger Udayan into extremist politics. In contrast, Subhash, the elder one secures his dream to pursue a PhD from MIT in America. The concept of ‘family’ has a strong metaphorical connotation as it is the marker of one’s belongingness and identity. Even after two years of diasporic dislocation in Rhode Island, Subhash receives news of his family at Calcutta “only in writing” (TL 76). Letters become carriers of transnational care of the family. Through the first letter from Udayan, he comes to know about his parents’ effort to extend their house: “*Baba’s taken out a loan. They’re adding to what we already have. They seem to think it’s necessary. That we won’t get married and raise families under the same roof if the house stays the way it is*” (TL 51; original emphasis). The second letter informs him about Udayan’s love-marriage with one named Gauri, denying any “type of celebration” (TL 56), and informing the parents only after the civil registration process is over. This way of marrying is a significant deviation from the traditional cultural norms in an Indian middle-class family.

In *Transnational Families: Ethnicities, Identities and Social Capital*, Goulbourne et al. find that the transnational individuals are “relatively freely to negotiate physical, social and cultural spaces to suit their felt or perceived needs, wants or aspirations” (9). When Subhash meets Narsimhan and his American wife, he feels an initial culture shock but gets acquainted with the liberal cultural space that America offers to

an individual. This acquaintance helps him befriending Holly—the American woman, presently separated from her husband. Subhash wishes to complement the absence of his family in the company of Holly and her son Joshua. However, as Holly declares to end up with him and reunite with her husband, Subhash’s dream of being part of a family-triangle becomes futile. Simultaneously, the arrival of a telegram from his parents with the message—“*Udayan killed. Come back if you can*” (TL 100; original emphasis) brings Subhash temporarily back to his family in Calcutta. The thought of the execution of Udayan by the police right before his parents and pregnant wife puts Subhash aback. However, he feels deeply worried by the plight of Gauri in his parental house even after the mourning rituals are over. A “deep sense of responsibility both for Gauri and his ‘wounded’ family” (Baruah 118) helps Subhash to challenge his middle-class cultural heritage, and he decides to marry the pregnant widow of Udayan before they leave for America. Subhash’s decision to marry Gauri and to take her away to America appears practical when seen from an idealistic frame of mind. On the other side remains the predicament of the shattered lives of the parents left behind in Calcutta which can never be repaired by any amount of money sent as a remittance by Subhash.

The recomposed family gets the third point of the family-triangle with the birth of Bela and becomes iconic of a dislocated nuclear family. Nevertheless, Gauri does not find motherhood as bliss to her. She instead feels more interested in knowing the American cultural space and forming a new identity of herself. Lahiri’s previous literary works portray most of “the first generation Indian women immigrants as guardians of traditions, but *The Lowland* completely changes this pattern” (Stoican 166). Over time, Gauri increasingly involves herself in academic emancipation, earns a PhD in philosophy and dissociates from her domestic and motherly responsibilities. After the death of his father, Subhash travels to Calcutta with Bela to attend the rituals, as Gauri denies visiting the Tollygunge-house to avoid the haunting past. Even in the absence of Subhash and Bela, she decides to move to California

abandoning her family in Rhode Islands forever. Gauri's successive transgressions—first from Calcutta to Rhode Islands, and then again to California is gradual, metaphoric movements from the East to the West. Transformation of her identity takes place through these transgressions and the simultaneous breaking away from the family bonds—from her roles as wife and mother, gradual distancing from the conventional Indian values of family life reaching its height in her involvement in a lesbian relationship with Lorna, one of her students. Subhash's "family of solitaries" (*TL* 262) splits into halves.

Bela, the third-generation of the Mitra family, feels distraught with the realization that her mother has abandoned them. The "most basic awareness of her life", as Bela has understood, is the "unhappiness between her parents" (*TL* 258). Unlike her grandparents, mother and foster-father Subhash, Bela prioritizes happiness over academically successful affluent life and associates herself with manual labour and farming. Her association with the poor people reminds of Udayan's left-wing idealism and solidarity with the dispossessed. In his penetrating article entitled "A Betrayal of Everything": The Law of the Family in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*, Kalyan Nadiminti observes: "Bela begins to mirror her biological father Udayan's disavowal of middle-class Indian life in favour of Naxalite politics" (254). Bela's decision to be a single mother may startle any Indian middle-class people on the issues of ethics and familial responsibility, but Subhash's worldview has now been transformed due to his transnational association with the American cultural space. He accepts her being a mother before getting married, which is regarded as a taboo in a traditional Indian family. Moreover, his relationship with Elise Silva and his decision to marry her also defies the Indian traditional family values. As Subhash tells Bela the truth about her biological father Udayan, she determines to start her life on her own. Bela's decision of being a single mother becomes a "lifestyle choice" as if to validate herself and lift herself out of the "realm of dependency" to the "realm of freedom" which helps her to become the icon of "self-sufficiency" (Juffer 2-

4). Once reactive, Bela is seen to tell her daughter Meghna that her grandmother is long dead, right at the front of Gauri; the reader understands that it is her denial to associate her with the middle-class Indian sentiment and Mitra family. The spontaneous adoption of Meghna by Drew, Bela's partner, makes it clear that kinship and social affiliation prioritize over the ideas of the traditional family and biological filiation in *The Lowland*.

Conclusion:

Through the multigenerational tale in *The Lowland*, Jhumpa Lahiri presents a series of family triangles which help in mapping out the transformation of traditional Indian middle-class family in transnational dislocation. Movement from the ethno-cultural root, breaking of families into pieces, lack of familial solidarity across time and space, dissolution of family values and cultural heritage, abandonment and divorce, single motherhood—all may impact on the relationships and ties of Indian middle-class families, but there is always someone to tell the next generation about the root. Bela's letter to Gauri, towards the end of the novel, could be seen "as a means of maintaining familial connections, providing justification...and serving as a space for negotiation of changing identities" (DeHaan 107). Somewhere there is always the presence of a family-triangle—the hope to find new connections en route the course of life.

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Capitalist Patriarchy and Position of Women: An Analysis of Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*

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Abstract:

Patriarchy is a social system that perceives human beings as binary – men and women. Being men centered, patriarchy favours men and marginalises women in every sphere of life. In such a social system, a boy child/ man is preferred to a girl child/ woman. Capitalism is “an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods ...” (Merriam-Webster). Under such a system profit and market play significant roles in decision making. Herein, everything in life is measured in terms of monetary value and ethics and morality appear to be unimportant. However, both patriarchy and capitalism are men centred and “together reinforce the oppression of women” (Bruneau). It is a fact that “The oppression of women is very ancient: it existed before capitalism, which is also a system of oppression” (Comanne). Thus, it is observed that both patriarchy and capitalism are forces which marginalise women. In this paper, Mahesh Dattani’s play, Tara, has been studied from the point of view of capitalist patriarchy. It is observed that the operation of capitalist patriarchal set up, represented by Bharati’s father, is so strong that it plays a significant role in the life of Patel, Bharati, Chandan, and Tara. It is also observed that all the men in the play – Bharati’s father, Patel, Chandan, and Dr. Thakkar – represent capitalist patriarchal attitude and women like Bharati and Tara are

always at the receiving end. Thus, the play suggests that humanitarian values are more important than capitalist patriarchal values.

Keywords: Capitalism, Patriarchy, Men, Women, Tara

The system of patriarchy has always relegated women to the periphery in a systematic manner. In patriarchy the role of men is considered as the primary authoritarian figure who is central to various social organisations, and where the central male-figures hold authority over women, children, and property. It implies male rule and privilege and entails female subordination. In such a context, Simone de Beauvoir’s observation, “Throughout history they [women] have always been subordinated to men ...” (Parshley et. al. xxiv) occupies a special significance. In fact, as Kate Millett opines in her *Sexual Politics*, the patriarchal society uses various mechanisms to employ power relation in the society and paves the way for dominance of men over women. Millett observes that women, in a patriarchal society, are often made to internalise patriarchal ideology so that they accept their subjugation and they also become instrumental in the marginalisation of other women.

Patriarchal societies run on principles which in most cases identify women as the conditioned “other” to the male “subject” (Parshley et. al. xxii). Beauvoir adds that women have always been dependent on “... fathers or husbands – more firmly than they are to other women” (Parshley et. al. xxv). Such a system is

deep rooted in Indian culture and Manu viewed, “In childhood must a female be dependent on her father in youth on her husband, her lord being dead, on her sons, if she has no sons, on the near kinsmen, on those of her father; if she has no paternal kinsmen, on the sovereign, a woman must never seek independence” (Chandra 64). In such a social set up women have traditionally been dependent on some male family members like father, husband, or son or even on some male relatives. They are often identified not on their own but in relation to some male member of the family – as someone’s daughter or as someone’s wife, or as someone’s mother and so on.

Women, in most Indian societies, are scarcely allowed independence and worst is the case of the girl children who, in some societies, are either killed or abandoned. Thus, patriarchy seems to be such a system which tends to work on the binary and which marginalises women. With the development of civilization, patriarchy got associated with capitalism and both continue to contribute to marginalise women. One of the principal factors for such combined oppression of women is obvious for the fact that both patriarchy and capitalism were constructed by men and are run to facilitate men over women.

Capitalism may be defined as “an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market” (Merriam-Webster). Thus, capitalism is a system run by private ownership, not by the government; and decisions, in such a system of economy, are arrived at by private firms wherein prices of goods and even the production and distribution of the same are dictated by the market. In such a system, decisions are arrived at eyeing on the profit and ethical considerations appear secondary. Capitalism and patriarchy combine to further marginalise women, “The oppression of women is very ancient: it existed before capitalism, which is also a system of oppression” (Comanne). Under capitalist system, women are oppressed and such oppression helps the capitalists to

control the workforce of men. It is understood that “capitalism and patriarchy together reinforce the oppression of women” and further “Patriarchy cannot possibly be considered as independent from capitalism” (Bruneau). Apparently capitalism seems to help women attain independence, but it actually damages the condition of women and thereby further contributes to the age old subjugation of women in a patriarchal system.

The phases of injustice and discrimination against girl children and women are common in a predominantly patriarchal society like India, in which it is believed that the *Vansh* (clan) continues through the male child. It is also believed that parents can attain *moksha* (liberation) only if the son performs the *kapaal kriya* (breaking of the skull while being cremated). So under such conditions women seem to have almost no significance and hence they are used for the purpose of men only. The operation of power-relations in society also causes for the oppression of women. On the operation of power, Michel Foucault views:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates or as something which only functions in the form of a chain.... not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power.... individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application (Gordon 98).

The play of power is often subtle and hegemonic in nature wherein power is exercised through negotiation and not through the application of brute force.

The play, *Tara*, centres round a family comprising of the father (Patel), the mother (Bharati), and two children (Tara and Chandan), “They are almost an all Indian family!” (Prasad 138). Mee views, “Dattani focuses on the family as a microcosm of society in order to dramatize the ways we are socialized to accept certain gendered roles and to give preference to what is ‘male’” (320). The birth of the children leaves the parents utterly shocked as the children are born as Siamese twins. The medical reports add to the worry

of the parents as it unveils that the “third leg” (Dattani 378) gets its blood circulated through the girl child (Tara), not, as they would have been happy to know, through the boy child (Chandan), and that the third leg biologically belongs to Tara and hence it will be safe to provide Tara with two legs through surgery.

Tara is a satire on the contemporary society in which “All the propagandas of equality between male and female, equal opportunities to women in all the fields are belied” (Das 51). Bharati’s father, who happens to be the architect behind Tara’s handicap, does not have any sense of remorse or even sympathy and leaves all his property only to Chandan. Subhas Chandra rightly opines, “It is the socio-cultural system which is responsible for her (Tara’s) death” (62). He adds, “No one individual is responsible for what happens to her [Tara], because this has to do with the positioning of the girl-child in the Indian society” (64). In other words, “Taras (stars) do not twinkle on the Indian sky! Because they are not allowed to!!” (Chandra 67). The society that Dattani portrays is one where girl-children are not expected or are drowned “in milk” (Dattani 349).

Tara subtly questions gender prejudice, “... the primary theme [of *Tara*] ... is the way we Indians discriminate between male and female children” (Prasad 135). This play can be read as a play about the combination of man and woman in one self. Hence, the play can also be read as the search of individuals for the self which unites man and woman. The play ends by showing that the twins hug each other suggesting that they are “together once again, and whole, complete” (Prasad 140). This suggests that the capitalist-patriarchal societal norm separated them, who once again form a whole when they are beyond the limits of society. *Tara* represents the case of Tara and Chandan and attempts to indicate that both men and women together form the social fabric and they need to be looked as equal. Dattani attempts to establish this thesis by making “a medical improbability an artistic possibility” (Rizvi 14). Tara appears as “an archetype, an icon of the postcolonial Indian women who are crushed in the mill

of tradition and modernity” (Kanupriya 71).

The patriarchal-capitalist society represented by Bharati’s father is disturbed at the revelation about the “third leg” (Dattani 378) as he finds it difficult and at times even impossible to support anything that comes as an obstacle to the benefit of a male child. Bharati’s father does not even appear on the scene but he is the most influential man who influences the lives of all the characters in the play. Influenced by Bharati’s father, Dr Thakkar operates upon the Siamese twins and favours Chandan with two legs though it was unethical. Dr. Thakkar does this as he has the “intention of starting a large nursing home – the largest in Bangalore. He had acquired three acres of prime land – in the heart of the city – from the state. Your grandfather’s political influence had been used. ... Chandan had two legs – for two days” (Dattani 378).

The result is disastrous as Chandan’s body fails to retain the second leg, the Patel family is shattered, Tara dies at an early age, and Chandan fails to live with guilt in India and settles down in England, and Bharati loses her sanity and later dies. Erin Mee views, “Woven into the play [*Tara*] are issues of class and community, and the clash between traditional and modern lifestyles and values” (319). Mee adds, “Tara and Chandan are two sides of the same self rather than two separate entities ...” (320). But the capitalist-patriarchal ideology fails to observe the beauty in each of the children and the outcome is disastrous.

Apparently, it is Bharati who betrays Tara and, thus, she suffers throughout her life. Bharati thinks, “... that it was her decision that caused this particular disability in her daughter” (Prasad 141) and gradually “Tara is emotionally devastated” (Mohandas). It may be said that the discrimination and injustice that Tara faces from her mother are the consequence of Bharati’s being a prisoner in the hands of collective unconscious that constitutes her psyche and therefore she believes that men should always be preferred to women. Such a decision of Bharati becomes the reason for her eternal suffering. She even attempts to atone for her guilt by donating her kidney to Tara. However, Patel, who is

also a representative of patriarchy, does not allow her to do so and thereby denies her expiating for the guilt that she lives with.

In decision-making part for the operation on the Siamese-twins, Patel seems to be the cruellest figure. In his abstinence from action in the matter of surgery, it seems that Patel was a complicit, “He too believes in gender hierarchy and thus his protestations are ultimately hollow and his rejection by Dan seems apposite” (Prasad 141). He is a representative of patriarchy who remains silent in the subjugation of women. His words, “Maybe if I had protested more strongly!” (Dattani 378) clearly speaks of his dependence on the capitalist father-in-law. Even Patel appears to be a party to the injustice done on Tara but he takes the central position in the play and the reader knows whatever he relates about the past when Bharati is taken off the scene for the rest of the play.

Chandan in *Tara* remains at the centre of action of the play – the play begins and ends with his speech – though the play is titled after the name of Chandan’s sister, Tara. Throughout Tara’s life-time, Chandan appears to have been highly concerned about Tara and he declares that he escapes to London to expiate for his sense of guilt, but his escape can also be seen as a pretension, “I had even forgotten I had a twin sister. Until I thought of her as subject matter for my next literary attempt” (Dattani 324). Thus, it appears that he thinks of Tara while he actually thinks about the “subject matter of ... [his] next literary attempt” (Dattani 324) – concern of a capitalist patriarchal man. Thus, Tara is seen here as a commodity and not as an individual. Guided by patriarchal ideology, Chandan, when he is able to write the play, becomes selfish and makes the play his tragedy with a simple statement of apology, “Forgive me, Tara. Forgive me for making it my tragedy” (Dattani 380). It, thus, appears that patriarchal society may appear to be sympathetic to the cause of women but it cannot bear to see women as more successful than men. The way Bharati’s father deprives Tara of the leg, Chandan too deprives Tara of being the protagonist of the tragedy.

The followers of patriarchal ideologies generally attempt to make gender roles specific for male and female children. Generally, awareness is created about their specific gender roles and they are expected to follow the same rigorously. Judith Butler opines that gender is “a constructed identity” in which “actors ... perform” (Butler 520). *Tara* represents such defined gender role where men and women have their separate zone, and where they are expected to fit in well. It is observed that both Patel and Bharati are bound by patriarchal norms and they do harm to Chandan and Tara, though their purpose was to help their son. Both Bharati and Patel set different roles for the children – whereas Bharati is concerned in growing Tara like a woman; Patel is concerned to make a man of his son – expecting manly behaviour from his son.

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Indigenising the Detective Genre in Satyajit Ray's 'Feluda' series: A Study

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Abstract:

The paper navigates through the socio-cultural footprint that Satyajit Ray (1921-1992) etches through his detective fiction in nineteenth century Bengal. It locates texts and their recurring themes and motifs in a wider social and historical context. This would deal with the emergence of the genre initially as an adaptation of the West. The essay tries to focus on Ray's uniqueness in his characterisation, origin, methods of detection, and nuances of narrative technique that makes him the stalwart of Bengali Detective Fiction for Children. Ray indigenised the genre and attempted to decode the unsolved mysteries through his protagonist by appropriating the cultural richness of Bengal.

Keywords: *Satyajit Ray, Detective Fiction, Bhadralok, Culture, Feluda.*

The evolution of Detective Fiction in European Literature had a distinct impact on the literature of the colonised countries, especially India which was already rich in its own literary heritage. Francesca Orsini in her essay, 'Detective Novels: A Commercial Genre in Nineteenth-century North India' argues that this genre "was brought into India 'ready-made', without the intellectual and historical substratum that had generated it in Europe" (436). Priya Joshi in her book *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India* states that the detective novels, especially the works of Collins and Doyle appeared in the public libraries in India, almost during the same

time when they initially appeared in Britain (64). Hence in the later parts of the nineteenth century, as Calcutta was considered the hub of all the administrative and cultural activities of its imperialist state, the canon of detective fiction was also available to the readers and writers in Bengal. As Bengali had already established its importance as a language in Indian Literature long before the British Rule, it can be perceived that the genre of detective fiction in England served as an archetype for the writers in Bengal. Though the reference of crime could be traced quite early in Bengali literature, yet the fact that detective fiction as an epoch emerged as a result of colonial intervention is evident while tracing the literary history of detective fiction in Bengal.

There is a distinct cultural value associated with the detective writings of Ray and he understood it well while writing down his stories. His stories are strewn with depictions of culture and history emphasising prominently the archival past of the country. They reflect the social milieu of the Bengali middle-class families, their habits, and carefully avoid any mention of the socio-political upheaval that was prevalent during the late twentieth century when these novels were published. His writings kept in mind the audience, reducing the discourse in a manner so as not to have a jarring effect on the reader's psyche. There was a deliberate avoidance of violence and female characters and Ray improvises his work in a unique way so as to bring out these cultural impressions through the setting, life-style, intimacy of relationships, narrative technique,

etc to make his writings more appropriately suggestive to the Indian audience.

The paper delves deep into the detective writings of Satyajit Ray and focuses on two major hypotheses: Firstly, in spite of the strewn references from western writers like Doyle, from whom Ray admittedly draws inspiration, his (Ray's) writings distinctly delineate divergences from them, making him create a niche of his own in the genre of detective fiction. Secondly, Ray uses local culture, history to weave the narrative so as to heighten the 'desi' flavour in his writings and indianizes the genre of detective fiction.

Literary critic Saroj Bandhyopadhyay, in her essay *Goyenda Kahini te Satyajit Gharana (Satyajit Ray, in the genre of Detective Fiction)*, discriminates the detective writings of Ray from the traditional works belonging to this genre. The protagonist Feluda is not typically a detective fiction character. Though he succeeds Byomkesh Bakshi, who was an out and out family man, Feluda is not placed within a familial structure. The narrator of the stories, Feluda's cousin is often termed as a 'functional narrator' by Bandhyopadhyay (936). Apparently, Tapesh Ranjan appears to be like Watson but the liaison, which the sleuth shares with his cousin is quite different from that of Watson and Holmes. Tapesh is quite younger than Feluda. He is more of an apprentice whom the sleuth trains to be like himself in future. The adolescent readers can vehemently identify themselves with the young narrator irrespective of their gender. Bandyopadhyay comments in her essay that though Tapesh is the narrator of the Feluda stories, Feluda has always been the 'guide-narrator'. According to Banerjee, Feluda was always the passive 'centre of consciousness in the novels (937).

Ray domesticates and internalizes several differences in his depiction of characters, in terms of their name, appearance, way of life and their food-habits by giving a sneak peak into the Bengali lifestyle that overshadows most of his works. The sleuth Pradosh Chandra Mitter is mostly known by his nick-name 'Feluda' which is typically Bengali in nature. A Bengali

is often vested with a 'dak-nam' or a nick-name given by the close ones apart from the real name by which he is known to the public. The name 'Feluda' can be broken into - the nickname 'Felu' and suffix 'da' meaning elder brother in Bengali. As Mathur suggests in her essay, *Holmes's Indian Reincarnation* that , "it is a name that combines familial intimacy and respect" (91), which is very typical of Bengalis or Indians believing in a close-knit familial relationships that is an inevitable part of the Indian society. The sleuth along with his cousin is a representative of the Indian youth, and Ray tries to idealize the character of 'Feluda' by bestowing him the qualities that would make the readers crave to be like the sleuth.

Feluda is conferred with several attributes, both physical and intellectual, which makes him interesting and attractive to the readers who would eventually have a tendency to imitate the sleuth for his brilliant agility, intelligence, observance, perception, detective and analytical skills. These skills gradually evolved with time as he perfectly mastered them all. The protagonist is not a mere hero, he is one of us. He is brave and a typical Bengali in his taste and behaviour. Ray imparts finer emotions and the power of observance to the sleuth that were the very streak of his own character. He believes in keeping his mind open to several spectrums of knowledge and retaining the innocence and inquisitiveness of a child which makes him more susceptible to learning in the future. The educative process is fostered as the protagonist uses concepts like parapsychology, cenotaphs, musical notes and goes on to explain them for the benefit of the audience. Feluda's interest in the classical past and history of India, his love for word-games and puzzles makes him a distinct and independent character. The strict moral code which binds the characters of Ray especially the sleuth himself and his compliance to emotions, feelings, morality and ethics makes his appearance as normal as any other Bengali youth of his age creating a 'dedicated universe of readership' (Chakrabarti 258).

Ray, very distinctly etches a graphic picture of the Bengali bourgeois class and the 'bhadralok' who

emerged during the period of 1970's through his characters. Rachona Majumdar in her essay *Feluda on Feluda: a letter to Topshe* discusses how Ray develops a private investigator, 'a middle-class man who was not bourgeois' and is completely indifferent to material benefits (242). Majumdar further comments that, Feluda was nothing "but a representative of the educated 'bhadralok' whose life found meaning in serving their country through honest endeavours. I [Feluda] epitomized an ideal of modern Indian citizenship . . . a modern man who did not seek to reproduce himself through family and property" (243). Gautam Chakrabarti in his essay, "The *Bhadralok* as Truth-Seeker: Towards a Social History of the Bengali Detective" mentions that the private investigator's 'spirit of rational enquiry', 'upholds the spirit of traditional orders by exposing the soft underbelly of moral corruption' (255) which should be the ideal of every youth of the nation. Chakrabarti pinpoints that the author aims at "the creation of a pan-Indian modern individual who aspires . . . the sense of colonial India necessitating a discourse of the confident Indian who can face up to the "West" on its own terms" (259).

Critic Indrajit Hazra in his essay *Felu Mitter: Between Bhadrolok and Chhotolok*, defines the 'bhadrolok' "in terms of class, the bhadralok can range from the archetypal rich, upper-middle-class Bengali gentleman to the middle-class Bengali gentleman whose relative lack of wealth is compensated by his ability to stand out with dignity in a crowd" (50). This representation of a morally stratified Bengali middle-class society which is judged by terms like 'bhadralok' for the gentleman and 'Chhotolok' for the "crass, uncultured" (50) is predominantly dismantled in the works of Ray. The characters of Ray's novels sway between the boundaries of 'bhadrolok' and 'chottolok' where there is a fine line that separates them from belonging strictly to each of these denoted categories. There is a "palpable sense of preoccupation with the lost world of the *bhadralok* which, Sayandeb Chowdhury discusses in his essay *Ageless Hero, Sexless Man*. He says:

This is not to say that Feluda's clients are anachronistic, but they are surely exceptional, citizens of a past world untouched by the disquiet of the time around them . . . Many of them happen to be specialists in one thing or the other, consummate in their taste of the finer things of life, . . . This is true, almost to the last syllable, of the clients outside Calcutta, most of whose primary occupation is to act as custodians of a past now irreversibly taken from them.

The author draws a picture of their daily life, their food habits, hobbies, appetite for reading and several other features that define Bengali culture. "Feluda is the archetypal Bengali foodie. (Mazumdar 8)" His culinary tastes resemble the traditional exotic Bengali cuisine which includes Bengali sweets, chicken curry and mixture belonging to a specific shop of his choice in New Market. For example, in *The Curse of the Goddess*, Feluda does give in to Lalmohan-babu's request and visits the Great Majestic Circus, but only after he had finished his chicken curry and dal cooked by the chowkidar's wife. His penchant for food and fondness for fish is also evident in stories like *The Mystery of the Elephant God*, etc. The sleuth is often presented as a voracious reader and is seen reading books like *The Chariots of the Gods* which provides an edge to his sharp mind. These features which Ray incorporates in his characters show the manner in which he perfectly nativizes the genre. Tapesh, who is the cousin brother of Feluda is often called 'Topshey' or 'Topshe' which is actually the name of a fish, Bengalis are fond of. Ray subtly incorporates a tinge of humour in the name where he hints at the sleuth's fondness of Bengali food and also his cousin. The third character Lalmohan Ganguly, introduced in *The Golden Fortress* is a crime-thriller writer with a pseudo-name 'Jatayu' - a mythical bird in the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. This valorous bird sacrifices his life, attempting to rescue Sita from the clutches of the villainous Ravana when the later was escaping in his flying chariot. The name Jatayu is not only associated with valour but also with steadfast loyalty towards

Rama, who is the epitome of righteousness. Here, Feluda is often considered as a moral centre to whom Jatayu is loyal to. By using this name, Ray tries to emphasise the “socio-cultural spectrum of the colonial native” who makes a “subaltern attempt” to emphasise the rich cultural history by reviving events from the past (Chakrabarti 260). There are strewn references from *The Mahabharata* in novels like *The Mysterious Tenant* which begins with Feluda reading the epic. The author seems to inform the readers about important details to illuminate their knowledge about India’s epic texts.

Apart from introducing dollops of humour, the purpose of Lal Mohan Ganguly was not merely to provide comic-relief but also to give an insight into a different kind of Bengaliness or ‘Bangaliyana’. He is an apt representative of a Bengali middle-class ‘bhodrolok’ (gentleman) just like Feluda himself. He is average heighted, bald, funny in his appearance, wrongly pronounces English words but is always ready to accept his mistake. He writes crime thrillers, with several factual errors, yet is inordinately popular amongst the readers. Ray tries to portray a contrasting character to ‘Feluda’, through the protagonist of Jatayu’s novels i.e. ‘Prakhar Rudra’, who has super-human abilities making Feluda look much more realistic in appearance.

Ray was always a socially responsible writer. His human qualities are equally vibrant as he tries to give a realist depiction of what appeals to the mind of the readers for whom he initially construed the narratives. The examples are deliberately strewn across most of the detective stories: in *The Mystery of the Elephant God*, Feluda’s concern for his friend Lal Mohan Ganguly reflects his character who values friendship more than anything else. Feluda’s compassionate nature and his sense of responsibility prevented him from punishing Prof. Nihar Ranjan Dutta in *The Mysterious Tenant*, and the famous zamindar Mahitosh Singha in *The Royal Bengal Mystery* whose crime was his zest for fame. Feluda’s pity prevents him from punishing Ranajit, despite him stealing the research materials of Mr. Dutta and thirty-three thousand rupees in *The Mysterious Tenant*. These features indicate that the

entire oeuvre of the stories is intricately bound to humane characteristics that are also found in the characters depicted by Ray. Mathur says that the Feluda stories are a form of writing back rather than being an instance of colonial mimicry as a whole (Mathur 90).

The author tries to draw attention to rich Indian civilization as he mentions the intricate architecture of India like the forts of Rajasthan, Agra and the caves of Ellora. He juxtaposes trivia and historical facts and folk-lore of a place to make the setting come alive to the readers. In *The Emperor’s Ring*, the sleuth gives an educative introduction to his cousin about the history of Lucknow and the Nawabs who built Bhoorbhulia in the Burra Imambara, the Monkey Bridge over the Gomti, and the Residency which was the “centre of the Bristish forces during the Mutiny.” Topshe describes Lucknow, “There are buildings with turrets and minarets all around; the roads were broad and clean and the traffic, besides motor cars, included two different kinds of horse-drawn carriages. One, I learnt, was called a tonga and the other was an ekka.”(Ray 28). The Indian culture at its peak can be witnessed in the elaborate description of the city Varanasi in *The Mystery of the Elephant God* which reinstalls the reader’s faith in India’s enriched culture.

Hence to sum up the contents of this study, Ray tries to give a vivid picture of the Bengali middle-class society by reflecting mostly on the lifestyle, day to day cultures and habits that encompasses a Bengali household. He purposefully refrains from delineating political issues but cleverly draws the picture of Kolkata and some of the towns of Bengal which the protagonist visits while resolving his cases. Some of the historically enriched settings like Lucknow, Rajasthan, Varanasi, Agra are aesthetically dealt with and elaborately narrated to empower the image of India through his writings. This also reverberates the author’s patriotic zeal and weaves cultural nationalism by representing India in a positive light. The uniqueness in dialogues, characters, settings along with the juxtaposition of suspense, action and humour enables Ray to paint a gripping narrative that keeps the readers hooked. Ray’s

abstinence from vesting ‘a super-hero image’ to the protagonist and the very fact that the readers can relate to the characters, makes the series immensely popular and instills the purpose of weaving these narratives.

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Homes across the Water: Dislocation and Transcultural Kinship in Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace*

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Abstract:

*Kinship studies, a key area of anthropology since the late nineteenth century, implies human relationships based on consanguinity and biological affinity, where blood-relationships play an essential role in the social grouping of people and identity formation. The essentialist idea of kinship insists on a universal assumption—‘Blood is thicker than water’. However, this idea has been challenged by modern cultural anthropologists in the late twentieth century (David M. Schneider and Marilyn Strathern) and early twenty-first century (Janet Carsten) since it does not take into consideration multiple cultural factors in the formation of kinship in this modern age of transnational migration and dislocation. Setting the ‘blood-related’, ‘natural’ or biological kinship aside, they advocated for the ‘cultural’ dimensions of kinship configured by regional specificity, community, ethno-nationality, language, marriage and even diasporic dislocation. In this article, we attempt an exploration of transcultural kinship concerning diasporic individuals and their families constituted by members with different ethno-cultural identities. Taking Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000) as case-study, this essay would examine how dislocation beyond the familiar cultural space opens up avenues for re-imagining*

kinship beyond the bonds of community and often leads to the establishment of families across the “water” (metaphoric of diasporic mobility). We also attempt to investigate how cultural hybridity and transculturality reconfigure family-ties situating an individual in a newer pattern of kinship; how a relationship like close friendship or mentorship turns into strong kinship bonds resembling family-ties.

Keywords: *Migration, Dislocation, Identity, Borders, Negotiation, Kinship, Family-ties*

“The ideas of kinship, the kin-based society, the idiom of kinship, and the content of kinship are the received wisdom of today, as they have been almost from the beginnings of anthropology.”

A Critique of the Study of Kinship (1984): David Murray Schneider

-With this proposition, Schneider's influential volume *A Critique of the Study of Kinship* (1984) initiates a relatively new way of looking at kinship studies beyond the formalist tradition, by attempting cross-cultural analyses of kinship only three decades back. The inception of kinship studies is attributed to Lewis Henry Morgan and his ‘magnum opus’ *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* (1871) which centres around the essentialist idea of kinship based on blood relationships and biological

affinity. The propositions of Schneider's new anthropology of kinship, which he finds as "the received wisdom of today" (3), rely heavily on nature/culture interplay than the biologically determined structuralist way of assessing kinship. The inclusion of 'local' culture/s and community history as no less essential determinants than the exclusive factors like progeny and ethnology in kinship studies, has allowed a broader and more fluid conceptualization of kinship through comparative analyses of what Riitta Jallinoja and Eric Widmer call as 'relationality' of the individual with society and its culture. Marilyn Strathern has further developed this very shift from biologically essentialist assessment of kinship to the comparative, cross-culturalist analyses of identity. In her book *After Nature* (1992), Strathern finds that as colonial encounters have materialized into cultural contacts, there is the apparent "possibility that new forms would naturally yield unique and vigorous hybrids" (37). Thus the historical process of colonization has its cultural outcome in redefining kinship. In this context of kinship studies, Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000), a multi-layered historical novel set in a period of a little more than one hundred and ten years, is an interesting case study. This narrative is a "family saga" (Thieme 269) showcasing the shaping and reshaping of kinship and family-ties across four generations. Beginning with the historical event of the third Anglo-Burmese war and the expansionist British Empire in the Indian subcontinent, the novel accommodates ordinary people down to a dislocated Indian orphan, as well as the last Burmese Royal family of the Konbaung dynasty deposed and exiled to colonial India.

Marilyn Strathern's ideas of the "unique and vigorous hybrids" (37) and the historico-cultural effects of colonization could be seen as 'relational' assumptions enabling the individual to conceptualize the self and its relationship status with the diverse cultural reality around, and thus broadens the scope of kinship terminologies. Janet Carsten, in *After kinship* (2004) attempts to find out how "kinship is part of the pre-given, natural order of things and the extent to which it is shaped by human engagement" (6), and therefore,

takes the way Schneider has recently paved for the 'revisionist' anthropologists. Carsten emphasizes the analytic project of cross-cultural comparison outside the Western model of kinship-studies and insists on the "processual understandings of kinship, which allowed for a greater experiential emphasis on the way kinship is *lived*" (36; original emphasis). She takes in consideration the "memories of houses inhabited in childhood" (31), "the 'mixed-up' quality of social life" (34) and the likes which should "be understood in juxtaposition to the dislocations of history" (35). She concludes that "close kin ties are intrinsic to the social constitution of persons" (83). These propositions of socio-cultural kinship have further been emphasized by Jallinoja and Widmer's idea of 'relatedness' which insists on the socio-cultural "processes" through "which contemporary individuals continuously make and remake their families within various structural and cultural constraint" (6).

In Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace*, historical vectors like war, deposition and exile, the fall and annexation of empires, the rise of a new capitalist colonial economy, the birth of new post-colonial nations, and finally the introduction of the global economy in the 1990s—all leading to massive movements and dislocation of people, contribute to the 'processes' of breaking and making of families and relationships. The memories of social life in different cultural spaces across India, Burma and Malaysia result in the genesis of the narrative itself, as Ghosh tells his readers in the 'Author's Notes': "The seed of this book was brought to India long before my own lifetime by my father and my uncle, the late Jagat Chandra Datta of Rangoon and Moulmein" (GP 549). Personal intergenerational memory has a seminal role to play in the narrative, as Ghosh dedicates the novel to the memory of his father and acknowledges how deeply this "book was rooted in his experience" (GP 552). In the 'Introduction' of *Ghosts of Memory*, a volume edited by herself, Janet Carsten observes that "kinship emerges as a particular kind of sociality in which certain forms of temporality and memory-making, and certain dispositions towards the past, present, and future are made possible" (5).

In *The Glass Palace*, kinship as “sociality” lies not just in the history of the colonial empire and its aftermath, neither in Ghosh’s inherited memories and personal history, but in the stories of dislocated individuals and families across their familiar cultural spaces.

The grand narrative of *The Glass Palace*, divided primarily into seven parts and further into forty-eight chapters, has its epic sweep over more than a century—from the November of 1885 to December 1996. Set in Mandalay, the first part introduces the arrival of an eleven-year-old Indian orphan Rajkumar Raha from “Akyab, the principal port of the Arakan” (*GP* 13) in lower Burma, after the loss of his family members in an epidemic fever: “I had a father, a sister, brothers...and a mother” (*GP* 12). The issues of family and kinship get impetus from the very first part, as the narrator describes how Rajkumar’s “father had quarrelled with their relatives and moved the family away” (*GP* 13) from their family-home in Chittagong to Akyab; how, after the unfortunate death of his mother Rajkumar is left with nothing—“who had been so rich in family, was alone now, with a khalasi’s apprenticeship for his inheritance” (*GP* 14). Except for the Royal family of the last Burmese sovereign of Konbaung dynasty King Thebaw, all the major characters introduced in part one are the residue members of broken families: Rajkumar, Saya John and his son Matthew, Saya John’s shopkeeper consort Ma Cho and Queen Supayalat’s handmaiden Dolly. No biological or familial tie unites these people to one another, but their ‘relatedness’ on the issue of transnational dislocation that forms real-life kinships and even family, in due course of time.

Ghosh feels fascinated by the lives of displaced people and families and ever remains critical of rigorous assessment of ethno-cultural identity. As “a believer in transcultural humanity, Ghosh insists on the warmth of human relationship and not on the cultural, ethnic or racial boundaries which separate people” (De 144). Saya John, the Chinese-looking teak-trading contractor in European clothes “from somewhere in Malaya” (*GP*9), has a Christian name—John Martins and was

raised by Catholic missionaries “in a town called Malacca” (*GP*10) as he was a foundling like Rajkumar. The shared identity of the orphan and tit-bits of Hindustani language soon work cementing the bond after their meet at Ma Cho’s place. A Burmese-Indian lady in mid-thirties, Ma Cho is John’s consort and runs a food-stall close to the western wall of the Burmese fort in Mandalay. Saya John’s son Matthew is a boy of seven, who has already lost his mother and lives in Singapore with his mother’s family for a decent education. It is only on holidays that Matthew visits Mandalay for a couple of weeks to stay with his father. Finally, the youngest of Queen Supayalat’s handmaidens, “a slender ten-year-old called Dolly” (*GP* 20) is someone who has “no memory of her parents or family”. As the narrator reports, she “had been brought to Mandalay at a very early age from the frontier town of Lashio” (*GP* 20). Contrary to these dislocated individuals of several broken families, stand the Burmese Royal family of King Thebaw and Queen Supayalat with their two princesses. Part one of *The Glass Palace* chronicles the defeat and deposition of King Thebaw after a fourteen-day war, and the eventual exile of the Royal family to India, where the Royal couple gets two more daughters in their family. The annexation of the Burmese kingdom of Mandalay to the British colonial empire of the Indian subcontinent opens up new opportunities to traders and contractors, and Rajkumar allows himself becoming an assistant of Saya John for a living. Part two of the novel focusses more on the family of the exiled Burmese King in Ratnagiri, simultaneously representing the capitalist economy of teak-trading and the rise of Rajkumar as a successful entrepreneur in Burma. Ghosh’s keen preoccupation with the issues of kinship and family has been reflected as in the transformation of human relationships, so in a subtle, fantastic reference to botanical kinship¹. However, the family of the Indian District Collector Beni Prasad Dey and his wife Uma has been introduced in this section. A new family is established with the marriage of Rajkumar and Dolly as Rajkumar appears at Ratnagiri as a successful and affluent timber-trader in search of Dolly in a rather

cinematic manner. A third family is on its way as the King's attendant-coachman Mohan Sawant gets seriously involved with the first princess. After almost two decades of stay in India, the exiled Royal family members have adopted many social and cultural traits of Indian life, along with a few Indian languages like Hindustani and Marathi. The Burmese Queen confides to Uma that the cultural custom of the change of Indian women's names before and after marriage is still obscure to her: "We have never been able to accustom ourselves to your way of naming women after their fathers and husbands. We do not do this in Burma." (*GP* 108). The difference between two ethno-cultural spaces becomes evident as marriage and the eventual change of family from the parental house to the husband's house takes place, resulting in the change of surnames of Indian women.

It is for Uma's earnest behest that Dolly decides over marrying Rajkumar and after a brisk "civil ceremony" and garlanding, the couple moves for Rangoon. Saya John appears to welcome the newly-wed couple in Rangoon's passenger jetty and what follows is a definite proof of transcultural kinship claiming a familial bond close to the role of a father-in-law: "Taking hold of her wrist, he slipped the bracelet over her knuckles. 'It belonged to my wife,' he said. 'I put it aside for you'" (*GP* 181). Rajkumar's identity mirrors that of John's biological child Matthew as John allows Rajkumar to enter his closest sphere of intimacy. Carol Smart's idea about "how we relate to our relatives and whom we include in our spheres of intimacy" (13) depends on the choice and decision of the individual outside specific needs prescribed by the traditional kinship formula. Meanwhile, the family of Collector Dey at Ratnagiri breaks as Uma moves back to her parental household in Calcutta. The first princess in the Burmese Royal household gets pregnant by the Indian coachman Sawant which creates sufficient ire not just in Thebaw's family but also in the British colonial administration. The Collector receives a reprimand from the Chief Secretary of the Bombay Presidency expressing intolerance about the "prospect of dealing with a half-caste bastard": "They like to

keep their races tidily separate" (*GP* 173). The issue of keeping "their races tidily separate" is vital to the discussion of the western model of kinship studies, as Janet Carsten points out in *After Kinship*: "In defining itself as a discipline, anthropology thus reinforced the boundaries between the West and the rest. Kinship was something "they" have; "we" have families, and this was a quite different matter." (15) However, Uma's departure and the official letter of reprimand depress the Collector so deeply that during risky and unmindful rowing in the sea, he is swept away by the tide and dies. As Uma had "no children to care for" (*GP* 184), she decided to go abroad. Ghosh has shown how the breaking of a family motivates dislocation in unfamiliar ethno-cultural space.

The names of Dolly and Rajkumar's two sons stand as significant examples of cultural hybridity and transcultural identity, as they have both an Indian and a Burmese name: the elder Neeladhri's Burmese name is Sein Win, and the younger Dinanath's Burmese name is Tun Pe. It is how, in the second generation, transculturality becomes easier to achieve. Meanwhile, Saya John's son Matthew marries an American named Elsa, and establishes a family: a transcultural family again! Though Matthew is a Catholic, and Elsa's parental family is Protestant, the common issue of Christianity keeps the difference less visible. A cultural anthropologist by academic training, Amitav Ghosh takes immense interest in human relationships despite the disparate socio-cultural constitution of identity, which gives Janet Carsten's proposition the validity that "close kin ties are intrinsic to the social constitution of persons" (*After Kinship* 83). As the issues of home, belonging and upbringing are significant to the constitution of cultural identity, kinship and family, the transculturally dislocated individuals find it challenging to establish families or close kinship in the socio-cultural order around them. The exceptions are excitingly exemplary, as the narrator of *The Glass Palace* informs the reader about the families of the Burmese princesses, which is also historically authentic: "...of the four Princesses, the two who'd been born in Burma both chose to live on in India. Their younger sisters ...

both born in India, chose to settle in Burma: both married and had children" (*GP* 213). The "unique and vigorous hybrids" (Strathern 37) hardly find it challenging to establish transcultural kinship in dislocation. Rajkumar's extramarital relationship with a south-Indian coolie woman in Malaysia and the eventual birth of Ilongo is a strong example of transcultural kinship in dislocation. The ending of the novel is significant since it shows how lack of wealth, homelessness and dislocation transform people. Despite their mutual antipathy, the redemptive love brings Rajkumar and Uma together to dissolve the borders between them. The crossing of borders not only liberates the 'self' from a confined space but also situates it in a global network of kinship that paves the way for re-imagining community and a home across the water.

End Note:

¹- Ghosh's narrator indulges in a fanciful reference to botanical kinship while reflecting over the relationship between teak and mint: "Teak is a relative of mint, *tectona grandis*, born of the same genus" (70), and "there was an unmistakable kinship, a palpably familial link" (71).

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Decoding *Lucifer*: Challenging the Retro- Fittings in the History of Satan

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Abstract:

Lucifer is a Television drama series developed by Tom Kapinos based on a comic book (The Sandman) character created by Neil Gaiman, Sam Kieth, and Mike Dringenberg. It was premiered on Fox on 25 January 2016. Satan/Lucifer, derived from the Christian myth has always been a misinterpreted figure. Satan is usually viewed as the embodiment of evil according to the religious myths. This paper attempts to decode Lucifer in order to study how this TV show challenges the popular myths revolving around the Lucifer/ Satan/ Devil figure. The series portrays Lucifer as an accuser/ punisher and not the embodiment of evil. Lucifer Morningstar used to be the Lord of Hell where his job was to punish the souls of the sinners before he decided to take a vacation in Los Angeles, USA. While in L.A, he continues his job as a punisher by associating himself with the LAPD. Another popular notion it challenges is the Devil as the tempter and the typical human behaviour to blame the devil thus attempting to escape accountability for our own mistakes/sins. Religious tradition teaches Satan as the most vicious living being in existence but the show purports the idea that even the Devil is not beyond redemption. The paper also envisages to analyse how Lucifer is rooted in Biblical and Miltonian Universes and how it subverts the same.

Keywords: *redemption, retro-fitting, censorship, evil etc.*

Lucifer is a procedural drama series developed by Tom

Kapinos which premiered on Fox television on 25 January 2016. The titular character is based on a supporting character by the name Lucifer Samael Morningstar in the comic book series titled *Sandman* which was written by Neil Gaiman and published by the Vertigo Imprint of DC Comics.

The series consisted of three seasons with 13 episodes in the first season, 18 in the second and 26 in the third season when Fox cancelled this show after the airing of the twenty fourth episode which ended in a cliffhanger on 18 May 2018. After the cancellation, fans of the show staged a massive protest on the various social media platforms and the show was taken up by Netflix and the fourth season was aired in 2019.

It stars Tom Ellis as Lucifer Morningstar: who has decided to take a vacation from his duties as the Lord of Hell and is the owner of a Nightclub named 'Lux' in Los Angeles and later becomes a civilian consultant to the Los Angeles Police Division (L. A. P. D), Lauren German as Chloe Decker: homicide detective of the L.A.P. D and Lucifer's love-interest, Rachel Harris as Dr. Linda Martin: Lucifer's Psychotherapist and his confidante, Lesley-Ann Brandt as Mazikeen: a demon who followed Lucifer through the gates of hell and his powerful ally with a dark side, D. B. Woodside as Amenadiel, Lucifer's brother who is the eldest of his Angel- siblings and Tricia Helfer as Charlotte Richards: whose body is possessed by their "Mum" (in season 2) the Goddess who had been condemned to hell for eternity by their "Dad", God.

This research paper envisages to analyse this television series with special focus on its eponymous character Lucifer, once-God's favourite son who was casted out of heaven for disobeying Him and condemned to be the Lord of Hell for eternity. The following are the objectives behind this attempt: 1) to examine the historical evolution of the character Satan/ Lucifer derived from the Christian myth ranging from his portrayal in Bible to this TV show, 2) to analyse how the theme of the Devil's redemption is worked out in the series, 3) to look at the controversies circulating the show to examine the hue and cry for censorship and 4) to explore the political commitments of the series.

Henry Ansgar Kelly in his work *Satan: A Biography* argues that Satan is a figure who is largely misunderstood and the negative characterisation associated with this character is due to retro-fitting: "this interpretation has bedeviled the history of Satan, transforming him from a merely obnoxious functionary of the Divine Government into a personification of Evil - a personification that really exists as a person"(2). He states that Satan is not God's enemy in the New Testament but is the accuser of humankind by drawing references from the Bible. The Devil became the embodiment of evil in post-biblical interpretations of the Biblical texts. Thus, according to Kelly, the Bible does not postulate him as God's enemy but he is merely an employee under God's authority. It is the texts and works that came later that portray Satan as God's adversary.

'The Lucifer' in the TV series is located within this context; he is not God's enemy. He is God's estranged son, deeply troubled with psychological complexities, who proclaims to hate his father but underneath that exterior bravado the viewer wonders if that is truly the case. For instance, in the episode titled "God Johnson" (Season 2, Episode 16) we see Lucifer meeting with someone whom he believes to be God. Naturally, he begins by venting his fury upon this character, named God Johnson but later Lucifer works out his issues with him and decides to arrange a meeting with him and his mother who had escaped from hell

and came to Earth and was trying to hatch a plan to return to heaven at any cost. The show's didacticism, ironic in one sense, seems to be trying to convey a message to the audience that one can always make peace with one's family members. Though both Lucifer and the Goddess state on multiple occasions that they can never forgive God, once they interact with each other, the previous differences that they had melt away when they apologise to each other.

In this sense we can say that Lucifer is closer to Milton's Satan than any other depictions of him. Milton's *Paradise Lost* offers Satan's perspective on his rebellion with God. Book IV of *Paradise Lost* provides a psychological peek into the character: "Me miserable! Which way shall I fly/ Infinite wrath and infinite despair?/ Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell" (63). Tormented with guilt and sorrow he finally decides that it is "better to reign in Hell, than to serve in Heaven." Lucifer in the TV show is not a diabolical villain or an evil master-mind. When the show begins he is selfish, ruthless, deceptive and even cruel. He considers himself charming and is arrogant to the core. But ironically the devil is not devilish. He is even capable of inspiring people to do good. This is shown in the Pilot episode, when he inspires his long time acquaintance and film star Dalila to turn her life around from substance abuse. However, she gets killed in an encounter soon after and Lucifer decides to seek punishment for Dalila's killer.

His psychological transformation begins when he meets Chloe Decker, the homicide detective who investigates the murder of Dalila. He introduces himself as the devil and naturally she doesn't believe him. Lucifer has the power to draw out the "deep dark naughty little desires" (00:02:11- 12, Episode 1, Season 1) in people's minds. He can manipulate people by making eye contact with them. He describes this as a gift from God. But to his indignation, he finds that his powers do not work on Chloe. This leads him to develop an attraction towards her and initially he accompanies her on her case to exact punishment for his friend's killer. Later he persuades the Lieutenant to officially appoint him as a civilian consultant to the L. A. P. D.

Chloe is a good woman with explicit moral values. The essential goodness and the selflessness of this character influences Lucifer in such a way that he begins to accept her criticism of him in a positive light. Another important factor which contributes in his psychological development is his sessions with Dr. Linda Martin. The inherent motto of the series, redemption is possible for everyone who makes an attempt at repentance and attaining goodness can be read in this character as well. Dr. Martin initially accepts payments from him as sexual favours but after meeting with Chloe she contemplates on her choices and decides to put an end to this unethical practise.

Each episode revolves around a murder case during the course of which Lucifer learns something valuable. In the second episode of the first season, though he denies initially that earth/ Chloe is changing him, he realises that he “ tried to change, that’s what’s important” (00:36:48) and admits the same to Dr. Martin. We see that he is beginning to care about someone other than himself. He begins to care for humanity as such and tries to ensure that the innocent are not punished and the killers are, in the later episodes. More than that, as Dr. Martin tells him at the end of the third episode: “I think you don’t just enjoy punishing the bad people. I think you are starting to enjoy seeking justice for the good ones” (00:41:40-41).

The seventh episode in the first season titled “Wingman” depicts a pivotal moment in Lucifer’s transformation and the journey towards redemption. He had severed off his angel wings when he decided to stay on in L. A and never to return to hell. The severed wings were secretly enclosed in a container vehicle to be transported when the container goes missing and a homicide takes place during the theft. Episodes six and seven narrate Lucifer’s quest for his wings. Lucifer tracks down the wings through a religious relic auction and realises that his brother Amanadiel orchestrated the theft in order to make him yearn for the wings and to generate in him the desire to return to Hell to resume his duties as it’s Lord. He

burns the wings in Amanadiel’s presence and perhaps this is the most significant moment in his road to redemption. This is when he truly understands that he never wants to go back to hell and this realisation is not simply because of his desire to be with Chloe. It’s much more than that; he is rejecting the destiny his father chose for him; he is embracing his own free will. Though it might seem confusing as to how rejecting God’s command is an act of redemption, my analysis is that Lucifer is fighting so hard to jettison the image of himself as the prince of darkness and the embodiment of evil. He might have relished in this idea before but now he finds it problematic that others find him evil. It is also crucial to acknowledge that he doesn’t consider himself evil. The burning of the wings is not merely the rejection of “the life dear old dad chose” (00:35:02) for him instead it is about embracing himself for who he is, Lucifer, but also Samael, the light-bringer.

The ninth episode “A Priest Walks into a Bar” showcases the idea that no one is beyond saving. Father Frank is a character who greatly influences Lucifer. He tries his level best to tempt him and expose his hypocrisy but to no avail. Frank tells Lucifer and Chloe about his own story of redemption, about how he turned to faith when he lost his family in a car accident. Lucifer finally accepts that there is inherent goodness in people and people with true faith remain incorruptible. It must be mentioned here that faith in the sense that is used here is not faith in any religion; its faith in an entity bigger than oneself.

Father Frank dies at the end of the episode in a cross-firing incident and Lucifer is devastated. Just before he dies, Frank tells him: “At first I didn’t understand why God put you in my path. But then it hit me, maybe he put me in yours” (00:35:17-18) to which Lucifer replies: “I highly doubt it. He gave up on me a long time ago.” Frank tells him that “You are wrong Lucifer. Your father has a, has a plan” (00:35:21-38). This scene is momentous in two ways. Firstly, it investigates the possibility of the devil’s redemption. Secondly the priest who is portrayed here is somebody who truly believes in Christianity, not just the institutionalised version of it

but in the true essence of it. What else proclaims God's goodness than the fact that even the devil is redeemable? The last episode of the second season shows Lucifer waking up in the desert with his wings restored. This is symbolic of the fact that he has been redeemed by God. In this sense, the series is propagandist since it encourages the viewer to have faith and imparts a message that we are all capable of goodness and God is forgiving and by repentance and good deeds one can be redeemed. Here the series subverts the demonised portrayal of the devil by the Christian theology, by challenging the retro-fittings that represented the devil as the embodiment of evil and also demarcates between religion and spirituality. It challenges the ideologies of institutionalised religion and expostulates the radical notion that spirituality can exist even without religion. It separates God from religion.

Another radical notion is introduced later in the series when Amanadiel has an epiphany and asks Lucifer: "I am talking about the rules of heaven and hell, Luci. It's all based on the human subconscious, what they think they deserve. What if it applies to us as well? ... What if He wants us to judge ourselves? My wings, your wings, your devil face, brother, what if we are the ones who control all of it? (Season 3, Episode 23, 00:12:08-10). This conversation is later given evidentiary support in the next episode where Amanadiel gets his wings back when he forgives himself for the mistakes he committed. The vision of hell depicted in the series also revolves around this concept of the self. Hell is a time loop where the guilty soul re-lives that one moment which has the capability to tear him or her apart over and over again.

This brings us to the question of censorship. When this series was announced by Fox "One Million Moms" a website by the American Family Association started a petition demanding Fox to cancel the show: "...because it supposedly paints the Prince of Darkness in a positive light and disrespects the Bible.... glorify Satan as a caring, likable person in human flesh," (Suebsaeng). Another organisation titled America Needs Fatima also came forth with a petition called "Be Gone, Satan. Tell FOX to cancel Lucifer"

(*America Needs Fatima*). Censorship has always been an obstacle to creativity and we can see that same is the case here. The very fact that freedom of expression is to be curbed, the idea that something is to be censored, inherently implies that the work in question has subverted or transgressed from the knowledge purported by the authority. Fundamentalists have assumed that they are doing 'God's work' while condemning homosexuality, patriarchy, racism etc. They have used God and religion to legitimise their power positions. They have threatened believers with damnation and hell if conformity to their authority is questioned.

Lucifer challenges such notions especially the rigid puritan code and the excessive emphasis on morality. This does not mean it supports a rejection of morality, instead it merely dispenses the idea that the actions that are often branded sins, like homosexuality, for instance, are not to be viewed as sins. The idea of morality itself is problematised. We often find that the definitions of morality- what is right and wrong- contain hidden agendas to serve the interests of the powerful sources from which they are released.

Many groups have associated this series with Satan worship but the twelfth episode in the first season distinctly clarifies its positions on it. The high priest of a Satanic cult himself admits that the whole thing is a joke. Malcolm, the corrupt police officer after killing three people asks Lucifer if he isn't impressed and happy by his actions. A deeply agitated Lucifer replies that he has never stood for killing people. "I am not evil, I am the devil"(00:37:46). Similarly the series also criticises the human tendency to blame the devil for their atrocities in an act of evading accountability for one's own crimes. "Why do they blame me for all their little failings, as if I had spent my days sitting on their shoulders forcing them to commit acts that they would otherwise find repulsive , ah the devil made me do it. I have never made any one of them do anything. Never." (Season 1, Episode 6, 00:41:40-41)

The series is politically committed in the sense that it upholds feminist, gay, lesbian stances. It subverts patriarchy and questions the objectification of women.

It places in its discourse a divine Goddess in variance with the Christian theology. *Lucifer* also undertakes to subvert Racism. In the series, God's eldest born son Amanadiel is Black. This is in direct opposition to the popular cultural productions in which white symbolically stands for good and black for evil.

In conclusion, *Lucifer* de-mystifies religion and challenges the retro-fittings in the history of Satan as the embodiment of evil. Thus, the propaganda that operates underneath the show is 'angelic' rather than ungodly or foul, ironically. The series also deals with the themes of forgiveness, guilt and atonement. However, it is beyond the scope of a research paper to give weightage to all the themes explored within a series consisting of three seasons. Through this paper, the researcher has examined how the series challenges the notions which came about with the retro-fittings that occurred in the history of 'satan' that, Lucifer is the adversary of god and the epitome of evil are questioned.

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Masculinity and Performativity in Patrick White's *The Solid Mandala*

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Abstract :

In every community, the role of both women and men is important for all round development of their families in all aspects. When a man and woman lead their life together as a couple with their children then it is known as 'Family'. It depicts the gender roles and social conformity in all phases of their public life. But Judith Butler's opinions are in contrast to this sort of social norms. In her critically acclaimed 'Gender Trouble', the author had explicitly interpreted the concepts of gender identity and performativity. She argues that gender is performative and its identity is not stable. Her viewpoint distinctly implies that gender identity is subjected to social order and traditional practices. The main objective of the paper is to focus on the men's role in the conventional social order from the literary point of view. Along with that, the paper attempts to critically analyse Judith Butler's 'Performativity of Gender' vis-à-vis The Solid Mandala.

Keywords: *Nostalgia, Mundane bondage, Gender Performativity, Effeminacy, Gender Identity, Transvestic disorder.*

Introduction :

According to Cambridge's Dictionary, 'Masculinity' means the characteristics that are traditionally thought to be typical or suitable for men. The plot of the novel revolves around the twin brothers and their love interest

on the same young woman namely Dulcie Feinstein. Albeit Brown brothers tried their level best to marry her, they were not able to convince her to marry anyone among them. Not only Waldo brown was womanish in this case but also Arthur brown had the same persona. Moreover, they were sceptical of their own gender identity. In specific, the following two characteristic features disclose the ambiguity in Waldo brown's Gender Identity.

Waldo brown has a transvestic disorder as he liked to have women's attire than men's and his reticence prevented him from mingling with others easily. Secondly, he intends to marry Dulcie Feinstein for the sake of social life even though he lacked sexual attraction towards her. This exhibits Waldo's trait of following public life just to portray himself as a social person. In addition, his homesickness bonded him from all sorts of external works making his social appearance limited. Overall, Waldo was entirely different than any other men in masculine features.

This is applicable to Arthur Brown also who never determines to lead his life like any other normal man. He endeavours to look after Mrs Poultry who is neighbour to him. His excessive concern does not seem to be natural as it was quite bizarre to society. Apart from this, Arthur's unconditional love on Dulcie absolutely secludes him from the rest of other men in terms of social relations. Thus, the people of Sarsaparilla town considered the twin brothers strange and eccentric due to their unconventional personality.

Even Mrs Dun, the neighbour of Brown brothers criticizes their strange behaviour by terming it as ‘unnatural’.

From the gender perspective, Effeminacy can be envisaged as the prominent feature of the male characters of the novel. Throughout the novel, two major concepts - Masculinity and Performativity can be traced out from a literary perspective in connection with Butler’s ‘Performativity of Gender’.

Social relationships of Brown brothers through the lens of ‘Performativity’ :

In the broad area of Gender Studies, Men’s study is quite a new concept which deals with the men’s role and activity in society. In this area of studies, the male characters seem to be normal in public life but they want to prove their masculinity in all possible ways. Furthermore, ‘Performativity of Gender’ can be critically applied to the male characters in the literary context. In this aspect, Judith Butler’s concept can be considered in which she unveils the relationship between gender identity and performativity in her book “Gender Trouble” (1990).

“There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results”. (Butler, GT 33)

According to the author, gender identity does not depend merely on the expressions of a person in his social life. In addition to this, Performativity is a referential word which implies the activity of persons as a social norm. Moreover, Judith Butler had written about ‘Performativity’ even in her another critically acclaimed book “Bodies that matter”:

“Performativity is thus not a singular ‘act’, for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition” (Butler, BM 12). In this statement, the author did not imply any confined meaning to the word ‘performativity’ and she regards it as a repetitive practice of a society.

When it comes to the topic of Men’s studies, the main

factor is nothing but the job or designation of men. Everyman’s work doesn’t remain the same in every society as it varies from person to person and the mode of work represents the gender roles in society. Therefore, men are preferentially hired for Industrial works which require physical strength to work effectively.

Even though all kinds of jobs require both physical and mental strength, men’s jobs are complicated than that of women as the former’s work demands much more physical strength to do strenuous works than the latter. But the male characters of ‘The Solid Mandala’ seem to be different in terms of physical ability as they inclined to stay in their house rather than going to work outside. It clearly shows their homesickness in which normally women possess. It is a novel that depicts the life of two unmarried brothers with opposite nature and behaviour. Both of them reside in the same parental house from their birth age to senility but they lack brotherly affection and family concern.

Reflection of ‘Effeminacy’ in the male characters :

The author has written this novel in four chapters. Among them, second chapter is the biggest which is related to the personal confessions and judgemental opinions of Waldo brown. It has Waldo’s perspective which is the longest section whereas the third chapter has been narrated from Arthur’s point of view. In these sections, Brown brothers defend themselves for their actions and accuse each other. For readers, their confession seems to be correct in many aspects. Hence, it is important to critically examine the characters of twin brothers. Waldo brown is physically challenged and intends to stay at his house most of the time due to his inability to work efficiently. But Arthur brown maintains amicable relationship with his friends and relatives, unlike his brother. This fact has deeply hurt Waldo who considers his brother as his foe in his social life.

“He hated his brother Arthur, although, or perhaps because, Arthur was the thread of continuity, and might even be the core of truth”. (The Solid Mandala 187)

Waldo feels that he has been continuously cornered

not only because of his physical disability but also Arthur's influence on others. Two brothers though born to same parents possess different interests and wishes. In sociological context, Arthur as a gregarious person earns social respect and becomes a respectful person whereas Waldo maintains reticence and stays out of the company of his friends, acquaintance and his relatives as well. Apart from this, Waldo's character is portrayed as an effeminate person due to his transvestic disorder as he aspires to wear women's garments in solitude. Though he was a librarian, he did not like his job of sitting for a long time without motion in the library. His inferiority complex has increased day by day due to his motionless activity and loneliness. In brief, his homesickness and dressing nature unveil the effeminacy in his personality. In his childhood, he was instructed by his mother to pray. She also had advised him to be strong which was not possible to him.

"Waldo had been taught to pray, because, said mother, everything depends on your own will, it would be foolishness to expect anything else, we can achieve what we want if we are determined if we confident that we are strong". (The Solid Mandala 77)

But Waldo brown never felt that he was strong mainly because of his physical disability.

Similarly, Arthur's character is no more different than Waldo in the aspect of masculinity as he wishes to stay with the women's company instead of men's. As proof, he always works for the two ladies in which one among them is his love interest. Dulcie Feinstein and MrsPoulter are the two ladies in which he has been associated with them for a long time. In his entire lifetime, the two women are prominent to him and he has no male friends at all. Normally, every person will have many friends of a respective gender. But it is not seen in Arthur's social contacts and his female affinity shows his womanish nature which can be observed in his unconditional support to them. Meanwhile, Arthur's friendly relationship with Dulcie turns into love for which she denies and gets married to another person. In spite of having a passionate love for her, Arthur fails to impress and loses her permanently. The same thing

happens in the case of Waldo who aspired her to be his wife but gets rejected by her. Therefore, Brown brothers determine to remain lifelong bachelors instead of opting for any marital plans. Dulcie's stern denial to their love plea depicts the human relationship and the woman's expectation on her suitors which mainly depends on sexuality as well.

Twin brothers' love failure due to their Gender Identity :

M.A.R. Habib, an acclaimed critic has referred Michael Foucault's perspective on Sexuality in his highly acclaimed book:

"Foucault's work is important perspective proposes that sexuality is not simply the natural expression of some inner drive or desire. The discourses of sexuality concern the operation of power in human relationships as much as they govern the production of personal identity". (Habib, LCT 435)

In connection with this statement, it is possible to empathize with the feelings of Dulcie Feinstein as an aspiring bride who dares to reject the marriage proposal of Brown brothers. According to her, Sexuality is one of the main factors to maintain a harmonious relationship in the married life. In this aspect, two important reasons can be specified for the love failure of the Waldo brown. Firstly, Waldo was a disabled man who doesn't seem to be trustworthy in terms of his physical strength. Secondly, his transvestic disorder faded his manly nature. Despite this, he wanted to marry her not for his sexual gratification but to earn social respect as a husband to a beautiful lady. He confesses even this point also in the second section of the novel without concealing. Overall, this kind of eccentric behaviour showcases the binary nature of his gender identity as he didn't have the qualities of a duty-bound husband. He lacked the gender identity of a man from many perspectives even though he was a man morphologically.

On gender identity and morphology, Patricia Waugh has specified Judith Butler's opinion in her book:

"Butler's main contention is that gender does not axiomatically proceed from sex. Although the sexes

might seem binary in their morphology and constitution, for Butler there are no grounds to assume that genders ought to remain as two. Alternatively phrased, gender does not necessarily mirror sex. Consolidating and expanding a key argument in *Gender trouble*, that the relation of gender is not mimetic, *Bodies that Matter* and *Excitable Speech* (1997) abandon the notion of innate or intrinsic gender identity". (Waugh 442)

Thus, it is uncertain to assert that the person's behaviour will depend upon his morphology as the innate traits vary from one person to another. Waldo's dressing sense is the best example as he wanted to wear women's garments with the male body and his strange act raises the question of his gender identity in view of social norms.

Besides Arthur Brown, just like his brother fails to impress Dulcie and she never wanted even to imagine him as her spouse. She was reluctant of him because of his close rapport with Mrs Poulter. His concern on the married woman seemed frivolous and unnecessary to Dulcie. In spite of it, he did many things in order to convince her to marry him. Nevertheless, she did not reciprocate his affection for not being a responsible householder. His lack of discretion on his future endeavours made him lose Dulcie forever.

Throughout the novel, Arthur Brown appears as a reliable person and many positive things can be noticed in his personality distinctly as a socially respectable person. He was well known as a helper and he always wanted to extend any sort of support to both Mrs Poulter and Dulcie Feinstein without any expectation. Yet he appeared feckless in Dulcie's pragmatic view. His social inclination was not enough for her to accept his marriage proposal. Apart from this, he was like a helping hand to Mrs Poulter which perturbs the serenity of Dulcie's mind. He candidly proclaims himself as Mrs Poulter's caretaker with a religious message and assumes that Jesus had sent him to replace his position.

"She did honestly believe it. Since her Lord and master Jesus had destroyed himself that same day, she had been given this man - child as a token of everlasting life". (The Solid Mandala 312)

Even this religious tone of Arthur didn't go well with

Dulcie. With these sorts of activities, he wanted to portray himself as a 'man of character' with social responsibilities. This distinctly shows that he has never appeared as a responsible householder to Dulcie in social life as he takes care of Mrs Poulter for no logical reason. In this regard, Arthur is praiseworthy for his humanitarian activities but he miserably fails in his love and sexual life. Psychologically, Sigmund Freud expresses the difference between love and sexuality in the human relationship which can be seen in the Habib's writing:

"Freud extended the meaning of sexuality to encompass not merely genial satisfaction but a broader bodily function, having pleasure as its goal and only subsequently serving a reproductive function. Sexuality now encompassed all of the emotions of affection and friendliness traditionally subsumed under the word love". (Habib, LC 236)

The Psychologist's opinion explicitly unveils the importance of love and sexuality in the human relationship. According to him, human emotions have the equal importance of love and sexuality which are vital for a happy married life to get satisfaction both physically and mentally. When this psychological viewpoint is taken into consideration in the marriage life, every young woman expects those characteristic features in her beau and vice-versa. In the case of Dulcie and Arthur's relationship, she had a full-fledged reliance on him but she was sceptical about his ability in leading a happy married life. In short, Brown brothers had one sided love with her and they were not able to empathize with her feelings. The peculiarity of one-sided affection of men has been described by Simone De Beauvoir in her book '*The Second Sex*'. Her views are comprehensively elucidated in Habib's "*Literary Criticism and Theory*" :

"...A man thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he apprehends objectively, whereas he regards the body of a woman as a hindrance, a prison.." (Habib, LCT 683)

This statement implies the social liberty of men and women in which men consider themselves as the social

representatives without paying any sort of special heed to the opposite gender.

In this novel, Brown brothers had an unrequited love for the same woman in their life span and they could not find an alternative option to Dulcie Feinstein who chooses some other as her husband. Even after her marriage also, the brothers don't bother to find suitable brides for them. If they were interested to lead a householder's life then they might have married any others. Unfortunately, Dulcie was the first and last love interest to both of them which reveals their disinterestedness in having a soulmate other than her. It can also be the narrow-mindedness and inferiority complex of brothers. As proof, Arthur writes a poem that is focused on their common agony of feminine attitude and mental turmoil which they endured.

"He saw the hatred Waldo was directing, had always directed, at all living things, or the blasphemous poem - because that, too, had a life of a kind - the poem which celebrates their common pain". (The Solid Mandala 294)

It is a common fact that every person wants to have an attractive life partner and there is no difference in them. In this context, social life can be taken into consideration as the unification of men and women in the name of marriage which constitutes a family. Therefore, 'Performativity of Gender' is directly traceable in the male characters of this novel.

Conclusion :

Expressing her notion about the psychological and biological aspects of gender Judith Butler says in her book 'Bodies that Matter':

"What has been understood as the performativity of gender—far from the exercise of unconstrained voluntarism—will prove to be impossible apart from notions of such political constraints registered psychically. It may well be useful to separate the notion of constraints or limits from the metaphysical

endeavour to ground those constraints in biological or psychological essentialism". (Butler, BM 94)

In the conclusion of the novel, Arthur tries to console Waldo and suggest him to accept their fate as the god's wish. His religious opinion reveals that both of them lack autonomy.

"That's something you and I need never be, Waldo. Afraid, we learned too late about all this Christ stuff. From what we read it doesn't seem to work anyway. But we have each other". (The Solid Mandala 200)

Throughout the novel, the sufferings of twin brothers are intertwined with that of women's characters which have limited scope. Along with that, 'Performativity of Gender' as a prominent literary topic in the Gender studies adds a special scope to the men's characters in this novel.

Patrick White's 'The Solid Mandala' is a major literary contribution in the field of men's studies as much more focus has been given to the life of twin brothers. The author has succeeded in exhibiting Australian society and the life of unmarried brothers who fail to influence society in any possible manner due to their doubtful gender identity.

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Engaging the Body: A Study of Desire and Identity in *Babyji* by Abha Daweser

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Abstract :

The depiction of queer sexuality and the emergence of multiple identities, as reflected in contemporary queer writings, has unveiled a very complex socio-political fabric along with its ambivalent attitude towards same-sex fancy. In the pre-colonial Indian scenario sexualities, positioned outside the heteronormative structure, were proclaimed to be unnatural and seldom invited correctional measures which led to the establishment of the opposition to homosexuality law in 1861 by the British. In order to understand the contemporary reception of homosexuality and the problematic nuances of modern queer culture it is important to perceive Indian society as an evolutionary space-a site of socio-cultural transitions. Since the early 1990s, various movements have been taken by LGBTQ people to proclaim ‘Queer’ as a very important position of identity and as a way of being which requires cultural visibility. Being an important area of scholarly enquiry, Abha Daweser’s novel Babyji unpacks certain fundamental premises of lesbian sexuality. In my paper I would try to address and critically analyse the problematics of the body with reference to the question of desire and identity. Daweser makes a very radical approach towards unveiling the concept of ‘female gaze’ and how it functions without de-humanising the body itself. My paper would also interrogate the complex structure of sexual politics which consistently tries to contain the lesbian body and manipulate the

patterns of behavior that it proceeds to enact.

Keywords: *Body, Desire, Identity, Politics, Sexuality*

Reading lesbian sexuality in Abha Daweser’s *Babyji* would certainly probe certain important ideas that are challenging enough to dismantle the ideology of moral enquiry and the assumed coherence of heteronormativity. The idea of the lesbian body is one such important concern that needs to be explained critically. “Babyji” refers to Anamika Sharma whom the novel centres around. She is a girl in twelfth standard and the Head Perfect at school, and also an unconventional lover with equally unusual relationships. Her liaison with a divorcee lady, a maid servant and a girl of her age – is something that becomes a very potent instrument to give a threat to the privileged discourse of heterosexuality. She also shares romantic interest with her best friend’s dad and the most unscrupulous boy of her class. Eve Sedgwick, in *Tendencies* (1993), writes “Queer refers to open mesh of possibilities...excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone’s gender and sexuality aren’t made monolithically” (Sedgwick 8) and Anamika’s sexuality very effectively addresses the sense of indeterminacy or fluidity integral to queer discourse.

Anamika’s encounter with the idea of the body and desire is recalled when she confides in the readers “I used to be innocent...My knowledge of the facts of life was based entirely on books...These books never went into any details...To remedy this I decided

to read Kamasutra.” (Dawesar1-2) What we sense is an honest confession of a teenage girl who is on a crucial phase of transition from her teen-age to adulthood and her exposure to *Kamasutra* is absolutely a harbinger of a new experience for her. The conflict, therefore, is not merely between what she is allowed to read and what not, but more importantly between, what she desires to read and what lies outside her desired reading. This is where the idea of desire comes in and the book of *Kamasutra* acts as a catalyst for this identification of this desire- desire to know the deepest truth, to know the unknown functioning of the body and how it reacts to its proximity to other body. Abha Dawesar very explicitly subverts the prevailing narrative of innocence by portraying Anamika as a highly matured being with full grip over the knowledge of the physical. This is the “remedy” that *Kamasutra* provides to bring a transformation in the understanding of the self and also to recognise her latent desire. The knowledge of the body is of prime importance for Dawesar’s protagonist to claim her distinct sexual identity.

The body as a leitmotif continues to celebrate the “lesbian continuum” which Adrienne Rich explains in her essay titled “Compulsive Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” (1980) as the far ranging and diverse spectrum of love and bonding among women which also includes same-sex relationships. While disparaging the normative discourse like “ageism” Anamika very effectively questions the arbitrary nature of social relations. She feels it absolutely oppressive and it stands as an impediment to her attraction to someone older than her. She describes when she meets her first love, Tripta Adhikari, a divorcee “I was susceptible at that age...I fancied for a moment that she was that handsome woman” (Dawesar 2). Again she continues: “...I felt my heart overflow with some kind of knowledge I could not immediately identify...that a great discovery had just been made...I wished a simple object like apple had been involved, something tangible that I could contemplate and hold, smell and bite” (Dawesar 3). The first realisation of the body thus comes up with a kind of desire infused

with physical longing for something that she can touch. The desire to “hold, smell and bite” has a deep sexual undertone and she feels for the “tangible” body. What happens therefore is a kind of sexual awakening and carnal longing for a person of her own sex. There are references where she feels extremely moved by the “tapping” and “squeezing” that her new love (whom she names India) prefers to do to her while talking. Anamika ends up calling her an “enigma”.

Feminist theoretical understanding of female gaze becomes crucial while delving deep into the issue of body reflected in the novel. What Anamika feels for the body is integral to her visualisation of the body. It is through this gaze we can sense a kind of de-aestheticisation of the body and also the body as a marker of one’s social position. This kind of physical inspection is of introspective nature that makes this girl a threatening symbol of moral decay at the surface level, but it also reflects the desire that is repressed. We can refer to Freudian theorisation of sexual drive from a functional point of view where he explains that sexual drives are the basis of conscious experiences, even if they are secondarily repressed. Freud talks about it in *The Ego and the Id* (1923) and he further explains it as “motive force of sexual instincts”. It is this instinctual urge that continues to define the sexuality of this girl. The conflicts that she experiences between intimate personal fantasies and the norms of social life are understandable. Interestingly, she tries her hardest to integrate the sexual and the personal in a balanced way. Abha Dawesar redefines the body while selecting the lovers of Anamika who range from the upper to the lowest strata of the society. It is the body or rather the desire for the body that is prioritised and therefore projected as humane enough to be unaffected by the class, caste identity and also gender identity. Desire knows no gender. Being a Brahmin herself Anamika never stops her amorous adventures because of social restrictions, rather she unequivocally makes the striking conviction: “Only feelings counted. And sensations” (Dawesar19). We see a very strong emphasis on the fulfilment of female desire and a bold recognition of it which Srimoyee Piu Kundu in her

feminist erotic novel *Sita's Curse*(2014) perpetually proclaims. The acknowledgement of women's desire and allowing her to regulate that desire towards both the sexes -is an incredible understanding that *Babyji* validates. And all these realisations are described as an important part of the process of growing up in a phase like puberty. Anamika says: "I was suddenly ahead of everyone. More grown up." (Dawesar 15)Without any sense of insinuation the knowledge of the body is claimed as purely a demand of the instinct and it is more like an adventure rushing to the body in the puberty or post puberty period. Never do we find Anamika performing poorly in her studies, misbehaving with her teachers or parents or going astray, she maintains all these formal, regular things perfectly. We might say that Dawesar perhaps attempts to give a jolt to the moral and immoral binary which, in other words, is the binary between the moral and the physical. The conventional approach to view the body as something immoral is in a way discarded by Dawesar in this novel.

The body as something to be celebrated yet protected is also another important facet that needs to be explored. We see a kind of feminisation of the act of escorting which again is customarily associated to men. Anamika has a very consistently protective concern towards her lovers and hers is a kind of masculine approach in taking care of her lovers. There are scenes where she aspires to be manly enough to guard the susceptibility of the bodies she shares relation with. Being a girl herself she feels more concerned with Sheela's chances of being molested in the crowded bus, she becomes terribly upset when India flaunts her voluptuous body in front of other people, and she is equally alert of the danger that can be inflicted on Rani's body if the latter has to live with her husband. We see her saying "Rani's touching my feet was a gift of love. A gift so enormous I didn't know what to do. It was also a responsibility." (Dawesar 93)

This is the responsibility of taking care of a female body by another female and also a consistent effort to foster the ambience of safety. Hence, Anamika is never

a passive sex as is conventionally thought of, she rather strives to make a space of her own or rather leaving a mark of her fierce sexuality on the body of her lovers because she feels they are hers only.

She seems to be under suppressed contestation with the opposite sex. Male characters like Ajit, Chakra Dev demonstrate overtones of frustrated sexuality. They are found to be interested in Anamika physically but she hardly allows them to forge in their motive rather she strives to and is more determined to sustain her same sex relationships. In her words "I had never wanted a boyfriend anyway." (Dawesar 11)

The body triggers conflict and egoism in a more passionate way when she feels restless to create physical distance between her lovers and the men who are after them. She enquires Rani if her marital relationship is consummated or not. Their conversation goes as follows -

"...Does he do that sort of thing to you?" I asked slightly harshly.

"sometimes"

"How often? Every night?"

"No, some nights," she said vaguely.

"Do you like it?"

'No". (Dawesar 47)

Discussing the body with regards to desire brings forth another irrefutable idea which is the voyeuristic interest that Anamika expresses at times in the novel, for instance the slum women's squatting, Sheela's "uthak-baithak" or Chakra Dev's private moments with himself- in each of these cases there emerges a kind of acute subversion of the non-consenting ideologies that run across the society and promote the image of normalcy. When enquired, Anamika gives a very sharp reply: "I have to know the truth. Truth is everything."(Dawesar 169) By "truth" she means the truth about "life" and "love". It is interesting that she is not merely interested in sexual gratification but also tries to read the complications of human sexual

behavior and the functioning of social constraints, imposing a bar to that spontaneous expressions of love and desire. This is what probably leads her to make a bold confession that she wants to have mistresses in future which obviously is suggestive of the fact that she does not want to be bound by socially recognised or defined relationships which determine a person's choice of love interest. What seems so subversive about Daweser's novel is primarily the mobility that she infuses in her protagonist's disposition and the way she inverts the essentialist assumptions of identity and sexuality.

What we see throughout the novel is the focus on the non heterosexual expression of desire- a desire which consistently gives a jolt to the notion of innate or intrinsic gender identity as marked by Butler in *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (1997). The body can be both an instrument and effect of power. As we know, the discourse of the body is intrinsically related to the discourse of sexuality that acts as an important tool to determine which version of sexual identity is to be dominated and which not. Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) explains the way in which disciplinary practices harness and make the internal forces of bodies work. Thus the body, which also is a site for sexual politics, is rooted in disciplinary practices. Following Foucault's theoretical position we can understand how the "body is also directly involved in a political field" (Foucault 25) and how the body "becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body."(Foucault 26) In the novel the sexual body has to be dominated by the operational power of the discourse of normative sexuality.

The assumed stability of heterosexuality, thus, exerts control over the lesbian body, thereby making the true biological instinct remain concealed and subcutaneous. This is reflected when Anamika regrets "We are just bound by so many constraints" (Daweser 347) The fear of exposure ultimately makes her submit to society, debilitating her sense of freedom and unrestrained sexuality. She decides to leave the society

at a distant and moves on studying abroad. She is a failure to disclose her love interests before her parents, is unable to speak out her sexual identity in order to establish it, and she is forced to meet her lovers secretly because it is out of the norms of society. Identity therefore is largely a construct which signifies the functioning of power. "Biopolitics" is one of the instruments of propagating the power that society exercises on the individual life. This is what Foucault talks about in his *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979* (1979) to make a point that life cannot be understood in terms of biological force only, rather we have to observe the biological determinants as rooted in political processes.

Simone de Beauvoir, in the chapter titled "The Lesbian" of *The Second Sex* (1949), brings challenges to many prejudices against lesbianism. She dismantles the notion by claiming that anatomy can never be "destiny". She presents a critique of social "system" that disallows women to exercise their independence and shows that female homosexuality acts as an instrument to escape this system. Nivedita Menon, too, in her "How Natural is Normal? Feminism and Compulsory Heterosexuality" (2005) makes the proclamation that the discourse of heterosexuality can be damaging to the alternative sexualities that are non-binary by nature and that are perpetually marginalised. Therefore we can obviously understand that sexual politics is by and large rooted in the world of fixed, predisposed values and established authorities which Butler terms as "serious world" in *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947). Anamika's speech very explicitly highlights how social constraints keep on dictating the normative ideas and how she feels suppressed eventually: "I want to be free. I don't want society telling me what to do all the time." (Daweser 338) There remains oscillation between repression and resistance and that is how queer sexuality strives to make its presence felt in the currents of dominant discourse which tries to ascribe the idea of "mysterious physiology" onto homosexual bodies as claimed by Foucault in *History of Sexuality* (1976). Thus, homosexual bodies are believed to be a special anatomy which is at odd with the normal body.

The complexity and instability of human subject position thus debilitates the possibilities of placing an alternative identity in the societal contour at large.

The dialectic between repression and resistance, thus, leads us to an understanding of alternative sexuality and the limitations in positioning and exercising this sexuality. Daweser never seems to mention where such sexuality leads to and it is this indefiniteness which problematises the functioning of the queer body. The body, therefore, is entangled in the intricate web of biological instinct and biopolitical matrices. The fear of ostracisation , exploitation and the pressure of heteronormativity are the major factors that make the lesbian body a site of ,what Butler says in “Critically Queer”, “collective contestation” - a social and biological corpus-one of the constituting factors in the formation of the epistemology of queer feminism.

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Indigeneity in a Nationalist Context: Exploring Alternative Modernity in Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri's Popular Science Writings

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Abstract:

This paper attempts to explore the traits of alternative modernity in Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri's popular science writings by focusing on how he incorporates indigenous elements in the evidently derivative space of popular science writing for children in the juvenile periodicals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century colonial Bengal. Upendrakishore's attempts of indigenization can be seen to be in keeping with the burgeoning nationalist spirit, especially that of the nationalist Brahmo leaders who aimed, firstly, at identifying with the indigenous culture and then revitalizing it from within with the ideals of western modernity which thereby revealed their ambivalent responses to modernity, situated between the pulls of sameness and difference. Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar aptly observes that, "Everywhere, at every national or cultural site, the struggle with modernity is old and familiar" (Alternative Modernities 22). Therefore, while Upendrakishore accepted the modern ideals of rationality in reforming the traditional cultural epistemologies and thereby creating a modern scientific temperament among the children through his popular science articles, he at the same time was engaged in incorporating indigenous, culturally informed "functional equivalents" of western modernity from his own tradition,

exhibiting the spirit of "creative adaptation." The 'particular' form of modernity for Upendrakishore, then, constituted in combining the reformed Indian cultural tradition with the apparently western corpus of science and thereby making a 'difference' therein which then came to manifest the essence of alternative or national modernity in him.

Keywords: *Alternative modernity, nationalist spirit, popular science, indigenous culture, western epistemology, creative adaptation.*

The very response to modernity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Bengal, had always been ambivalent, dwindling between the pulls of acceptance and rejection, simply because the history of modernity in India had been invariably embedded in the history of colonialism. The ambivalence, that can be theoretically put as that between the "pull of sameness and the forces making for difference"¹ (*Alternative Modernities* 17), in the response to modernity was an offshoot of the cultural project of nationalism that in its burgeoning state formulated its nationalist ideology in terms of a creative synthesis between the "best of the West and the best of the East" (*Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* 77). In the context of modernity, this can be articulated by taking recourse to Charles Taylor's theoretical formulation of "creative adaptation". According to him those who attempt at "creative adaptation" happen to be "drawing on the

cultural resources of their own tradition that would enable them to take on the new practices successfully” (“Two Theories of Modernity” 183). However, between these two extremes, there was the proclivity to negotiate between the pulls of acceptance leading to “sameness” and at the same time the crucial nationalist necessity to make “difference” and it is this negotiation wherein lies the essence of alternative modernity. If at all there exists any universal feature of modernity, it is that by making one apply the elements of rationality, it helps determine the particular demands of one’s ‘own modernity’ or to mould the understanding of western modernity so as to make it suitable for one’s particular condition². The spirit of alternative modernity lies in finding one’s “own” or “particular” modernity.

It is from this premise that the basic arguments of this paper would follow. In the corpus of science articles for children in the juvenile periodicals which heavily borrow from western science, one finds how the middle-class, reformed Bengali intelligentsia, under the profound inspiration of nationalist feelings, exercised the modern ideals of rationality to determine that the particular needs of their situation would never be fulfilled by merely translating and mindless aping of the western science but by incorporating within it such elements as derived from indigenous tradition that would endow it with an indigenous dimension and also put it in a specific native context. The particular needs, as becomes evident, were for creating accomplished future citizens bereft of colonial indignities, empowered with scientific knowledge and surcharged with nationalist feelings through their encounter with the indigenous elements.

In so far as Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri’s popular science articles are concerned which he contributed to various juvenile periodicals of his time including his very own *Sandesh*³, one finds that he too often derived materials for his science writings from western sources. However, it is not always that he mentions the sources of his derivation explicitly as when he declares at the end of his article “Machrangar School” (“The School of Kingfisher”) that it has been derived from English books or mentions at the end of his article

“MulBarna” (“The Original Colour”) that it has been derived from Deschanel’s *Natural Philosophy*. The derivative nature of his science writings is to be understood implicitly from various references to the stories of sahibs, and European adventurers that he incorporates within them. But what is significant is that even within that presumably derivative space, he leaves his unique signature of indigenization.

Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, a prominent children’s writer of nineteenth century colonial Bengal, sometimes embraces traditional Indian myths while writing science articles for children which can be perceived as his unique way of indigenizing an apparently western epistemology i.e., science. One of the basic premises around which the nationalist consciousness was gradually taking shape in colonial India and its growth predicated upon, as Partha Chatterjee observes, was the revaluation of the attributes of indigenous ‘culture’ and locating the difference therein: “The more nationalism engaged in its contest with the colonial power. . . , the more it insisted on displaying the marks of its “essential” cultural difference. . .” (*Nation and its Fragments* 26). Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay tried to locate this difference in the spiritual dimension of indigenous Hindu culture that presupposed superiority on the grounds of ethics. The reason behind projecting Hindu philosophy as the national-cultural ideal was that Hinduism was practised by the majority of Indian population and also that Hindu religious culture was supposed to share a ground of commonality owing its origin to a common language i.e., ancient Indian classical Sanskrit or any language allied to it (*Nationalist Thought* 76). Almost at the same time, the Adi Brahmo leaders’ defence of indigenous culture against west-inspired ideologies also led to the earliest expression of nationalist feelings and ideologies in colonial Bengal. As David Kopf comments: “Rajnarain (Bose) was perhaps the earliest of all the Adi leaders to respond. . . with a bold nationalist plan . . .” (179). Another leader of Adi Brahmo Samaj, Dwijendranath Tagore, was again a passionate upholder of nationalist culture whose nationalist ideology was based on the perception that westernizing model was

anything but useful to nation-building and modernism. He, therefore, argued that national modernizers had to first identify with their indigenous culture and then work within it so as to revitalize it(Kopf 185).

In the context of the upsurge of nationalist consciousness in terms of the Hindu philosophy and culture, Upendrakishore's incorporation of ancient Sanskritic tradition—epical, mythical and literary—associated with Hindu cultural tradition, in the corpus of his popular science writing deserves critical attention. Raychaudhuri, a follower of Brahmoism, made attempts to make the children identify with their national-cultural ideal. Unlike his father-in-law Dwarakanath Ganguli's explicit involvement in Indian nationalism, there was little *explicitly* nationalistic in Upendrakishore for, as ChandakSengupta so pithily expresses, “Upendrakishore sought ultimately to build the *future* nation” (emphasis original 7). In so far as Upendrakishore's incorporation of direct traditional cultural references in popular science writings is concerned, one comes to understand that he perceives them as repertoire of collective traditional knowledge which the children must know along with the scientific details. In employing these parts of indigenous cultural epistemologies, he seems to have two specific purposes—either to extend the horizon of imagination of the children through analogies or to simply discard the absurdities associated with the myths. Imagination is considered to be an important attribute of cultural modernity. The primers of the first half of the nineteenth century in colonial Bengal, fashioned as per the western pedagogical practices prevalent in eighteenth and early nineteenth century England, emphasised objective rationality and a distrust of imagination. However, what they actually revolted against was the absurdities of imaginary tales; but in their militant adherence to western rationalism, they shunned all kinds of imaginative elements often embedded in traditional folk, fairy and mythical tales that might have had a positive impact upon the children. By seeking the trait of western cultural modernity i.e., imagination in the indigenous resources of traditional culture and in considering imagination to be an aid in

the rational appreciation of science, Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri certainly unfolds the spirit of alternative modernity within the textual peripheries of popular science writings. Again, he evinces another aspect of negotiation with modernity, thereby manifesting the spirit of alternative modernity, when he at first brings up and then discards—implicitly or explicitly—those elements of myths that he considers to be irrational and hence unscientific.

In the text, “Sheyaler Golpo” (“Tale of Fox”)⁴, as Upendrakishore attempts to humourously broach the topic of the fox's supposedly wide range of knowledge coupled with cunningness, he brings in an analogy that involves an indigenous reference to a Bengali caste and a traditional Indian myth: “Just as *napits*⁵ are among the humans, the crows among the birds, *Naradamuni* among the gods, so is the fox among the animals” (*Upendrakishore Samagra* 745). In Hindu mythology *Naradamuni*, the son of Brahma and devout worshipper of Lord Vishnu, is known to be a great Vedic sage who was also called “devarshi”—the king of all the rishis—for the range of his knowledge, intellectual sagacity and wisdom. Along with *Narada*'s scholastic range of knowledge, many anecdotes about his natural mischievous cunningness also find expressions in Hindu mythologies. As Upendrakishore appropriates this myth about *Naradamuni* to define the scholastic attitude of the fox along with its shrewd cunningness, his primary intention seems to be expanding the imagination of the children where they can imaginatively connect the scientific truth about fox's cunning knowledge with that of the mythical stories of *Naradamuni*.

In the article, “Gorilla”, as Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri expatiates on the Gorillas who reside in the African forests, he tries to inculcate in the children the very idea about the position of Gorilla among the African animals. In this connection, he introduces an analogy from the ancient Indian epic *Ramayana*: “Just as Hanuman was among the warriors of Sri Ramachandra, so is gorilla among the animals of that country (Africa)” (748). The point of similarity that the analogy tries to bring home is regarding the ‘chief’

status or position shared by Hanuman and Gorilla in their respective contexts. In *Ramayana*, Hanuman is the devout devotee of Sri Ramachandra and the chief of the monkey-warriors who fought for the sake of Sri Rama: “Hanuman expanded the notion of the divine, perhaps more than any other being in Hindu mythology. He appeared as an agent governed by *dharma* like any human, yet while in an animal form he was divine” (*Handbook of Hindu Mythology* 146). What is significant is that Upendrakishore avoids mentioning, perhaps deliberately, the mythical accounts of superhuman adventures undertaken by Hanuman like the lifting up of the whole mountain of *Kailasa*, building the bridge across ocean (*setubandhana*) to reach Lanka, slaughtering the demoness of Mount *Mainaka* and the like; neither does he extol the status of divinity enjoyed by Hanuman in the Hindu cult of devotion. Rather, by comparing the Hanuman with Gorilla, he simply underscores its ‘animal form’. His adoption of the reference from the *Ramayana* in his analogy is secular and in keeping with the essence of Brahmo spirit of modernity. However, by bringing in an analogy from ancient Indian mythical tradition, he happens to create an imaginative space where the children can at least imaginatively reconnect with mythical stories of Hanuman and Sri Ramachandra so as to understand the position and status of Gorilla among the African animals.

In the article, “Timingil”, Upendrakishore happens to introduce the children with mammoth sea animals like, what was known in ancient Indian tradition as, *timingil* which literally means a gigantic sea animal which can even gulp a whale. Herein, he brings in a reference from the ancient Sanskrit epic *Raghuvamsam* by the great classical poet Kalidasa where physical detail about the whales is found. In Canto 13 of *Raghuvamsam*, as Kalidasa depicts Rama and Sita over the “foaming sea”, Rama finds whales and other sea-creatures frolicking in the water of the ocean: “And great fish, with gaping jaws take in the river flows, together with creatures in them, and then spout the water through the openings upon their head” (371-72). Upendrakishore’s purpose of introducing this

reference from the Sanskrit epic is to point out to the children that even an ancient Indian epic has pertinently captured the scientific details about the whales which is actually matched by the practical observation.

In “Akasher Katha: Dui” (“About Sky: Two”) which is a scientific article on astronomical issues, Upendrakishore attempts to inform the children about the scientific facts regarding the stars. Here, he introduces a myth from the *Mahabharata* where Arjuna while undertaking his journey from earth to heaven encountered some effulgent personalities and came to know from Indra’s charioteer *Matali* that these were the congealed souls of the pious personalities transformed into stars⁶ (831-32). By introducing this myth from the ancient Indian epic tradition, Upendrakishore acquaints the children with a part of their cultural tradition that has some connection with the astronomical imaginings of the stars.

Many such similar instances can be cited from Upendrakishore’s popular science writings. An analysis of Upendrakishore’s incorporation of the indigenous elements from the ancient Indian Sanskritic tradition reveals that in his vision, mythic imagination and scientific imagination were not always exclusive but often inclusive, as myths and references from ancient Indian tradition are often seen to endorse scientific truths and observations. Again, imaginative dimension which is taken to be the characteristic of myths often forms the basis of and leads to the imagination that is proper to science. This is one perspective that justifies the claim of alternative modernity exhibited by Upendrakishore as he provided the culturally informed indigenous equivalents of the western cultural modernity i.e., imagination. Again, Upendrakishore proves deliberately meticulous in discarding the irrational aspects of mythical traditions with a view to developing scientific temperament among the children. Tradition, when carefully reformed through modern ideals of rationality, was considered worthy to sustain and nourish children leading to a better nation where the boons of modernity would be firmly rooted in and harmonised with the best elements of indigenous tradition and culture. In the nationalist context, the

concept of modernity envisioned by Upendrakishore was, therefore, a ‘different’ or ‘alternative’ modernity that combined tradition and modernity, myth and science, imagination and rationality in a holistic harmonious unison.

Notes :

1. In this context, it is worthwhile to take note of DilipParameshwarGaonkar’s further elaborations on this point: “However, to think in terms of alternative modernities does not mean one blithely abandons the Western discourse of modernity. That is virtually impossible. . . . Whoever elects to think in terms of alternative modernities must think with and also against the tradition of . . . many other Western (born and trained) thinkers” (*Alternative Modernities*14-15).
2. See Partha Chatterjee’s “Our Modernity” (p.8).
3. Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri started writing for the children by contributing to the children’s periodical *Sakha* in 1883. He also wrote extensively for the famous contemporary juvenile periodicals *Sathi*, *Sakha o Sathi*, and *Mukul*. At the age of fifty, in 1913, he himself took the onus of publishing a children’s periodical of his own and the outcome was *Sandesh* that was to become the most popular children’s magazine in the coming years.
4. The excerpts from Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri’s popular science articles like “SheyalerGolpo” and others that have been taken for analysis in this paper, have been translated by myself.
5. *Napit* is the Bengali equivalent of English barber. *Napit* refers to a traditional Hindu caste occupationally engaged in haircutting. In the traditional Bengali society, the *napits*

are known for their cunningness and penchant for cracking humourous jokes.

6. The episode is described in *Indralokagamana Parva* of the *Mahabharata* (Book 3: *Vana Parva*, Section XLII). See *The Mahabharata of Vyasa* by Kisari Mohan Ganguly (<http://www.holybooks.com/the-mahabharata-of-vyasa-english-prose-translation/> p. 96).

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Quo Vadis: A Study of K.V. Raghupathi's *The Images of a Growing Dying City*

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K.V. Raghupathi's third poetry collection: "*The Images of a Growing Dying City*" is taken up for critical assessment and evaluation in this paper. The volume is a collection in which K.V. Raghupathi has presented 81 sordid images of a city showing how it is simply dying (in terms of values and quality of life) in the name of growth. The poet by drawing the images of the degenerating city indeed makes it to represent any other city.

Indo-English poetry is now an established genre, both by virtue of its quality and quantity. It is known for expression of Indian ethos, sensitivity and sensibility. Indian English poetry has aroused interest among lovers of poetry across the globe. According to Das, "Post-independence Indian English poetry is genuine because it is deeply felt and addressed to the whole community; Indian situations form a vital part of it." (BK Das 2). The scrutiny of society is the subject matter of post modern poetry. Among the contemporary Indian poets in English, K.V. Raghupathi is an established Indo-English poet who has nine poetry collections to his credit. They are 1) *Desert Blooms* (1987), 2) *Echoes Silent* (1988), 3) *The Images of a Growing Dying City* (1989), 4) *Small Reflections* (2000), 5) *Voice of the Valley* (2003), 6) *Wisdom of the Peepal Tree* (2003), 7) *Samarpana* (2006), 8) *Dispersed Symphonies* (2010), 9) *Orphan and Other Poems* (2010). He has been writing poetry in English well over 25 years now, and his critical articles and reviews have

regularly appeared in various journals.

According to Patra, "the collection traces the genesis of a city which, once upon a time, was unspoiled and unpolluted. It was innocent and natural. Amidst growing complexities, something that is innocent and natural dissipates (Patra 59). The author of this paper presents a few pertinent images in the course of the city's evolution from its pristine state to its present state of decay and death. The poet intelligently traces the history of this imaginary city, which was uninhabited, undiscovered, and inaccessible and remained unknown to human species. Soon, it became the land predominantly occupied by human beings who are largely self-conscious. It is now a city that is dazzling and colorful built upon with tireless pursuits and ambitions. Multi-colored structures emerged on the city. Human population exploded day by day like swarms of bees and multiplied by moving in the streets, lanes and by lanes. With the advent of science and technology, the city has developed beyond expectations. All the forests have been cleared; roads and rail routes have been laid like branches of a tree. Factories and machines in city become symbols of pollution. It is all buzzing, zooming and blooming. There is exotic noise and chaos everywhere in the city.

It is all confusing, confusing, confusing..... ever confounding

A city has cropped up with new culture, with new

Traditions, with new conventions and beliefs,
It is a city shapelessly formless, formlessly shapeless
It is growing dying city
It is a stale, sterile, starving city

(Poem 2)

The collection is full of images that symbolize the creation and destruction of city life. To quote Kumar, “the poet casts aspersions on the growth and degeneration of the city life. We forget the fact that this development is a pseudo –development in terms of philosophical, moral, ethical and spiritual growth. We create the city to destroy it, and we recreate it only to re-destroy it” (Kumar, 38-39). The jungle of city life is shrouded in mystery. The city has a rich legacy of history in which the founder is forgotten. Man didn’t know from where he came. The history says he came and settled with two men and two women. It has grown into a human city where status of history makes builders, fighters, promoters and statesmen and so on. The poet contextually satirizes the growth and decay of city.

We are the makers, builders, promoters
Perpetuators and propagandists,
We are the images of our own sorrow.

(Poem 5)

Yet, the people called it a learned city, a civilized city, a modern city and so on. It is a city with new faces, new manifestations, and new creations. In creation is built destruction. According to PCK Prem, a Master critic in Indo Endo-English Poetry, writes about the *Images of a Growing Dying City* that “life in a city depresses and so he is worried and remains upset, and mistrusts what happens around. Hurried living, erosion of ethical values, contemporary anxieties and disgusting environment cause grievous sorrow, anguish and suffering to man” .(Prem, 176-177) The city is growing and dying, dying and growing. They build and rebuild the city without destiny. It is their sorrow deeply rooted in their happiness. The predicament of a city-dweller is ironically exhibited.

A portrait hangs before him on the wall
The remedy is shown in destruction.

(Poem 10)

The man of city is living in the sea of emptiness with rough passions and emotions dead. He is already half-dead like a half-beaten snake crawling on the bare. As life is a living dream, the city becomes a constellation of dreams half-fulfilled and half-unfulfilled. Life is neither an adventure nor a dream but a living reality .The city becomes an island of mind and he is a refugee driven by certain things. He is dwarfed and mummified. The poet presents the heart of city in the mushrooming of numberless streets.

Streets, lanes, by-lanes, roads and avenues
cut through the flesh
of the city like veins and arteries

(Poem 16)

The city has gradually lost its pristine beauty. It has now become a land of roaring houses and tall buildings, a land of men, women and children besides a land of factories, workshops and industries. Yet, man leads an insecure and hopeless life, a lonely life in the city. His mind grows like swelling cyclonic clouds. When he steps on the sixty-five storied building, he is not in the air. It is his creation that holds him upon its own pedestal. It is the world it has made for itself. It is its own world of ecstasy unlike him. T. V. Reddy is a stalwart in Indo –English poetry. He comments that “the poet is very cryptic and sensitive in capturing the images of a dying city and arresting them in the lines of his poem which is interesting to read”. (Reddy 493) The city is illuminated with dazzling lights, still, the twinkling lights cannot burn the twinkling starry night. The city can be alive through lights at night where the stars are naturally alive and vivacious forever. Man himself is restless in the city which remains busy round the clock. Again, Raghupathi portrays the fall of kingdoms in the poetic mode of narration. The decayed structures of kingdoms have so much to offer for passing generations. The city has gradually lost all the

historical monuments and it is now the city which witnesses a mass exodus of people from other parts.

Their decayed structures preserved,
protected, declared
as the inestimable relics of the past,
Where are the emperors, warriors, subjects?

(Poem 23)

The city becomes the city of pillaged temples, topless shrines, dangling pilasters, the suspended beams, the dismantled portico, the cracked pediment, the bruised walls, the scratched ceilings, the abraded notched corners-all symbolizing the marks of human brutalities and heinous crimes. It is the dying city that speaks of ruined life where human existence is frail, impermanent and ever-changing.

Men struggle desperately, despairingly
To become men every time and all time but never...
These speechless paintings, sculptures, stones

(Poem 19)

The poet dwells at length on its growth and decay. The city is sprawling beneath the diaphanous sky i.e. growing and dying. The city has grown vertically to penetrate into the deep void and yet, the growth has its limits.

The great show on the earth is human show
The mean show on the earth is also human show
But it is a make-believe show,

(Poem 29)

Man in the city is moving and unmoving encircled by forms- crooked, cruel and despotic. He is short in front of tall buildings; he is static in front of fast-moving vehicles.

It is a crowd
like the thick mass of lava spilled out from
volcanic explosions,
It is a destroyed crowd
Like the crumpled stormy clouds in the sky,
surging

(Poem 21)

Raghupathi presents the reflected city life in its nakedness. It is a city of our own reflections reflected from the sea of parquet mind. The city is alive because we eat our own reflections as alive.

It is difficult to see
The lights are off
The city plunged in dark
It is surrounded by dark night,

(Poem 34)

The city-dwellers are singing their songs of misery in misery. They are the street beggars, orphans, and handicapped, crippled, disabled, deprived. The winter wind cannot carry the misery far away. It is just a scar of inhuman elevation. But the city withers away under the garb of night,

Night after night,
it is a city of many-changed faces

(Poem 26)

The city man has lost his freedom. He wept and cried like a waif inwardly. Against each experience, he inhaled no freedom. He is, in fact, chained.

The primordial freedom he craved desperately,
Surrounded by gesticulating forms in movement,
Lost his will he became descript

(Poem 27)

A city dweller is a man yet he is nothing else. He feels he is everything. He is like a wounded mackerel swimming in the troubled waters. He moves like a crunched cloud.

He exists, in the waking dreams existing,
but not living

(Poem 41)

In another image the poet presents the busy traffic in a city and questions the unconcerned movements. The life of city is as horrible, frightening and disgusting as not to look at the dead through the corners of their eyes. The poet condemns the callousness of city public when they move about recklessly.

Despite the traffic on the bridge unhindered,
moving constantly,
People walked fast like termites
Unmindful of the ghastly sight

(Poem 46)

The city moved beyond the four directions and is still moving beyond the land. It will become a floating city in the water and a flying city in the air. The city extended beyond all limits of human habitation. An unusual migration of people makes the city really uninhabited. There will be no place for human habitation and man will be forced to build home in the water and up in the sky.

I shall build my home in the water

I shall build my home up in the water

(Poem 49)

A city man is in varied forms growing and dying, dying and growing. He feels the city belongs to him entirely. He just sings about himself but is in no mood to listen to others.

It is himself in varied forms growing and dying, dying and growing
Between growing and dying, dancing,
rollicking, yelping in pain himself in
umpteen forms

(Poem 59)

Human existence in City is always self-centered. He takes no responsibility, cares nothing, rushes onward, feverish, and does something and gets something.

It is his world. Nobody alters.
Nor ever himself
He is responsible and accountable to nothing,
he thinks
There couldn't be a better world than
himself, he thinks

(Poem 57)

The increasing population makes the city highly invisible. There is thick mist, fog, and smoke everywhere. The city man loses his eyesight. He

cannot see city any more. Its location is far beyond the naked eyes. As Kumar observes that, "we wish to know where we are living, and where the city is leading us to." (Kumar, 54) The poet presents the difficulties of city life amidst glaring examples.

The city is invisible
In the mingled thick mist and fog and
smoke concealed
It is a land of mist, fog and smoke

(Poem 62)

The city lay like a paralysis-stricken patient. No medicine could cure it from falling like ripe fruit. Raghupathi uses the image of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to effectively convey the most alarming condition of city and its possible extinction.

It is a city just convalescing like the dying
patient kept long in
Intensive care unit

(Poem 62)

The city extends no more the warmth, affection, and love between the parting relations and friends at the bus stations what one finds largely in cities is metallic roads, stupefying curves, frightening structures, vulgar laws, baneful values — all depicting myriad adversaries. The city prefers modernity to tradition.

What is seen between the parting
lovers, relations, friends,
At the bus stations, airports, on the
platforms in this land locked city

(Poem 39)

Such a city becomes a restless city and notorious for corrupt and dishonest people who make to unmake the city every movement. The city plunges into the city of vices.

Yes it is full of men, corrupt,
dishonest, propagandists
Pamphleteers, dummies, pseudos,
neos, imitators and so on
They croak, cackle, chuckle, drawl and drool

They make it lively and lively with
umbilical desires,
(Poem 64)

The city does not grant freedom of life. Freedom is just fleecy. The city-dweller makes an endless search for freedom each day and each night. It is the city of what Raghupathi calls ‘abyssmal clamor and confusion’. The city never enjoyed freedom. It is an incorrigible tragedy.

Freedom is transparent and translucent
and fleecy

Each night, each night he is an
incessant pursuer

(Poem 67)

Further, the poet shows how the city has lost its stature gradually. The baby knows nothing of the heartless-city built by his predecessors. He builds his own graveyard. This is how city has degenerated into the valueless life. The city symbolizes the city of unsung heroes.

This babe when born knows nothing
It is a state lost gradually as it grows
Exposed to the heartless city
built by his predecessors

(Poem 70)

The city is slowly dying in terms of quality and values of life. Prem analyses that “*The Images of Growing Dying City*” paint a bleak future for man, who lives in the city and yet wants to run away, a philosophical solution it is he finds but every possible way out makes life more miserable”. (Prem, 176) The birds have left the cities to seek shelter in the deep woods. All this reflects that city is no more a city but the city of insecure life.

Already birds have flown away one after
another In fright to be extinct

(Poem 71)

The city doesn’t impart the quality of education. An experience of a university don from the city is regarded

as a blessed scholar in blessed sate but later proved himself unworthy. He did away his scholarship and became a wanderer in saintly posture. Similarly, a philosopher’s tale is no exception. All his fifty years of learning make him a philosopher of inscrutable hollowness.

It is the hollowness of man’s life
amidst creations
It is the hollowness deeply
rooted in existence

(Poem 78)

The poet writes that the city sleeps half-naked, soused in bars, watching the swirls, swivels and swerves of hips and buttocks in the flicking, flashing lights, sits maudlin weeping over their inherited miseries, works machinations for tomorrow’s life in attics and cellars.

He wonders life has any worth at all
But life moves on forever
The clock ticks, tick tock, tick tock...

(Poem 81)

In conclusion, I reckon that K.V. Raghpathi largely characterizes the special quality of his work, his deep sense of city life and his acute observations in *The Images of a Growing Dying City*. In each poem the poet has represented a particular state of the city in a particular image in a remarkable way. As we move from poem to poem, we discover the gradual decay in terms of life and values. The poet has succinctly captured the images and arranged them in sequential manner. The sequence is both linear and vertical; hence the decay is seen in all dimensions. These images are not imaginative but concrete and evocative. Literary vitality and energy lie only in innovation and creation. The poet has achieved a good balance between the ends and means of city in terms of values and quality of life. The city has grown considerably and at the same time, collapsed on similar lengths and breadths of value-based life. Every bit of city life projects that it is growing and dying, dying and growing.

The need to choose the right path is a problem often faced in life more so in cities. The poet ponders over such paths and successfully exposes them as a typical prophet. This paper puts a distinctive stamp on his work – on his chosen theme that is city growing and dying as well as on the manner of its unfolding the main focus of Quo Vadis i.e. where are we heading from here? Where is the city leading us? Is it on the brink of glory or disaster?

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Women and the Domestic Space in Rashid Jahan's *Parde ke Peechey*

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Abstract:

Rashid Jahan is remembered today for her radical writings on women's issues and as an early champion of women's rights. Her consciousness, as a writer and as a social reformer, is shaped by her life-long commitment towards her profession as a women's health practitioner, and her association with the All India Progressive Writers Association (AIPWA), Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) and various other communist movements which always strived to bring social change, empowerment and awareness. With recent debates in legal and socio-political domains on the rights of Muslim women which are closely associated with the institution of marriage, her writings become an important sight to understand the condition and position of women in Muslim households' domestic spaces. Jahan's works gave voice to issues which articulate the concerns of Muslim women that were traditionally kept hidden under the guise of domesticity. She raised issues related to female agency and consent in matters of sexuality, female body, women's health and the unequal gender power relations which proved to be oppressive and exploitative towards women. Such a thought has been reflected and communicated through her plays in a creative, expressive and dramatic manner. The present paper

attempts to trace the voice of protest against rigid and oppressive social structures through the English translation of Jahan's one-act play, Parde ke Peechey. It further aims to analyse Jahan's thoughts on the root cause behind oppression of women that takes place in the institution of marriage.

Keywords: Marriage, Women's Rights, One-act plays, Protest, Social Reform

All India Progressive Writers Movement along with diverse social reform and nationalist movements, created an atmosphere of argumentation and debate in the public sphere on the issues related to women's agency, upliftment and emancipation. The reformist zeal in the Muslim community began in the decades when Jahan was too young. On the one hand, she inherited the legacy of social reform from within her family. Her parents, Sheikh Abdullah and Wajid Jahan, were the early Muslim advocates to raise concern for education of Muslim women. Madhulika Singh rightly points out their literary contribution for the cause of women. She writes that Jahan's father "founded the widely circulated Urdu journal for women," named Khatun in 1914 and her mother contributed to it frequently(1). While on the other hand, Muslim women had begun to negate the idea of a secluded protest against gender inequality and injustice against women. Many of them participated in various pan India

women's associations such as Women's Indian Organization which was formed in 1917 and All India Women's Conference which was formed by the Indian National Congress in 1927. Their aim was to focus on "the issues specific to women and their social and legal disabilities" (Hussain 1). They made a remarkable presence and primarily struggled for legal rights of women in matters of education, property inheritance, marriage and divorce during the 1920s and 30s.

Literature of this period deeply reflects, interrogates and suggests remedies to the social complexities which had arisen due to the heated debates between the two oppositional forces to which the Muslim Personal Law was subjected. The oppositions were between the traditional, conservative and orthodox forces and the liberal, more secular and modernist forces. In the field of drama, Nandi Bhatia investigates that there were playwrights who "dealt with the politics of domesticity through subjects pertaining to marital discord, education, social reform, extra-marital affairs, the problem of dowry, and so forth" (34). She further observes that depiction and examination of the "position of women with regard to family and marriage" (35) was central to pre-independent India's dramatic tradition. Representation of the lives and experiences of Muslim women in conjugal relationships was the trend followed by the genre of drama, especially Urdu drama, during the times when Jahan was actively writing. The present paper attempts to study the figure and condition of a woman within the institution of marriage in Jahan's one-act play, *Parde ke Peechey*, which was a product of the times which favoured change. It also attempts to seek the root cause of women's oppression in the institution of marriage. Some of the questions which the paper attempts to investigate are, whether the traditional Islamic culture was oppressive towards women or did men start to appropriate and misinterpret the religious authorities to their benefit, and how is social upliftment as well as emancipation of women possible?

Her play, titled *Parde ke Peechey* (translated as Behind the Veil), is a part of the highly controversial anthology *Angare* which was published in 1932. The anthology has been seen as a marker of radical literary trend in Urdu literature. The play is formulated in the form of a dialogic narrative that takes place between Muhammadi Begum, a muslim woman from a well known family, and Aftab Begum, her guest. It explores the secluded life of muslim women belonging to ashraf families. As the title suggests, it brings to focus the deplorable condition of Muslim women when a closer look 'behind the veil,' which is representative of retrogressive values functioning in Muslim society, is made. It is an account of what Madhulika Singh calls as "oppressive domesticity." In the process of unveiling the complains of Muhammadi Begum, Jahan begins to imagine a speaking subject. Here, the dramatic act provides an alternate and subversive space where the culturally and socially silenced voice of the victimised women is presented without any interruption.

Jahan critiques the stereotypical notion that a woman's existence is limited to the domestic sphere and her roles as a wife and mother, thereof. In *Parde Ke Peechey*, Jahan experiments with the conversational style of narration whereby women overtly question their role in family and community. The two women begin to critically explore the notion whether marriage and conjugal relations are the most important part of a woman's life. The traditional approach towards the position of women in the institution of marriage is highlighted by Aftab Begum, who says to Muhammadi Begum, "Who can be as fortunate as you?... you have a home, a husband, children, everything" (200). Ironically, from here on, the two women begin to unveil the reality which comprises of issues related to women—their agency and rights in private spaces.

Discussion of issues related to women's body at public forums in those times was an uncommon practice. But with the development of women's movement and the secular discourse of nationalism, the personal and

individual issues related to women were on a rise among social activists and reformists. When the play begins, Muhammadi Begum is introduced as a woman of thirty-two, who was married at the age of seventeen. Due to ill health, multiple pregnancies and unsympathetic attitude of her husband, her looks have withered. Furthermore, there are a number of issues related to women's body and health which Jahan attempts to communicate with the help of this play. One of the major ones is related to motherhood since it is mentioned that Muhammadi Begum is unable to nurture her children well. They look "pale and sickly, as though they are victims of starvation" (202), points out Aftab Begum. Hereafter, the wife points out that it is her husband's 'command' that she must acknowledge and satisfy his sexual needs, rather than fulfil her duty as a mother and feed the babies. Even though her bodily health is deteriorating, yet she has to neglect her personal ills to perform her role as a wife. Her husband controls and exploits her body to an extent that she is forced to undergo multiple surgeries of her private parts so that her husband "would get the same pleasure he might from a new wife" (211). These references explain that the wife is not given agency to control her own body and its functions. She readily accepts her husband's animalistic command in the form of multiple pregnancies and unreasonable sexual demands because he threatens her that "he will marry another woman and bring her home" (202), if she neglects his advances. She is aware that even after fulfilling his needs, he has sexual liaisons outside the conjugal union as well. In terms of explaining the critical functioning of a woman's body in gender power relations, Nishat Haider is of the view that, "Muhammadi Begum undergoes what Kartak terms as "internalised exile"(2) where the body feels disconnected from itself, as though it does not belong to it and has no agency" (209). By becoming a part of the institutional structure of marriage, the woman is distanced from her own personal needs and loses

agency over her own body.

During their conversation they discuss the plight of other women as well. They move from discussing the "fortunate position" of women in households to discussing the diverse ways in which the institution is unjust, exploitative and oppressive towards women, in addition to the hypocrite nature of men. They come to a point where they mutually agree that "everyone has their own troubles" (204). The reference is of every married woman or girl of a marriageable age. They further highlight the condition of women in polygamous unions. The two gossip about an old man, known to them, who has married a third time to a young and beautiful girl. The practice of polygamous unions was widely prevalent and accepted in Islamic cultures. This practice gives men the freedom to choose multiple wives. It also propagates unequal gender relations.

Jahan, attempts to expose how men use the polygamous structures to their undue advantage by bringing up the case of Razia, Muhammadi Begum's cousin sister. With Razia, Jahan elaborates upon the desire of an old man to marry a girl of tender age for sexual fulfilment. There is not shown any amount of jealousy amongst the two sisters, rather Razia is scared and Muhammadi Begum is outraged. At this moment, Jahan presents the wife as confronting her husband for his daring act of writing love letters to her cousin. But she says, "he stared straight into my eyes and asked me what was wrong in it. He said he wanted to marry Razia, even if it meant divorcing me" (208). He defends his actions and desires by citing the verses from Quran, the *Sharia* Board's legal acceptance of Muslim men marrying upto four times and the wife's ill health. He further wishes to gain the consent of his wife to re-marry her sister by emphasising that it is the duty of a wife to obey her husband. In a number of ways, therefore, the play "offers a variety of demystifications of traditional expected female roles, for instance, wifehood, not as it is traditionally expected to be fulfilling and nurturing but as enslaving" (Haider 204).

Jahan is known for not only raising the plight of women in domestic spaces but also attempting to provide certain solutions. Hamidi Saiduzzafar comments that, "she was quite aware in life of social injustice and the sickness of society. As a practical person, the diagnosis was not enough for her; she wanted a treatment, a cure" (162). This sums up Jahan's socio-feminist approach in life. As a social reformer, she does intend to bring about changes in the Muslim Personal Law with regard to women's agency, freedom to choose a partner, a liberal approach towards marriage, women's education and age gaps in conjugal relations, especially in polygamous unions. But there are certain subtle solutions which she wishes to communicate to her reader/ audience as a writer. Through this play, particularly, she highlights that it is only when women will seek roles outside the domestic space and pursue a professional career, would they be able to gain agency over their body and actions. Further, by bringing up the case of Razia, she intends to highlight that society at large can also play a major role in bringing about a change and securing the lives of women. She propagates that on the one hand, the wife needs to confront the husband's deeds and on the other, the targeted second victim's family must choose and decide their daughter's future wisely.

But at last, Muhammadi Begum's confrontation does not prove to be strong. She only tries to make her husband understand the negative consequences of marrying a young girl, again. She is not provocative in her defence and gradually submits. This appears to be Jahan's strategy to point out and communicate that a woman should not be secluded from matters of social reform and society must support such women in raising their voice against the unjust practices. She knows and accepts the fact that he will marry a second time. The stage direction towards the end reads, "the sound of the Alan can be heard wafting in from the mosque" (211). Jahan might have used this as a means to highlight that since religion has helped to propagate such unjust

and unequal gender relations, there is a need to modify and follow a liberal approach to certain values, rituals, practices and customs.

Every society in order to progress must re-evaluate its traditional values. Through this play, Jahan conveys that cultural modes of radical writing help to achieve change and social transformation. She brings to light that financial independence is a means to achieve women empowerment and confront patriarchal ideology. Jahan's writings poignantly point out that social reform is important because conservative values which are held sacred by religious authorities are falsely appropriated by men in society. The relevance of her limited literary output is that it raised a radical voice which is well informed by a feminist consciousness, to address the issues and experiences of women in domestic spaces such as marital structures, observance of purdah, women's health and the mandate of triple talaq. The embers of the issues raised by her are still burning, since women who are followers of Islam are still spearheading nation-wide campaigns to outlaw *triple talaq*.

The genre of one act plays, for Jahan, opened up a space to argue, debate and discuss about subjects relating to women that were considered social taboos. Even though, most of the issues addressed in the play are left unresolved, they highlight women's tendency to resist, counter and subvert oppressive social and cultural codes. In her works the possibility of self-empowerment through acquisition of voice and agency can be witnessed. The continuation of her legacy can be observed in more participation of women in activities of IPTA, the women's liberation movement and the women's theatre movement which gained momentum in 1970s.

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The Empire is Resurfacing: Rapacious Neocolonial and Bounteous Primitive in Buchi Emecheta's *The Rape of Shavi*

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Abstract:

The paper explores the newly emerging structures of the ‘Empire’: the insidious forms of neo-imperialism seeping into a ‘primitive’ society. Buchi Emecheta’s novel The Rape of Shavi deals with the accidental intrusion of a group of Western people into an indigenous African society deeply-anchored in the desert of Sahara. The European visitors manipulate the bounteousness of the native Shavians and leave the whole society devastated with its nature and culture. The capitalist, neocolonial West rapes the native Shavi of its natural wealth and sacred dignity by harnessing it. However, the illusion of Eurocentric superiority also collapses when the Europeans are faced with the indigenous knowledge-system. The colossal idea of Western modernity collapses and is rendered shattered, but with this ‘ambivalence’ the camouflaged enemy has ambushed and turned the indigenous structures upside down.

Keywords: Empire, native, primitive, Eurocentric, neocolonial, neo-imperial, culture, bounteousness.

In colonial times, the imperial systems of domination would rather be conspicuous and centered, and they often employed duress to retain power. They waged wars to co-opt territories into their ambitions of colonial rule. “Imperialism’s culture was not invisible, nor did it

conceal its worldly affiliations and interests” (Said XXI). But, in the wake of political decolonization, it has emerged as the “imperialism without colonies” (Young 63). It has mutated into an amorphous mammoth to monitor the baseless and formless power-structures through indistinct trajectories. Imperialism, now, has resurfaced as a new form of domination. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri observe in *Empire*:

The passage to Empire emerges from the twilight of modern sovereignty. In contrast to imperialism, Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers” (XII).

Consequently, Postcolonial studies, in the recent decades, have taken up the imperatives of ‘beyond’ (Ania Loomba et al.) and ‘rerouting’ (Janet Wilson et al.) consecutively “to redress the lost histories of colonialism obscured in the scramble for globalization’s patina of universal progress” (Loomba et al. 10) and to cope with the “neocolonial imbalances in the postcolonial present” (Wilson et al. 1). As the discipline is incessantly going through interpolation and backlashes, scholars are extrapolating ‘cross-

examination’ “to push the field in different directions” (Albrecht 1). In this exhaustive discussion, the tenet of ‘resistance’ should be the sinew of the theory, according to Patrick Williams. He avers: “Of more general importance is the fact that postcolonialism has historically been both an analysis of, and hopefully a mode of, resistance: consequently, any shift away from resistant discourses or politicized critique represents the abandonment of one of the major justifications for postcolonial studies” (Williams 88). Bill Ashcroft notes the characteristics of porosity, ‘argumentativeness’ and ‘utopianism’ as positive signs for the future of postcolonial theory. He argues: “As a way of reading, postcolonialism now extends into various realms of contemporary social politics and refuses to be confined. Clearly postcolonial studies is too dynamic and unruly to police. It has become a field with rich pasture and few fences” (“Postcolonial Futures” 5).

Buchi Emecheta’s novel *The Rape of Shavi* invites a new foray into a ‘decentered’, cultural and economic domination of an imaginary African territory and exhibits consequential ravages incurred by an outflanked ‘Other’. This is a sheer irony that the primitive people of Shavi, who are absolutely estranged from the outside world, are democratic and benevolent in their way of life even without an access to Western modernity and globalization. Their intentions regarding the European visitors are ingenuous and selfless. The crash of the aircraft is outlandishly unexpected to the Shavi people. The king Patayon does not harm the white Europeans, instead he asks his people to fete and inhabit them gracefully, because it is the cultural tradition of Shavi to accommodate and assimilate “the people who are immigrant in [their] society”. Shavi is “a close-knit society” in fact, a nation that exists as a cohesive unit in social, cultural, economic and political terms. It does not need to be defined by the Western rubrics of knowledge-production. The natives also fear to be snarled up into enslavement “for [they] want to be [their] own masters and protectors” (Emecheta 36,

14, 17). Rapacity for power and prosperity does not affect them. They are complacent with their poverty-ridden, mediocre life-style. Even, they do not believe in ‘colonising’ others; they are non-violent people as the king, his wise minister and friend, Egbongbele and the priestess Iyalode defy Anoku’s suggestion to sacrifice the visitors. Emecheta narrates with a mordant tinge: “On the whole, the Shavi council regarded the visitors as humans, whose only difference was their pigmentation. So, one by one, each council member promised to make the visitors feel at home” (39).

The Shavians realise their racial ‘difference’ from the Albino visitors, but they do not make them [Europeans] feel alienated. The skin-colour does not induce the natives to alienate the white visitors. In fact, the novel is Emecheta’s “writing back” (Bill Ashcroft et al.) strategy to contradict the Western discourse of racial superiority and capitalist mindset. The novelist reviles and ‘mimics’ (Bhabha) the Eurocentric ideology, but she is also aware of the neo-imperial proclivity of the West. Nevertheless, she reveals a stark irony that the so-called aeronautical scientists of the West have to “seek a refuge” (Emecheta 29) in the desert of Sahara, when they feel that the so-called developed West may wipe itself out by the impending nuclear war. The stupendous ideology of development and progress begins to wreck and gives way to a so-called primitive way of life. The Eurocentric modernity does not belong to the Shavi people. They believe that all human beings are “refugees, immigrant strangers on this earth” (Emecheta 13). This is the Shavian cosmopolitanism. Bill Ashcroft reveals the deep-seated elitism and sophistication implied in the term ‘cosmopolitanism’ and questions its Eurocentric ethics. He posits: “Clearly, Cosmopolitans are not defined by a particular subject position but by an orientation to the Other and to diversity” (“Transnation” 77). Even without a trickle of knowledge about the so-called modernity and globalization, the Shavians are inherently democratic and humanitarian in their so-called primitive stage; they

conform to the ethical virtues of equality, human rights and freedom of speech. Emecheta narrates:

The king and his men had sworn with their life blood that no one should oppress or use his position to treat the other subhumanly. . . . Shavi prided herself on being the only place in the whole of the Sahara, where a child was free to tell the king where it was that he had gone wrong. And the child knew that not only would he not be punished but also that he would be listened to and his suggestion might even be incorporated into the workings of the kingdom. (3)

The natives intend to learn the culture of the albino people, but Ronje, one of the visitors, wants to impose his [European] culture upon the natives. He detests and devalues natives' convivial ways of social behavior. The Shavi people are "rootless savages" (Emecheta 50) to him. He does not consider them to be human. Discussing Rudyard Kipling's life and work, Edward Said, too, reveals this geopolitical and discursive ideology about the West and East:

On one side of the colonial divide was a white Christian Europe whose various countries, principally Britain and France, but also Holland, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Russia, Portugal, and Spain, controlled most of the earth's surface. On the other side of the divide, there were an immense variety of territories and races, all of them considered lesser, inferior, dependent subject (*Culture and Imperialism* 134).

Flip, the supposed leader of the visitors, expresses his sympathy for the natives, but Ronje flouts him, because his racial prejudice and Orientalist superciliousness do not allow him to befriend the Shavians. "Flip and his illusion of the noble savage" seem to be risible to Ronje. "A thought occurred to Flip at this stage: that they must have sounded barbaric to these gentle [Shavi] people" (Emecheta 105, 54). Both Flip and Ista are greatly

impressed by the bounteousness of the natives, but Ronje and Andria nurture suspicions about them. Ista exposes the "convincing demonstration" (Said, *Orientalism* 233) of European discourse and contends that Europeans ". . . simply find it difficult to accept kindness". She explodes the edifice of Eurocentric superiority and discloses the self-destructive clout of the "over-civilised society" of the West. In Ista's view, Shavian way of life is surpassingly noble. "Maybe if she could understand that way of living, she could teach her own people that there was another way to live" (Emecheta 60, 64, 169). Biodun Jefiyo argues ". . . that the moral of the failure of the "civilizing mission" outside Europe is that there are more ways to being "civilized" and "modern" than the unitary, homogenized way touted by the European or Western project" (609). Ista speaks unflinchingly: "We ran away from our over-civilised society because we were about to destroy ourselves. We landed here among people who haven't got the faintest idea about the bomb, who are perfectly happy and sure enough of themselves to trust and welcome us into their midst [. . .]" (Emecheta 64). The primitivism of the native people is feted by Ista "as a corrective to the malaise of Western modernity, a redemptive alternative that supplies what is missing in modernity" (Li 985). The novelist juxtaposes the inherent bounteousness of the Shavians with the volatile and selfish incredulity of the European visitors. Actually, the Shavi people pose a challenge to the prodigious knowledge-system constructed by the West, as they (Shavians) are absolutely unaware of the Orientalist discourse until Asogba gets harnessed by the 'resurfacing of Empire'. It irks Ronje that Flip confers importance on the natives. Ronje contends: "They [Shavians] didn't even know of the existence of other races, except those distant tribes that bought their cattle" (Emecheta 105). This ignorance of the natives, in fact, embodies resistance to the meta-power of knowledge.

Ista signals the perpetual, insidious working of the

Empire by appertaining to the history of colonialism, slavery and religious conversion in Africa and the contemporary neo-imperial, capitalist hegemony of the West: “We took Christianity to them in West Africa, then we encouraged them to sell their brothers and sisters, and we’re now buying up all their mineral deposits . . .” (Emecheta 74). Ania Loomba takes up the issue of neocolonial hegemony as very significantly prevalent in the globalized structure of the world. It is redolent of the old racial/cultural dichotomies. She states that “If the earlier period of colonial globalization simultaneously integrated the world into a single economic system, *and* divided it more sharply into the haves and the have-nots, so the new empire both facilitates global connections and creates new opportunities, and entrenches disparities and new divisions” (*Colonialism/Postcolonialism* 219-220; emphasis in original). A similar view about colonial and neocolonial interconnectedness and difference, in the context of globalization, is put forward by Ali Behdad:

The colonial model of center and periphery, for example, may not be at work today, but the geographical division of developed and underdeveloped worlds continues to persist. Every world-system rests on the ruins of the previous one, and because of this, world-systems are interrelated, albeit that the new system always expands and transforms the elements that it borrows from the previous one.

(69)

Ayoko’s rape by Ronje is a metaphorical symbol of the coercive subjugation of the blacks by the white colonialists. And Asogba’s hegemonic manipulation by Mendoza, the most rapacious of the visitors, by virtue of the Shavi stones, represents a neo-imperial exploitation of the Orient. Ronje’s ingrained racial prejudice abets him to rape the dignity of Shavi. Emecheta seems to foreground that the ‘binaries’ have not been effaced, instead they are looming large in new shapes. She narrates: “Ronje fell on her and, in

less than ten minutes, took from the future Queen of Shavi what the whole Shavi stood for. To him, the Shavians were savages and Ayoko was just a serving girl” (94). The anti-essentialist, cosmopolitan and undefended attitude of the natives brings havoc and ravages to them.

Rebutting lecherous Ronje’s intention of marrying Ayoko, Flip adjures him not “. . . to introduce corrupt ways to this [Shavi] people”. He warns Ronje imparting it to him that raping Ayoko would be raping Shavi. But for the chauvinistic Ronje, Ayoko was “. . . an object of use for any white male wanderer. He had only done what generations of his race had done before” (Emecheta 104, 106). In fact, the ‘sacred’ of the indigenous society, which, in Ashcroft’s view, is of utmost significance in post-colonial study, is defiled by Ronje (*The Empire Writes Back* 212). In a violent retaliation, his Eurocentric arrogance is trampled down by the female version of native resistance.

Although the grand- narrative of Western superiority is rejected by Flip when he feels disgusted with the “instruments of physical and moral destruction” (Emecheta 102) and seeks recourse to the African (primitive) way of life. The “discourses of colonial power” are rendered “ambivalent” (Bhabha 153) in Flip’s compunction. In his view, Shavi turns a pure, genuine, eco-friendly and truly democratic world and the West is a “polluted world, where the acquisition of money reigns supreme” (Emecheta 103). But his way of knowing Shavi is a part of the ‘Orientalising’ (Said) project unknowingly. He is an ‘ambivalent’ neo-colonial. His sympathy and respect for the Shavians turn out to be superficial when he reaches England back and becomes complacent about his life. “Flip didn’t feel guilty at all that he had in a way disturbed the Shavians’ quiet life” (Emecheta 167).

The bounteous Asogba faces sheer slight and racial discrimination in England. His desire “to learn their [albinos’] tricks” inveigles him into the vortex of capitalism and desire for power. The Europeans send

him back equipped with “arms and ammunition” (Emecheta 134, 156) only to wipe out his own peaceful world of Shavi. He attacks the neighbouring kingdoms to emulate the Europeans, but leaves the whole human and animal world ransacked and devastated “under the disapproving gaze of a hypocritical West” (Ashcroft, *The Empire Writes Back* 213). The “new ideas and strange ways” betoken the resurfacing of Empire in Shavi. His returning “great and powerful” (Emecheta 121, 141) from England is actually a signal of being “outflanked” (Hardt and Negri 138) by the Empire. Nevertheless, he becomes aware of the reality and warns his people: “They carry weapons of death in their speech and in their bodies. They’re not the friends we think they are. They’re dangerous”. But Asogba’s resistance to the dupes of the albinos fails and he proves to be an emblem of blight for his own people. The “power-drunk Asogba” is ambushed by his unseen enemy with his own weapons. Mendoza goes back to Shavi to exploit its natural resources (Shavi stones) and render the natives shorn of their Shavian wealth and dignity. Asogba gets snarled up into his capitalist lure and orders his people to cease food-production and lean upon the Europeans for it. “He wanted his people to be as great as these white people” (Emecheta 152, 156, 149). Frantz Fanon notes the psychological corollary of such experience:

When the Negro makes contact with the white world, a certain sensitizing action takes place. If his psychic structure is weak, one observes a collapse of the ego. The black man stops behaving as an *actional* person. The goal of his behaviour will be The Other (in the guise of the white), for The Other alone can give him worth. That is on the ethical level: self-esteem. But there is something else. (*Black Skin, White Masks* 154; emphasis in original)

Apart from being a liberal cosmopolitan, the king Patayon is also a cultural nationalist. He always seeks to maintain the dignity of his cultural value-system, the sacred and the environment of Shavi. He flouts the

mammoth of Empire. His ‘slowness’ indicates his wisdom, sangfroid and rootedness. He states his principle: “ “We stand for independence, we stand for freedom. If we allow ourselves to be completely dependent on the albinos, and don’t prepare ourselves for the worst, I hate to think what will happen to us if for any reason they fail to bring food.” ”. His son, Asogba deviates from this parapet and gets entrapped into Mendoza’s perfidious ruses. This process of unseen and unheeded subjugation of culture and resources leads to an economic famine in Shavi. The culture of sheer capitalism and neo-imperialism divests the prince of his intrinsic culture of bounteousness and emanates a marauding, ravaging and self-destructive Asogba. As Viyon, Asogba’s step-brother expresses it with pride that they have best of civilization, but the “ . . . adventure into the desert, and the Ogene stones, were a dream and a temptation” (Emecheta 159, 178).

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Serenity in Insanity: Exploring Love in Sajid Ali's *Laila Majnu*

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Abstract:

The paper explores the layered notions of love and sanity as depicted in Imtiaz Ali's Laila Majnu. The movie is a modern adaptation of the classic and tragic love story. The paper intends to not only analyze the movie, in all its hues, but discuss the modern notions of love, sanity and society. It has also explored the love as perceived in mysticism in Sufism and attempted to trace the similarities in both. The study becomes relevant in the contemporary context where our society employs love as a dividing agent rather than a binding one on pretexts like caste, religion and social status. The clash of the individual with the society, the beloved and more so with oneself lends layered textures on this story which the paper has explored.

Keywords: Love, sanity, insanity, serenity

'Love' has been attempted to be defined by poets, critics and writers across ages and genres, though it can be conveniently inferred that it is beyond all poetic endeavours and rationale. While Bacon perceived it 'fit to be a matter of theatre and the cause of comedies and tragedies' (Bacon 42), Shakespeare was of the view that the course of true love 'never did run smooth' (Shakespeare 5). Love has evolved from the grace of the sonnets to the fickle minded present generation where attachments change as rapidly as the pictures on the profile. Love has been misconstrued, misrepresented and invariably misunderstood. The earlier generation spent a lifetime with the stolen

memories/ glances of their first love (as in the classic tale of "Usne Kaha Tha") where a moment gave them happiness to last a lifetime. It compels us to wonder if it is the romance and mystery associated with a generation that did not communicate enough or they had patience enough that lasted a lifetime. But then love was never supposed to be easy, Bacon remarked, "It is impossible to love and to be wise...in life it doth much mischief; sometimes like a siren, sometimes like a fury."(Bacon 42)

The tragic stories of lovers have always fascinated writers and artists and suffice is to say that it continues to mesmerize the coming generations. One of the numerous stories that have captured the imagination of many is the story of Laila Majnu. The paper attempts to understand the nuances of this story, as depicted in Imtiaz Ali's adaptation, without any reference to the original story or earlier adaptation. The attempt here is to study in isolation the serenity that love offers while claiming all and yet filling the void with the infinite. Mortality is depicted as a blissful place and the lovers, despite being offered a chance at unison prefer to claim each other forever in afterlife, unperturbed by the other relationships and customs of the society. The inability of the lovers to understand the society as they become consumed by love appears irrational yet convincing. The paper is an attempt to understand if love is all consuming or constructive or destructive or both. It explores whether it is possible to love and be rational or whether by surrendering all sanity, one

achieves it all.

Homayoun Hemmati refers to the story of Laila Majnu and refers to it as ‘mystical love’:

A model of mystical love is (Majnun), the hero of old Arabic tale, who lost his senses in his love of (Laila). This woman who was not even particularly beautiful, was for him the paragon of beauty, and as interpreted by the sufi poets became the manifestation of Divine Beauty seen through the eyes of love (20).

The story deals with two feuding families who are involved in a property dispute against the backdrop of the beautiful valleys of Kashmir. Each family considers itself to be righteous and fails to understand how both are not at fault. Even in the basic plot, the movie vividly portrays what life essentially teaches, how we all perceive ourselves as morally right and virtuous. Love blossoms, in the most unlikely of all places: Qais Butt starts to pursue (not pester) the daughter of the archrival of his father, Laila. The maiden is not depicted as a damsel in distress or shy; she is rather of the opinion that marriage will claim all her freedom and hence she intends to enjoy whilst she can. She, then ventures in a playful exchange with Qais without realizing when she succumbs her heart to the charming and the soft hearted guy. As in any traditional love story, the families are unable to settle their mutual dispute which leads to miscommunication and confusion culminating in the unhappy marriage of Laila to an ambitious and cunning youth leader. After four years, when an emaciated Qais returns to India to attend the funeral of his father, he starts melting at the thought of seeing Laila. As they meet in an epic scene, he is unable to live the happiness of the moment and faints and Laila realizes what she has done to the person she had loved. She then musters up the courage to leave her husband when an unfortunate/ fortunate accident kills Laila’s husband. As Laila decides to leave her house, her father blackmails her for the second time asking her to stay only for the mourning period. At this juncture, Qais starts to lose his composure and his brother decides to take him to their farm house. Qais starts exploring the mountains and valleys (which had

fascinated him since young age). He keeps immersing himself in the nature to discover his beloved, Laila, but it comes at the cost of his sanity. The movie ends at a very cathartic note when Laila comes to him, but he states that she has always been with him which evidences how the physical manifestation no longer holds any significance for him.

The larger question is the generalized perception of ‘sanity’ and because the present state of our existence is insane, do we still idealize sanity in worldly sense. In a poignant scene as he is talking to his ‘imaginary mashooq’, he disturbs the ‘namazis’, who is then offended with him. Qais then raises a very pertinent question, “I was talking to my mashooq and hence couldn’t hear you, just as you are talking to yours (implying God). Then, if I couldn’t hear you, how did you hear me?” If the world had half of its population engrossed in the pursuit of the ‘maashooq’, the problems of the world would be solved.

The tale of Laila and Majnun is one of the best-known love stories of the Middle East. It is also remarkable as this story takes the dimension of Sufism as for them it is an allegory of mystical love. Sufis are deemed as lovers of God and for these mystics the relationship between a Sufi and God that of lover and Beloved and referred by Lee:

...it is the longing for their Beloved that turns them away from the world, drawing them deeper and deeper into the mystery of the heart. These lovers of God have made *Laylā and Majnūn* their own story, full of symbols and images of this great love affair of the soul, a love affair as mad, dangerous and destructive as that experienced by the young man Qays, whose love for Laylā changes his name to Majnūn, the mad one(Vaughan-Lee 2011).

The truly mystical quality of love is the way it transforms an individual’s inner core. The Sufis were aware of this all-consuming nature of love. The term referred for this is ‘fanaah’ which can be loosely translated in English as annihilation. The Sufis believe that love destroys all that is insignificant (especially

ego) and what remains is only ‘love’.

The people are in the constant chase of corrupting factors like power or money which have disrupted the peace of human minds. If the world perceives the protagonist as insane then contrasted with the sanity of Laila’s husband he does little damage to the world. In what is insane, rests the sanity of the world. There is a constant awareness on the part of the protagonist of the customs and limitations of the society/ mortal world. He had, at one point believed that his beloved shall desert all to be a part of his life, which unfortunately did not happen. He then lets his love be a victim to the society and his ‘sane mind’ worked on the guidelines set by the world. He keeps repeating the phrase, “Duniyahai, duniyaadaarhai” (there is this world and the worldly customs), which is a helpless realization of the ruthless reality.

The story teller uses the literary device of ‘foreshadowing’ brilliantly, both with the events and places. One such instance is when the protagonist comments on the hero that the world rightly considers him ‘mad’, to which Qais replies that “if the world says that, then it has to be right”, giving an insight into the future of the character. Another moment which is significant is when Qais refuses to follow Laila and says “Go, now you, will have to seek me”, by which he intends that his absentia will be his presence, forever in her life. It becomes an important dialogue, as at different junctures in the movie, he leaves her only to be re discovered by her. The inevitability of fate is hinted in the statement when Qais reassures Laila, “What do you think, we are doing all this? Our story has been written”. Even if the fate they await is tragic, the realization of the fact that they have found their soul mates makes this fate bearable.

The consequential and heartfelt lyrics add to the plot giving it an ethereal dimension. The lyrics not only bring out the emotions of the character but add to the pathos of the storyline too. Phrases like, “Maine yaadtumharipehni h” (I have worn your memory) or “terा pyaarkhushikitehni h” (your love is like the stem of happiness) (3:44-4:15) do what the actions barely dream of. The sense of waiting which eventually leads

to the insanity of the protagonist is conveyed in the song “Aahista”, which as poetry, overflows with emotions. As Laila asks him to fall in love, ‘slowly’, he asks, “hotakyahaiaahista” (what happens slowly) (4:24-4:45) conveying what may be perceived as the *hamartia* of the hero. As the external world and its intentions finally fall in place for the unison of the two, the waiting takes a toll on him.

The insane Qais appears to be a believable character who remains unperturbed by the world and its customs. This is in stark contrast to the character who had during the first conversation expressed his desire to meet the parents of Laila for marriage. From a loving brother, a carefree youth, an understanding son, he transforms to a person who becomes aware of the limitations of this physical world and disclaims all other living relation. The transition of the protagonist from a dashing, intelligent and resourceful youth to a hopeless insane romantic is not only believable but heart wrenching. In a poignant scene, when his father dies, and his relatives try to give comfort and solace to him, he is offended it and states that the dead body is not his father.

In Shaw’s play, *Man and Superman*, it is stated, “There are two tragedies in life. One is to lose your heart’s desire. The other is to gain it.” (Shaw 277) For Qais, gaining makes him lose it. He has to pay the price of his life in order to claim from the world what he truly desired. Like everything, love comes at a cost. The inability of the character to live ‘normally’ in the worldly sense and love at the same time due to the circumstances evokes essential questions on the conditions of human happiness and existence. The essential philosophical issue is what is perceived as ‘normal’. It is the ability to mask your desires, emotions and evil and pretend to be undisturbed by them, which Freud summed up as ‘Id’. The moment a person is unable to do the same and expresses what he really feels, he is labeled as insane. Qais’ love for Laila and his devotion to it makes him incapable to shoulder any other responsibility of the world.

There is an element of romance and glorification associated with unfulfilled and forbidden love. This

may accrue to the fact that they do not undergo the disillusionment and the boredom of a couple whose love culminates in the bond of matrimony. The tales of Heer-Ranjha, Soni-Mahiwal, Romeo-Juliet are tales of tragedy, where both fate and society crush the blooming love of the couple. There rarely appears any glorification of those who spent years attempting to understand and then demystify the intricacies of a normal life as it is the routine everyday life that is lethal, which love fails to withstand. The romance of the rebellious becomes a prey to the dull routine of life.

The peace of Qais after he loses his sanity in the worldly sense is contagious. It makes one believe in the peace of the insane. What the society perceives to be madness proves to be a blissful state for the lover. He imagines his beloved to be a part of his world, though universe would be a more appropriate choice of word in this context. When Laila finally comes to him after overcoming all ordeals, he already perceives her in all. There is no element of ‘selflessness’ involved as the world ceases to exist for him. In fact, Rumi’s famous saying, “The wound is the place where light enters you”, aptly summarize the condition of the protagonist as the wound of love lets the divine light of the creator illuminate his soul.

The setting of the movie is crucial too, as when the society rejects, nature accepts. The blissful moments of the couple are in the valleys away from human habitation. Qais’ brother tries to take him closer to nature for his recovery but Qais feels at home in the lap of nature, so much so that he loses himself in it. The transformation of the hero from forlorn lover to a happy and self-contained ‘insane’ is possible only amidst nature. The mountain that had enamored him earlier, now provide a safe haven to him and his imagined beloved. The journey is depicted through a song, “hafiz hafiz”, which brings forth his state: “jug main jug sa hoke reh tu/ suntaa reh bas kuchnakehtu/ baatienpathar, taaientohmatt/ humsahokarhans k sehtu” (stay in the world, like the world is/ listen to all but do not say anything/ words like stones, taunts like allegations/ be

like us, smile and bear it) (1:57-2:04). The hero finally learns to embrace his fate and state in the presence of all embracing nature, losing his self. In his madness, there are traces of brilliance like that of Hamlet, though it does not look feigned.

The society takes the right to love and the lover claims his love in insanity. The people perceive their present conditions as sane, but if in this state they are constantly unhappy and unstable, insanity with its peace and serenity appears lucrative.

Love, thus transcends the physical for the not the eternal or immortal but a ‘peaceful’ state, not by the conventional definitions of the society. Qais showcases the eternal truth that forms the base of his mystical journey: the belief that the pure love destroys the individual ego/ self-love is the love that reveals the eternal presence of the Beloved within one’s heart. The delusion of parting is destroyed and the reality of union survives.

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A Critical Discourse on Aesthetics in Contemporary Indian Dalit Literature

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to study Aesthetics in contemporary Indian Dalit literature. Dalit literature is prominently a literature of social reform and awareness. In the second half of the 20th century, Dalit literature has emerged as a new literary current to address the prevalent regional issues of modern India especially the caste system. With the rise of Dalit literature, Dalit critics have demanded a separate aesthetic yardstick to interpret and evaluate Dalit literature. Since ages, canons of literary aesthetics have been shaped by the mainstream literature. However, Modern and Postmodern movement has brought a paradigm shift in the very nature of Aesthetics. Across the world, literature from the marginalized and subaltern class is gaining instant recognition. Unlike mainstream literature, Dalit literature not only attacks the established caste-based social stratification but also rejects established literary canons. Taking impetus from the thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar and Jyotirao Phule, Dalit literature has surfaced with a new zeal and confidence to assert liberty, equality and fraternity in society. Dalit writers' resentment and revolt is clearly reflected in subverting the classical notions of Aesthetics. The beauty (Aesthetics) of Dalit literature lies in its aspiration for the inalienable human rights – life, liberty,

equality, justice and dignity. With the emergence of Dalit consciousness, Dalit writers have developed their own literary style, form and tradition that is challenging, revolting and rebellious in nature. This subversive and aberrant literary approach is reshaping the very concept of Aesthetics in Dalit literature.

Keywords: *Aesthetics, Dalit and Dalit literature, Postmodern Literature, Dalit Aesthetics*

Art, one of the most distinctive and universal aspects of the humans, embodies human's innate desire to imitate reality. In Aristotle's words "art is representational". However, it is not mere imitation that determines art but it is the artistic skills that recreate and redesign reality. From the Classical antiquity to modernity, art practices have developed various theories to appreciate different forms of art. Today, these theories have developed a separate branch of philosophy known as Aesthetics. It is widely acknowledged that we appreciate art because it gives us pleasure and appeals to our emotions. Since the classical age, there has been a ceaseless debate over whether beauty is subjective; lies 'in the eyes of beholder' or objective; an inherent part of an artwork itself. In the classical age, beauty was thought to be objective i.e. eternally governed by some immutable high laws. On the contrary, in the Age of Reason beauty was regarded 'no other than subjective'. Later in

Postmodern age, this subjective notion became a catalyst to bring a radical transformation in the very concept of beauty. In the Postmodern age, beauty does not ‘lies in the eyes of beholder’ but lies in the culturally conditioned mind of the beholder. In other words the concept of Aesthetic is not transcendental, absolute, arbitrary and eternal. It changes over the passing of time and more importantly it is subject to conditioning. What was once considered low, rough, repugnant, inelegant, bizarre, offending is now creative, meaningful and artistic. Ellen Dissanayake, in her famous work *Homo Aestheticus* (2010), writes:

What seemed at the time a shocking (or amusing)..., can now be recognized as a crack in the dike of high art that in the past two or three decades has released an ever increasing flood of antiestablishment theory and realization-of-theory (i.e., works of art). (Dissanayake 200)

In the light of Aesthetics, Indian Dalit literature finds beauty in human emancipation. It is the literature of those people who were socially and culturally exploited for thousands of years. For dalit writers literature is a tool to create consciousness among people about their exploitation. The function of Dalit aesthetics is to stir the reader’s emotions about the gruesome treatment they receive from the very society they live in. The root of Dalit literature actually lies in social inequality which has been prevalent in India since ancient times. Due to the age-old caste system, people are divided into different castes and sub-castes. This stratification is strictly hierarchical in which people, who form the hegemonic class, control all kinds of power and resources whereas people at the bottom of the hierarchy have a very limited access to power and resources. After the independence, the Constitution of India outlawed the caste system but in practice it still exists in various forms.

Unlike mainstream literature in India, Dalit literature not only attacks the established social norms mainly caste system but also rejects established literary norms.

With the emergence of Dalit consciousness, Dalit writers have developed their own literary style, form and tradition that is challenging, revolting and rebellious in nature. Nevertheless, the mainstream literary critics such as P. S. Rege and Balkrishnana Kawthekar are of the opinion that Indian literary tradition is rich enough to appreciate and evaluate Dalit literature. It does not need any separate and distinct yardstick to evaluate its artistic expression. If Dalit literature is great, it will withstand any test and any time. Artistic values cannot be destroyed only because they have been rejected by Dalit writers. In P.S. Rege’s words:

When measuring the significance of any artistic creation, only artistic values should be employed, all others are irrelevant- they are meaningless. If they were to have a place, it would be minor. (Rege 29)

On the other hand, Dalit critics present their arguments to defend Dalit literature and its separate identity. Sharankumar Limbale, a renowned Marathi Dalit writer and critic, argues that Dalit literature is novel form in the area of literature and it puts an emphasis on fresh experiences, a new sensitivity with new words, and a new way of expressing Dalit’s suffering and revolt. Sharankumar Limbale presents a systematic understanding and analysis of Dalit aesthetics in his book *Dalit Sahityache Saundaryashastra* (2004) which was later translated into English by Alok Kumar Mukherjee as *Towards An Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*. This work is considered to be the first critical work that investigates aesthetics in Dalit literature. It has been assumed that Dalits, being a low-caste and uncivilized, cannot produce a sense of beauty in their works. According to Limbale, this claim is shallow and narrow. One should look at Dalit writings from a broader perspective. In the following words Sharankumar Limbale clearly draws a demarcating line between Dalit aesthetics and traditional aesthetics.

Ambedkarite thought is the aesthetics of Dalit literature....this literature cannot be evaluated on the

basis of either Sanskrit aesthetics or western aesthetics. The aesthetics of this (Dalit) literature can only be based on the thinking of Ambedkar and Phule. (Limbale 147-48)

This disengagement has also raised a significant question on the aesthetic aspect of Dalit literature. How can a literature generate aesthetic taste for its readers which is full of anger, resentment, abusing and offending words, abhorrent and repugnant images? For instant in the following lines from *Under Dadar Bridge*, a dalit poet Prakash Jadhav narrates the mental state of a protagonist who is a son of a prostitute and he is in search of his identity.

'Hey, Ma, tell me my religion. Who am I?
What am I?'

'You are not a Hindu or a Muslim!
You are an abandoned spark of the
World's lusty fires.'

Religion? This is where I stuff religion!
Whores have only one religion...

'Who was he? Who's my father?'

Scraping and scratching at the VD sores...

She would answer: 'He was some swine or other!'
'Whore! Tell me the truth, or else...'

'Why? Was there only one who mounted
And then abandoned my body?

How many names shall I mention?

Many came and many went.'(Dangle 65-66)

Since ages, conventional aesthetic standards have been employed to evaluate and appreciate mainstream literature. Dalit critics argue that these standards are basically designed to suit and justify the socio-economic output of the hegemonic class. Since Dalit literature is the result of the very different socio-economic condition of the marginalized people, it obviously needs different aesthetic consideration to suit and justify its literary works. Sharankumar Limbale aptly says:

To assert that someone's writing will
be called literature only when 'our'

literary standards can be imposed on. It is a sign of cultural dictatorship. The yardsticks of literature do not remain standstill for all time. With changing times, literature changes, and there remains the possibility of change in its criticism too. New literary trends cannot be evaluated with traditional literary yardsticks. (Limbale 07)

In linguistic aspect, Dalit literature is originally found in regional, dialectal and clumsy languages. Visual images and symbols used in the poems are rough, asymmetrical, comfortless and disturbing. Such literary behavior of Dalit literature poses an important question on the aesthetics of Dalit literature: Can Dalit literature be beautiful? The style and nature of Dalit literature is aberrant and subversive. It deconstructs the prevailing linguistic conventions for literature which is set by the hegemonic class. Today, this against-the-stream attitude is a conspicuous characteristic of the postmodern literature. Dalit writers use crude language and disturbing graphical descriptions because the language used by dalit people in their community gives more authentic impression while narrating their social conditions. In the following words from a short story titled *The Cull*, Dalit writer Amitabh presents a lifelike graphical description of a moment when a dead animal is being skinned and people are waiting to get their share of meat.

On the scrub under the gum trees were gathered all the Mahars from shanty town. Each carried a knife and some kind of container. Some made do with a broken piece of a mud pot or a rag. Some didn't have even that, so they would have to carry the meat in the folds of the dhoti or sari they were wearing. He (Pandya) and his son Somya started skinning the carcass with their knives... As soon as Pandya and Somya were out, others, like sanguine Rajput warriors, pounced

upon the prey, raising a full-throated battle cry... Tens of knives were sawing at the chest at once. Whatever piece, small or big, they could manage, they cut and put into their containers. The knives slashed and sliced, chunks and chunks of meat were piled into the hampers and basket. It was a free-for-all. (Dangle 221-222)

The beauty of the Dalit literature lies in its appeal through disturbing words. For example, in *Jasumati, My Black Jasmine*, Neerav Patel, a renowned Gujarati poet and critic, narrates how a dalit woman is molested in public. In the title of the poem, the poet has deliberately used 'black' adjective for Jasmine. This is very suggestive because for dalit people 'black' is close to their reality. In the following words the poet gives a horrific picture of how a young dalit girl's chastity is violated in public.

Instantly you become feast for the zooming vultures.

A nasty joke,
A quick and sudden hug
A slap upon your heavy buttocks.
You are cornered like an easy prey.
They enjoy the delicious
Most touchable flesh of an untouchable girl.
You moan and become mother-
Mother of a bastard.
They button up the trousers
And take a plunge in the ganges
They defile you, dear Jasumati

Like a crow defiles with his dirty bill. (Patel 113)

For the Dalit writers, real beauty of literature lies in its action. If literature is unable to bring change in the world, in such literature lies a real ugliness. Neerav Patel, in the following words, nicely explains the pragmatic approach of aesthetics in Dalit literature.

The sword that is strong enough to strike and sharp enough to cut the target into two is beautiful and not the one that has a blunt blade but has a

well-carved, gilded handle. And that helped develop his aesthetic sense. He (Dalit poet) sharpened his poetic talent so that he can strike, and strike at the very root of the evil. (Patel 116)

The major literary genres used by Dalit writers are autobiography, poem, short story and essay. These genres are mainly employed to depict the painful and inhuman treatment to the people of dalit community which is firmly rooted in almost all the regional communities. In Dalit shorts stories, poems and autobiographies, story does not move as per Aristotelian rule i.e. beginning-climax-end but story ends where it starts i.e. no change in the life of character. Characters are born with pains, they suffer and they are left by the writer with eternal torment.

Since ancient time, Indian literature is highly influenced by aesthetics and literary theories which were developed by Sanskrit scholars. In the medieval period, the renowned Sanskrit poets and literary critics enriched this tradition. However, modern Indian literature has adapted the western literary theories and European knowledge and methodology of reading and writing. Eventually, this resulted in a new hybrid literary culture in India in which the contemporary Dalit literature bears a significant contribution to the development of new aesthetic theory. However, the mainstream critics argue that "Dalit literature must be assessed on the basis of traditional critical theories. There are universal values embedded in literature, which never change" (Limbale 106). To answer this Sharankumar Limbale argues that:

The act of imagination called art is impermanent and ever-changing. Literature changes with changing culture. Unless the yardsticks change, the relationship between literature and criticism will be fractured. Like literature, criticism, too, is apt to change. Just as the course of literature has changed from one period to another, so has the

mode of criticism. (Limbale 107)

Instead of following the age-old notions developed by the hegemonic class, the marginalized literature, especially the Black literature in the West, has adapted postmodern norms of literature. Sharankumar Limbale says that in the earlier literature the chief focus was on the life of kings and noblemen. There was no space for the slaves, peasants, serfs, downtrodden people and oppressed classes in literature. Back then, the society could not accept a hero from the oppressed class but today marginalized literature is chiefly about those who are voiceless and this is the reason why Dalit literature is accepted and well acclaimed across the world.

In Dalit literature, behind the anger and resentment there lies an aesthetic that is life-affirming and realistic. It harshly revolts and attacks to eradicate the evil and inhuman practices prevalent in different forms in society especially the caste system. Dalit literature does not believe in romanticizing the day-to-day life incidents. It holds mirror up to society so that people can see their own evil reflection. Thus, aesthetics in Dalit literature lies in its vision of social reform, freedom, justice, equality, brotherhood and above all humanism. Since Dalit literature is deeply inspired by the revolutionary Ambedkarite thoughts, its major concern is to protect and promote the inherent dignity, self respect and inalienable rights of humans. This is aptly seen in the following poem by Anna Bahu Sathe, a renowned dalit poet from Maharashtra.

The rich have exploited us without end,
The priests have tortured us,
As if stones had eaten jewels
And thieves had become great.
Sitting on the chariot of unity
Let us go forward
To break the chains of class and caste
Hold to the name of Bhim! (Dangle 05)

This humanistic approach and emphasis on human values are the real aesthetic standards of Dalit literature. Therefore, the real beauty of Dalit literature

lies in its vision of social reform, emancipation, freedom, justice, equality, brotherhood and above all humanism. The classical notions of aesthetics judge literature based on the concept of ‘Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram’. Dalit literature rejects this spiritualistic and abstract approach of aesthetics which often makes literature vague and unrealistic. This kind of literature cannot function as didactic literature to bring change in society. As a critic, Sharankumar Limbale presents the following aesthetic standards to judge Dalit literature:

- Artists must be motivated by their experience.
- Artists must socialize their experiences.
- Artists' experiences must have the strength to cross provincial boundaries.
- Artists' experiences must seem relevant to all time. (Limbale 120)

The pragmatic approach of Dalit aesthetics bears some limitations. In order to raise the social and cultural issues, dalit writers have reduced aesthetics to focus on a specific group of people. This intense reductionist approach has lost its universal appeal. Literature always transcends time, place and culture. Moreover, Dalit literature does not accept non-dalit writer's work who writes on the socio-economic conditions of the dalit people. “By Dalit literature,” Limbale defines “I mean writing about Dalits by Dalit writers with a dalit consciousness” (Limbale 19). If the aim of Dalit literature is to produce “an aesthetic that is life-affirming and realistic” (19) then the exclusion of non-dalit writers makes no sense. Non-dalits writers such as Premchand and Mulk Raj Anand have envisioned the sufferings of the dalits through literary expression which serve aesthetic that is life-affirming and realistic. Dalit aesthetics which rests on humanitarian grounds should have an appeal to all the people of marginal classes who has been persecuted and oppressed. The demand of separate aesthetic standards to evaluate Dalit literature is apt. However, for the proper assessment of the many dimensions of a work of art, it would be inappropriate to employ fixed aesthetic yardsticks.

Dalit literature, which has begun its journey as a protest

literature and whose chief function is to portray the true picture of Dalit's life, has now occupied a significant place in the contemporary Indian literature. With the development of Dalit consciousness in the post-independence era, Dalit literature has succeeded to earn a significant identity which is epitomized in the capitalized 'D' in Dalit literature. Subverting the traditional notions of aesthetics, Dalit literature has introduced a new yardstick to judge the artistic taste of literature, which has firmly secured a space in the literary tradition of Aesthetics.

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Theatrical Space and Visibility of Children's Concerns in Ramu Ramanathan's Play *The Boy Who Stopped Smiling*

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Abstract:

In India, a lot of pressure is imposed on children for performing better than others in the examination. For many, the parents decide which career they should opt as they are considered incapable of making decisions for themselves. Children are given no individual space and their issues remain socially invisible. Does literature give space and visibility to these invisible issues? Does it empower the ones who contest for their individual space in society? Does theatre act as heterotopia? Are Indian homes and educational spaces panoptic? Does GRIPS theatre give space and visibility to children's concerns? This paper seeks to answer these questions with reference to the play The Boy Who Stopped Smiling by Ramu Ramanathan, which deals with issues faced by students in India. This paper aims to analyse this play from the point of view of spatial theory and invisibility studies. Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia, his discussion on panopticon and Francoise Král's social invisibility theory are applied to the play in order to achieve the objective of the paper.

Keywords: GRIPS Theatre, Heterotopia, Panoptic Space, Social Invisibility, Spatial Theory.

In India, children are considered incapable of taking decisions for themselves. There is always an authority above them which monitors their behaviour. The education system and parents are the decision makers for them. Children are rendered invisible beings with

no space of their own. In the 21st century, this section of society has begun to contest for its own individual space. Ramu Ramanathan, a contemporary Indian English playwright, is known for his political plays that deal with issues of contemporary Indians. His play *The Boy Who Stopped Smiling* belongs to the GRIPS theatre category and deals with issues faced by students in contemporary India. The paper seeks to analyse this play with the help of Michel Foucault's spatial concepts and Francoise Král's invisibility theory. It aims to find out whether GRIPS theatre offers space and visibility to the issues of children.

GRIPS theatre originated in Germany and was founded by Volker Ludwig. Gradually, it spread to other countries, including India. "Almost 30 years ago, Mohan Agashe was responsible for introducing GRIPS theatre in India" (Kapoor). Shrirang Godbole along with Mohan Agashe started the GRIPS movement in Pune city and had also held a workshop to celebrate completion of 25 years of GRIPS theatre in the year 2011. Some GRIPS theatre plays which were screened during the workshop include "ChaanChote Waitta Mothe, Nakore Baba, Amhi Gharache Raje, Pahile Paan, Pan Amhala Khelaychey, Hashh Hashh !Thaal Thushh" (Express News Service). About the history of GRIPS in India, Shruti Nambiar writes, "The legendary Berlin-based children and youth theatre, whose name in German dialect means 'brainy' or 'common sense', landed on the Indian shores in 1986. Due to the active support of Maharashtra Cultural Centre, Theatre Academy, Max

Mueller Bhavan and actor, Dr Mohan Agashe, GRIPS has happily chugged across 12 plays and close to 3,000 productions in its 25-year-long journey in India” (Nambiar). She further remarks that “Chaan Chote Vaitt Mothe is the first play that GRIPS had showcased in 1986”. Today actor Vibhavari Deshpande is “one of the younger flag-bearers of GRIPS” (Nambiar). Lakshmi Chandra notes “the GRIPS originated in Germany and is an offshoot of the Youth Movement, which swept the world in the seventies” (xiv). She further elaborates that GRIPS is based on “the ideology of opposition and the importance of questioning grown-ups, elders and the status quo” (xiv). According to her, GRIPS plays were not ‘traditional’ children’s plays with fairy tales and dream-world” (xiv).

An article on IHS Blog remarks that Ramanathan’s play *The Boy Who Stopped Smiling* belongs to the category of GRIPS theatre. In it, adult actors play children’s roles. It is a contemporary realistic theatre which deals with real-life issues faced by children and adolescents. This theatre brings out problems faced by children and youngsters and thus provides “a platform to open dialogue that could lead to emancipation of youth and sociocultural evolution and enlightenment” (“Night of Theatre”). The play “tackles a theme all too familiar to students – an insensitive society and pressurising parents who fail to understand the psyche and pulse of the younger generation”. In the play, “Ramu stresses on the importance of asking the question ‘Why?’” (Chandra xiv). The play’s character Mallika keeps questioning why things are the way they are and she does this “with great elan”. The paper aims to discuss Ramanathan’s play which belongs to the GRIPS theatre category and analyses it through the lens of spatial and invisibility theories.

In Spatiality theory, space and place are two different concepts with different meanings. While place is tangible, space is abstract. Place is the real space, whereas space as a concept is perceived or conquering space. The paper analyses both place and space depicted in the Ramanathan’s play, however, the focus

is more on space. A play depicts real space on an imaginary platform. Thus, theatrical space can be called thridspace, which falls between the real space and imagined space. Two terms, heterotopia and panoptic space, are employed in the paper thereby analysing whether theatre space can make invisible issues visible. Michel Foucault, one of the initiators of the literary spatial turn of the 20th century, in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, suggested that the panopticon “is polyvalent in its applications; it serves to reform prisoners, but also to treat patients, to instruct schoolchildren, to confine the insane, to supervise workers, to put beggars and idlers to work” (205). In “Of Other Spaces”, he proposed a new concept, heterotopia, and explained that:

There are also, probably in every culture, every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like countersites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their own locality in reality.(3)

In his paper, Iwan Sudradjat notes that the heterotopia is etymologically linked to another more familiar term, “Utopia”, which Foucault cites as a theoretical counterpart to the heterotopia (29). Thus, from the definition of heterotopia, theatre can act as heterotopia by giving visibility to those contesting for their space. The paper examines how the play can act as heterotopia and analyses the panoptic spaces in Indian society.

Firstly, to look at the play from geocritical and spatial point of view, it is important to note that like Ramanathan’s other plays, this play is also set in contemporary Mumbai. Though Mumbai city is not physically depicted on stage, it is discussed and described by the characters in their dialogues. In Act

1 Scene 2, the protagonist, Malhar, mentions names of real places in Mumbai city like Sewri, Churchgate, Mazgaon. He also describes the history of the city. The play however doesn't stop at discussing physical aspects of the city. Its main motive is to look at the panoptic spaces in Indian society and the visibility given to children's concerns. The play, as a thirdspace, depicts the attitude of people residing in the city. It gives a psychological framework of parents in the city and its educational system. It shows how Indian homes and the education system become panoptic spaces while the theatre functions as heterotopia. The paper focuses on the different spaces than on place in the play.

While Indian homes and educational spaces represent panoptic spaces trying to control the behaviour of children, there also exists heterotopias like theatre, especially GRIPS theatre and different institutions like art schools which promote individuality in children. These heterotopias are places which support children's contest for individual space. The controlling behaviour of Malhar's parents in the play represent panoptic Indian homes and the play allowing children to express their point of view about this environment shows how theatre can act as a heterotopia, a counter site. The play makes children's concerns visible through the story of a young boy, Malhar, who is considered different from other children. His dream is perceived as unrealistic by others. Though he is good at mathematics, his real joy lies in playing chess. In fact, he envisions to defeat Vishwanathan Anand, the Indian chess champion. However, his parents have different plans for him. They want him to forget this unrealistic dream and to focus only on his studies so that he can have a secured career in future. They want to bind him to the chains of education and conform to societal norms for children. They fail to understand his passion for chess. Malhar being a rebel cannot tolerate this suppression and reaches a stage where he stops smiling. Due to constant nagging by his parents, Malhar behaves weirdly and has not smiled since the past six months. He has stopped eating and speaks illogically. No one understands what he is talking, not

even his parents. The only thing he likes is playing chess. He is so much obsessed with the game that he puts the chess board in the fridge. His parents want him to behave like other children and study encyclopaedias and mathematics. Thus, the play is a fictional representation of the reality that exists in contemporary India. Many children like Malhar who have a liking for an uncommon activity are considered as abnormal or foolish. Parents measure the success of their child only through report cards. However, the actual progress lies in development of the unique skill and talent that each child possesses. The play opens doors for a new thought that motivates parents to encourage their children's unique talents. It aims to change the mind set of parents, schools and the ministry that sets the syllabus of education. The stage itself, where the play is enacted, serves as a thirdspace to children's issues and as a heterotopia it depicts contesting children who want to free themselves from the panoptic environment of homes and schools. The playwright has aptly used stage space to highlight the need to give space to children. "The stage space is defined into four zones: indoor, outdoor, family space and Malhar's space" (Ramanathan 61). Thus, the play is an attempt to give space to children like Malhar and make their issues visible. Malhar represents all the children in India who are pressurised by their parents and the educational system to choose a career like doctor, MBA or engineering. His not smiling is a representation of anger of today's generation for being suppressed. The play gives voice to these suppressed voices. Malhar runs away from home without telling anyone and goes to participate in a game of chess against Vishwanathan Anand, the chess Grandmaster in India. Like Malhar, even his sister Mallika feels that elders are complex. They call their parents as Enemy Camp. They dislike their parents as they are very strict and impose lot of restrictions. They find Ashwini's mother better as she "goes to work and never troubles her" (Ramanathan 114). "Ashwini can watch TV. Eat chocolates. Play video games. Do anything at home, all the time" (114). Mallika says that "Papa and Momma are Big Bullies" (114). She dislikes it when

she is asked by her mother to recite a poem in front of Dr.Bhuskute and that her mother wants her to become a doctor. Though a child, she makes an important comment that parents also can go wrong. “They must also be doing some *gadbad* at work. Not doing their homework, properly” (115). The play puts forth a question to the audience whether the adults scold themselves when they go wrong? If not, then should they punish their own children when they make mistakes? Following the principles of GRIPS theatre, the play depicts exchange of roles of the characters. In the middle part of the play, parents are made to act like children and children act like elders. This is to make the parents in the audience realise how they mistreat their children even for the smallest of mistakes. Thus, the play depicts how Malhar contests for his individual space and how theatre functions as heterotopia.

The paper also seeks to analyse the play through the lens of another theory named the invisibility studies, which has gained prominence in the mid-20th century. In her book *Social Invisibility and Diasporas in Anglophone Literature and Culture: The Fractal Gaze*, Francoise Král has explained that social invisibility is the “lack of visibility of given marginal social groups” (1). Dr.Nilakshi Roy in her paper, “Seeing is Not Believing: Social Invisibility in *Salaam Bombay*”, discusses on how the film depicts invisibilisation of children and their labour in the city of Mumbai. Invisibility theory can also be applied to children’s concerns like parental pressure, unnecessary competition, lack of individual space and no freedom to decide for themselves. These issues have remained socially invisible. The play looks at invisible issues of Indian education system and its impact on children. English language was introduced to Indian education curriculum during colonisation, and the Utilitarian concept of rote learning was highlighted as the best method. This impacted the education system in the country negatively, resulting in a focus on memory-based learning which has its own perils. Instead of encouraging students to gain knowledge, it only misleads young minds towards unnecessary competition. Parents expect their children to score better than others. This

subjects children to undue pressure and takes away any possible space to express their own creativity and latent talent. “With all its insistence of rote learning our educational system misses out on this essential ingredient of childhood, of learning more about the world around us” (Chandra xiv). Competition in education is another invisible issue that the play deals with. In the play under discussion, Father comments that “In these days of competition, one has to prepare for everything. Poems and all”(Ramanathan101). Parents expect their children to excel in studies and to recite poems and show others how clever they are. Such kind of pressure has, in the long run, led to many suicidal cases in reality. Malhar finds the controlling behaviour of his parents suffocating. He runs away from home to participate in a game of chess with Vishwanathan Anand. The play warns parents of consequences of over-pressuring children. Thus, the play makes invisible issues of children visible.

The play gives voice to the silenced issues of children. It is sarcastic about the behaviour of adults, however, one character in the play, which is the character of Dr.Bhuskute, becomes the voice of the playwright who wants parents to understand children’s psychology. Dr.Bhuskute asks Malhar’s parents to understand that “every child is special” and to not “compare one with the other” (Ramanathan105). His suggestions to Malhar’s parents are actually an important message to the audience. He says that “Parenting is the most difficult job on earth. Almost everybody does it. But nobody knows how it is to be done” (105). He not only supports Malhar for his liking for chess, but also informs them about the draw between Malhar and Vishwanathan Anand. He tells them that Malhar “has done you proud” (124). He makes them realise their mistakes and explains them the true reason behind Malhar’s not smiling. He narrates to them how Malhar smiled after Vishwanathan Anand spoke to Malhar at length for 10 minutes. Malhar was seen as an abnormal child by everyone, including his parents. Only Dr.Bhuskute saw the genius lying in him and even convinced Malhar’s parents about it. In the end of the play, he makes an important point that “The parents obviously

love their children" but by pressuring children they can make "mistakes that cannot be rectified" (128). The play puts forth an important message for all the parents that "The parents will have to find the right balance in bringing up their children, properly" (128).

From the above analysis and discussion, one can conclude that GRIPS theatre plays like *Boy Who Stopped Smiling* function as a heterotopia and become a Third Space for children's invisible issues. Through the story of Malhar, it puts light on the need for a change in the panoptic nature of Indian parenting and the educational system.

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Revisiting Masterpieces of Literature Through Indian Aesthetics: *A Myth Of Devotion, a river sutra & NAVEEN PATNAIK*

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Abstract:

T. S. Eliot's statement that novelty is better than repetition holds good in creation and revaluation of masterpieces of literature. Indian Aesthetics is based upon the principle that intuition rather than intellect is secret to the deeper understanding and maximum aesthetic enjoyment of literary work. Intuition is a faculty that is higher than reasoning. Life is so mysterious and universe so complex that intuitive perception of reality leads to optimum aesthetic pleasure because reasoning fails at a particular point to evaluate the beauty, the wonder and the mystery behind every phenomenon: universal, natural, super-natural or human. The exponents of Indian Aesthetics: Bharat, Kuntaka, Abhinavagupta, Mahima Bhatta, Annadavardhana, Bhartrhari, Dandin and so on, in ancient times, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo in modern times, share one feeling that expressions in any literary masterpiece should be artistic not ordinary, oblique rather than direct, special rather than casual. The literary artist must possess dristi (vision or sight) by which he can transform an ordinary object into an extra-ordinary phenomenon of beauty. Viewed in this light three literary works: "A Myth Of Devotion", a master poem by Louise Gluck, "a river sutra", an enchanting novel by Gita Mehta, NAVEEN PATNAIK, an exciting biography by Ruben Banerjee arrest attention of the scholars and common readers because of originality and dexterity in style. The titles of three literary works

have been written in three different ways: A Myth Of Devotion has been written in the usual way, Mehta uses all small letters in the title of her fiction but Banerjee prefers all capitals. The stylistic deviance is not without a reason. Gluck deals with usual human predicament, Mehta discovers that the river rather than any human guru needs to be man's teacher but river has been ignored to play the role of teacher by the common mass. The aim of this paper is to analyse and underline the stylistic devices through Indian Aesthetics that make Gluck, Mehta and Banerjee popular in the domain of literature.

Keywords: Indian Aesthetics, dristi (vision or sight), intuition, oblique, special, Gluck, Mehta, Banerjee

I

In 2020 Louise Gluck, the American litterateur, wins the Nobel prize for literature. The originality (and innovativeness) of her poetry instils a desire in the practitioners of literature to know her literary technique. Gita Mehta who was born to Biju Patnaik, the ex-chief minister of Odisha, now lives in London, New York and India; She has varied experiences as an authoress(a story teller) with a special command over English language. Her *a river sutra* which TIME OUT declares the 'seductive prose of the highest order'-(the cover page of *a river sutra*), merits attention of the lovers of literature. Ruben Banerjee's *NAVEEN PATNAIK* published in 2018 is written on the life of the Juggernaut in Odisha politics. Banerjee, a journalist,

unravels the psyche of Patnaik with penetrating insight and knowledge. These three literary works capture the imagination of readers not only for their themes that are relevant in the present context but also for the elegant and fascinating style. This paper discovers the source of beauty in literary works, as expounded by the Aestheticians of India, which accounts for their popularity.

This paper has been divided into five sections. The opening section is an introduction which spells out the design of the project. The second section analyses Gluck's poem in the light of Indian Aesthetics. The third section sheds light upon Meheta's literary devices and focuses on their suitability to the text as designed by the Aestheticians of India. The fourth section dwells upon the literary techniques and embellishments of Banerjee to be analyzed through the prism of Indian Aesthetics. The fifth section is the conclusion in which the artistic designs of three authors are compared and contrasted so as to justify the application of Indian Aesthetics in the production and enjoyment of literary texts.

The major schools of Indian Aesthetics : *Riti* School that focuses on style; *Vakrokti* that emphasizes an obliquity in expression; *Dhvani* theory that stresses on suggestivity; *Rasa* theory that attaches importance to aesthetic enjoyment; *Anuman* theory that presupposes that inference is secret to the creation of literature, and *Aucitya*, the theory of propriety, merit attention. All these theories, though apparently different in their principles and methods agree on the point that literary expressions should be original, innovative, and creative rather than dull, stereotyped and commonplace. All of them agree on the fact that a good literary work is a thing of beauty which is a joy for ever; its loveliness increases it never passes into nothingness. They establish the view of Shakespeare that a literary artist 'gives to airy nothing a local habitation and name'. The artist is a creator and creates his own world in the domain of literature which is beautiful, symbolic and ideal. Literature is the art of the desirable and the literary artist projects an ideal world or presents the tension between the ideal and the actual which a serious reader should perceive. The Indian Aestheticians have

framed their principles, devised their methods which remain as guidelines for any litterateur of repute. Borrowing the language from Oscar Wilde the leader of Aesthetic Movement in the west it can be stated that the conclusion of Indian Aestheticians is that good literature is moral; 'bad literature has a moral'. It means that literary artist must give a holistic picture of his world in which it is difficult to find inconsistency or incoherence. Harmony that manifests in the symphony of sounds, color and ideas is the watchword of every literary artist who follows the Indian Aesthetics. Considered in this light, these three masterpieces of literature as discussed in the paper in the short length of about 2,500 words, are finest specimens of literature that transport the readers to the world of the sublime; a kind of transportation that two noted Indian Aestheticians: Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore long for.

II

A Myth Of Devotion, a representative poem by Louise Gluck (<https://poets.org/>), gives the picture of a duplicate of the earth in which death, not love is the solution to the end of human miseries. Devotion that is purified love is a myth, not a fact, in modern world. The poem tells a complex story in Greek mythology in which Hades the protagonist tried to create a replica of the earth in which his love and passion for Persephone would be materialized but the kind of materialization that the poem depicts is shocking. Here the protagonist expresses helplessness in the profession and practice of love to his beloved:

He wants to say *I Love You, nothing can hurt you but he thinks*

this is a lie, so he says in the end

you're dead, nothing can hurt you

which seems to him

a more promising beginning, more true.(poets.org)

The passage above, can be analyzed in the light of the theory of Vakrokti (striking expression). Borrowing the ideas of Bhababhuti and Kuntaka, who propound the theories of Vakrokti it can be asserted that in case of master literary artists 'sense rushes after their words'.

Gluck's words contain profound truths. They can be subject to multiple interpretations. Here death is truer than love to end all troubles of human existence-an ironical remark indeed! Hence, Hades uses darkness to symbolize his passion for love. Darkness is usually used as a representation of loneliness and rejection but the speaker uses it in a different sense. Thus, in the hands of Gluck symbols change, flash and glitter. They are dynamic-a secret to successful poetic craftsmanship!

III

Meheta's *a river sutra* has a unique structure. Neel Mukherjee comments in the introduction:

a suite of stories, one following the other, all loosely connected to a frame with characters
coming in, playing their part and then disappearing...
the narrator provides one cohering principle for the book but is too shadowy, too much upon interlocutor, even a mostly a passive hearer to be called a protagonist(XI).

Thus, the structure of the fiction is unusual and novel; it corresponds to that of the Mahabharat or the Ramayan, the Indian Classics that juxtapose tales into an organic whole. The reasons behind the variation of tales is to sharpen curiosity about multi-faceted human life upon this planet: wonderful and unpredictable. The authoress believes like P.B. Shelly that life is a multi-coloured glass that stains the white radiance of eternity. These stories reveal the indomitable longings of human heart along with beneficent powers of the river Narmada. The plot of the novel is woven around the life of an elderly bureaucrat who runs a guest house on the sacred banks of the Narmada, a holy river of India. Those who arrest his attention are a young executive fascinated by an enigmatic lover, a Jain monk who renounces the world and voluntarily embraces hardships; a frustrated woman with melodious voice and a saint who saves a child from taking resort to prostitution. Thus the fiction moves along a variety of complex tales that provoke thought and evoke curiosity: A perceptive reader exclaims in the language of Shakespeare: 'what a piece of work is man...!' The

novelist dexterously juxtaposes the profane with the spiritual, opulence with the poverty, restlessness with tranquility and so on and gives the impression that human life is a paradox and full of contraries. *a river sutra* begins with an epigraph :

Llisten, O brother
Man is the greatest truth.
Nothing beyond.

(Love Songs of Chandidas)

The epigraph forms the basis of the various tales in the novel: the truth about human predicament and human existence. The ideas that the stories contain have relevance today. For example, now-a-days the people are advised to put on masks as a preventive measure for Coronavirus. This gesture is shown by a Jain monk for different reasons. In *a river sutra* a Jain monk says "this mask prevents us from killing some blameless insect by sudden inhalation". A gesture of non-violence! Such a gesture of non-violence is needed today for a different purpose.

In *a river sutra* the river is symbolic. The river has a continuous flow despite impediments; it looks enchanting and fresh. The choice of the name 'Narmada' is not without a meaning. 'Narmada' means a whore; a whore lives an adventurous life- a life that lures, but full of blemishes, a life that offers troubled pleasures. The stories that blend and constitute the fiction deal with various facets of human life: 'enchanting... somewhat comic, somewhat tragic and always filled with insights' NEWYORK TIMES (quoted in the back page of *a river sutra*).

Suggestion, Anandvardhana would view is the soul of literature, especially of poetry. The suggested sense arises out of an idea, a figure of speech or an emotion. The poetry that *a river sutra* contains needs to be analyzed in the light of *dhvani* theory. The grateful tribals of the Vano village invoke the spirit of the Narmada in poetic language:

Salutation in the morning and at night
to the, O Narmada!

Defend me from the serpent's poison (*a river sutra*:4)

The expression ‘serpent’s poison’ radiates meaning: In literal sense, it means snake’s poison, but its associated meaning is evil that obstructs the smooth flow of life. It is pictured in Shankaracharya’s hymn:

O holy Narmada!
you remove the stains of evil.
You release the wheel of suffering
you lift the burdens of the world. (ibid.180)

The Narmada tells the river *sutra* that river is the liberator: It liberates the humans from sufferings, worldly burdens and above all, clutches of evils; it can dissolve the fear of time

IV

NAVEEN PATNAIK reads like a fascinating biography in which Banerjee- the biographer deals with the life of Naveen from various angles: Political, Social and Psychological. He focuses on the public image and private life with interesting details that enhance the readability of the text. The book is divided into six chapters excluding introduction. The first chapter is entitled ‘*Mere Pitaji Ko... Bahut Pyar Tha*’: the expression in Hindi makes the utterance appealing and symbolic. Behind the success of Naveen Babu lies the blessings of his father, the charismatic leader, Biju Babu. The last chapter titled “What after Naveen?” is inferential in character. Mahima Bhatta, a leading exponent in Indian Aesthetics, conceives of inference as the basic principle of writing great literature; in fact, such a chapter adds grandeur to the biography. The chapters entitled: “The First Steps”, “The Uninterrupted Reign”, “Why Naveen Wins”, “The 2019 Challenge” are thought-provoking. They focus on Naveen the man and the politician. On politics, Banerjee utters the unpleasant truth:

Politics, by and large, is a sordid, murky and fiercely competitive affair, it is a treacherous vocation where everyone is out to pull everyone else down by any means, fair or foul. The world of politics in Odisha is no different... The politics of the *Aaya Ram, Gaya Ram* kind.

(Patnaik: 8)

Banerjee’s conception of politics corresponds to that

of Samuel Johnson: Politics is the last refuge of scoundrels. Bernard Shaw agrees on it. The murky side of politics creates *jugupsa*, the aesthetic of disgust. *Rasa theory* is the unique contribution to the world of aesthetics. About *Rasa theory* Bharata holds that Rasa is the resultant of the unification of ‘*vibhavas*’ (determinants), ‘*anubhabas*’ (consequents) and ‘*vyabhicharibhavas*’ (transitory feelings) (Tiwari 52). Determinants are the objective conditions or situations. The consequences are physical perceptions. The situations prevailing in Odisha politics are not fair; hence the feelings about politics are not good of an enlightened citizen. Banerjee perceives that Naveen intuitively knows the problems of Odias, and thus he aptly analyzes the psychology of voters and wins.

V

To conclude, revisiting masterpieces of literature through Indian aesthetics is a valued suggestion not only from the aesthetic stand-point but also from the academic perspective. The greatest contribution of Indian aesthetics to the domain of world aesthetics lies in *rasa-dhvani* theories. These theories advocate that a piece of literature will yield maximum aesthetic enjoyment if the reader has *sahridaya*(proper taste) and a man of culture. Bhartrhari’s concept of *sphota* is unique. What is articulated and listened to is “*dhvani* but this *dhvani* is the manifesting agent of *sphota* which is unheard”. (Seturaman: x) Suggestion is the link between words on the page and vision of the reader. The profounder is the suggestion, the deeper is the aesthetic delight. The literary text *A Myth Of Devotion* highlights the grim reality that devotion which is a human emotion: pure, total, and unsullied is a myth, not possible in real life. The fiction *a river sutra* throws light upon a formula that if a man establishes close rapport with the river that symbolizes the eternal flow, freedom and flexibility in movement he will be liberated from sorrows and sufferings that characterize the life of an ordinary mortal. NAVEEN PATNAIK- the biography deals with the story of a politician who succeeds because he understands the psychology of the common people and intricacies of the game that is politics. He follows unconsciously the words of the

aesthete: Oscar Wilde that success is conditional and he is always eager to study the conditions and fulfil them. Politics was in his ‘genes’; he decided to give up wearing ‘jeans’ in order to identify himself with the poor Odias. His decision about dress and address is appropriate-here lies his success as a politician. Thus, these three literary texts, succinctly analyzed through the prism of Indian aesthetics, open out the vistas before the reading public that the comprehension of Indian Aesthetics is essential to read the masterpieces of literature for better understanding and enjoyment.

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“Can a Pulaya Speak of His Life?”: Autobiography as Ethnography in Kallen Pokkudan’s *Kandalk kadukalk kidayile Ente Jeevitham*

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Abstract :

*Autobiographies of individuals from marginalized communities have often been sites of epistemological resistances placed against the mainstream narratives of history that sideline and denigrate the former. Marginalized autobiographies thus become a recording of collective counter memories. Autobiographies of the marginalized communities are, in that sense, ethnographies that document the collective experiences of that particular community. It is in this context that Kallen Pokkudan’s *Kandalk kadukalk kidayile Ente Jeevitham* (*My Life Amidst the Mangroves*) is analysed here. The study takes a two-pronged approach towards the subject. Firstly, this study looks at the emergence of a renewed socio-literary consciousness, which emerged after the Muthanga struggle of 2002, which resulted in a renewed interest in the life narratives of marginalized communities within Kerala. Secondly, the study posits that while Malayalam literature has a dearth of auto-ethnographies, marginalized autobiographies of the post-Muthanga phase are at once, an expression of the individual’s life, and also the recording, response, and celebration of his/her community’s struggles against a*

*discriminatory system. Therefore, Kallen Pokkudan’s *Kandalk kadukalk kidayile Ente Jeevitham* can be taken as an activist’s auto-ethnographical writing that documents the fragmented lived experiences of the Dalit community in Kerala.*

Keywords: Autoethnography, Marginalized Writings, Print Imagination, Representation

Introduction

Auto-ethnography as a postmodern social research method and also an exercise to record one’s communal life, essentially subverts traditional social science’s emphasis on generalizable truths written in a third person voice. It is a reflexive take on lived experiences that are situated in the present and remain fragmented, supplanting the positivist notions of objectivity and academic neutrality. It recognizes the postmodern narrative that it is impossible to escape the language game. Instead, as a response to the crises of representation and legitimization, one must engage in creative language practices such as the use of a subjective personal narrative.

“Critical auto-ethnographies critique harmful, dominant narratives, which often go unnoticed because of their mundanity and/or lack of acknowledgement. Critical

Auto-ethnographers fervently seek social justice” (Allen 74). Auto-ethnographers reclaim their voices as opposed to the ‘scientific’ ethnographic writings that are often “esoteric, to embrace and engage their fallible bodies as they listen to themselves, others, pasts, and presents” (Allen 74). As an attempt to break free of the objectivistic norms of conducting studies, Autoethnographies celebrate the multiplicity and polyphony of these narratives, while giving space to hitherto unheard voices and expressions.

Social justice is identified by Sally Denshire as a common trope of auto-ethnographies. “While auto-ethnography contains elements of autobiography, it goes beyond the writing of selves” (2). Brodkey claims that “Autoethnography invites writers to see themselves and everyone else as human subjects constructed in a tangle of cultural, social and historical situations and relations in contact zones” (29). While traditionally auto-ethnography has been a purely social science exercise rooted in the post-modern turn that the discipline took, the concept can be adapted to explain the practice of writing autobiographies. Autoethnography therefore can be seen as an expositional tool to expose one’s past in relation to the caste and cultural identity of an individual. As racial tensions and its complexities can be explored through auto-ethnographic writings by activists, especially in the African-American and Aboriginal context, the same can be applied to engage with the nuanced modes of functioning of caste within individuals as well as their societies.

The Dalit/Adivasi Turn

Dalit autobiographies, even while being popular throughout India, did not appear very often in Malayalam until the break of the new millennium. The dearth was supplanted by the publication of Kallen Pokkudan’s *Kandalkkadukalkkidayile Ente Jeevitham* (2002) and CK Janu’s collaborative autobiography *Janu: C.K. Januvinte Atmakadha* (2003). As argued by Ranjith Thankappan, with the publication of these texts, Malayalam literature took a “Dalit/Adivasi turn” (195).

This socio-literary turn within the society, stems from a larger awakening of a social awareness with regard to marginalized politics. ‘Kerala model of development’ hailed as “a schoolhouse for the rich world as for the poor” had masked the socio-cultural inequalities that divided the society on the thresholds of caste (McKibben 123). This was particularly so with regard to the unequal distribution of land and natural resources amongst the dalits and adivasis. While there were constant demands for a just distribution of land among the Adivasis since the formation of the state of Kerala in 1957, the limiting of the Land redistribution policy of the state to agrarian lands and not to plantation land - which were located near and around Adivasi settlements - had largely kept the Adivasis landless. It was after almost half a century long struggle, Adivasi GothraMaha Sabha (AGMS) decided to take over the Wildlife sanctuary in Wayanadu and declare it their own. “It was on January 4, 2003, that the Adivasi GothraMaha Sabha... entered the deforested portions of Muthanga and its vast eucalyptus plantations that have been successfully passed off as forest by a shrewd state and forest department”(Bijoy, C R, Raman, 1975).

The Muthanga struggle, while remaining a failure in terms of having their demands accepted by the state, was groundbreaking in terms of being a clarion call to challenge the claims that Kerala Model of economic development and social justice is inclusive and egalitarian. It further drew the attention of the public sphere who saw the police action against the Adivasi protestors as brutal. Many studies and writings were published, books were written, its leaders received wider attention, and public sensitivity arose positively towards the general state of the marginalized in Kerala.

At the same time, the incident triggered an awakening of the marginalized consciousness, which resulted in giving an impetus to later struggles. The years after Chengara saw the rise of several people’s struggles in places such as Plachimada, led by women from the marginalized communities themselves, such as C.K. Janu, Mayilamma, SeleenaPrakkanam et.al. In the

years that proceeded, all of these women have had their lives written by collaborators and published by leading publishing houses. These works were received well by the Malayalam reading public and were discussed and studied academically. They have further been readily translated into English.

While the writer-activists might not have thought of their life writing as auto-ethnographical, Pokkudan seems to deal with the question of his caste identity as the root of his personal identity and hence asks whether a Pulaya can have a biography. As it lacks the established narrative structure and narrative devices, Pokkudan's text seems to be just as much a conversation, a performance of sorts, leaving aside the social scientific narratorial expectations and signals "a break from objectivistic models of knowledge and an experimental journey into literary forms of expression, as an epistemological statement" (Iake&Decesare 202).

Auto-ethnography and Communal Representation

Auto-ethnography as a genre has been explained as a multifaceted, polyphonic entity, which is difficult to define or pigeonhole as "it has been argued that there are as many ways to do auto-ethnography as there are auto-ethnographies" (Bolen 75). Auto-ethnographies essentially present shards of memory interlaced with communal experiences. They also work as recordings of the communal and social identity to which the author belongs. The autobiography thus becomes an ethnographic record of one's identity, its nuances and marginality. Life Writing defies all norms of the genre and deconstructs the established biographic, historiographic and ethnographic norms.

"Auto-ethnography is an autobiographical genre of ethnography that emphasizes the lived experiences of researchers to access culture as communicative accomplishment" (Bolen 73). Bolen provides an overview of auto-ethnography as a postmodern social research that subverts traditional social science's emphasis on truths that can be generalized when

written in a third person independent voice to preserve objectivity and neutrality. It is considered as an essentially postmodernist process which presents the varied, fragmental and temporal representations of one's self and others in the culture and society. While the ethical question of providing representations of the experiences of the other may be raised, the texts however remain as a source of communal or shared identity than that of an individual and is accepted as a means to passionately pursue social justice. It further critiques the often neglected, dominant narratives and hegemonic practices, be it linguistic, ethничal, or cultural through its reflexive takes on past experiences, as evidenced by Pokkudan's criticism of religion and communism.

'Personal as Communal'

An autobiography becomes an ethnographic record of one's identity, its nuances and marginality. As a form of life writing, it defies all established patterns of the genre and deconstructs the established biographic, historiographic and ethnographic norms. Auto-ethnography, in its most expressive form, is a political tool that occupies the space denied to the marginalized in the mainstream histories and political epistemologies. It asks questions pertinent to the process of marginalization itself. It is in this regard that KallenPokkudan raises the question, "Can a Pulaya have a Biography? What Biography! When everyone else pass away, what is to be said of certain lives that merely perish, some might ask" (Pokkudan& Madayi32).

In the text, Pokkudan is at once an individual who fights against the social and political injustices on his own and a representative voice of a largely denigrated community when he asks whether marginalized lives will ever have scope in the annals of mainstream history. The pages that come after this questioning are in itself the answer to the query. Auto-ethnobiographies that record the lives of the community are subject to this exclusion themselves. Curiously, these words echo the voice of PoykayilSreekumara Guru, a Dalit social reformer during the nineteenth century who famously

said, “Not a letter is seen on my race, while I can see many annals of others” (Appachen 14). The space, which was denied thus, to the marginalized communities, their tales, folk songs, mores and customs find space in these texts. These expressions that fail to find space in the mainstream imagination, are recorded here.

Many intricacies that form the individual and the self in a typical autobiography seem to be suspended in Pokkudan’s text. Any necessity of continuity or consequential self building does not seem to come within the ambit of the text. Instead of it being an attempt at an exploration of the self and its development, it works as a recording of his community’s life. The text does not work to form a tapestry of Pokkudan as any conventional autobiography would. Pokkudan stations himself as the reminiscing narrator of a shared experience. The authorial voice plays the role of a documenter of common experiences than as Pokkudan himself.

The narrator eschews all opportunities to present his life story and chooses to present a discontinuous and hence fragmented script of a marginalized community estranged from the mainstream by socio-cultural traditions, ideologies, public institutions and even writing traditions. As the miserable experiences of an individual can be attributed to one’s shared caste identity, Pokkudan has portrayed himself differently, as a communal caste being, an identity that will inevitably be pigeonholed by the public sphere.

As Udayakumar explains in the case of the autobiographies of Kamala Das, this autobiography too does not showcase either the invention or the testimony of a self, nor does it follow the narrative pattern of a story which is often a feature of autobiographies (As qtd. in Sreekumar 76). Even the use of a plural collective pronoun “njangal” (Malayalam equivalent of “we”) instead of the singular “Njan” (I) points to the lack of a singular authorial self within Pokkudan’s text. The self-conception or self-explication as seen in other autobiographies does not seem to be a goal of the author. Pokkudan, the narrator and the subject

interweave the past and the present of his community as his own, while his own experiences are equated to that of the experiences of the community. The past sticks to the text as an attachment that combines experience and trauma, which constantly remind the reader of how things were and how things came to be.

Throughout the text, Pokkudan raises questions on how literary visibility is directly proportional to socio-political capital and challenge the reproduction of social inequalities within print culture and dominant public imagination. Throwing a question towards the audience, on whether the marginalized can write of their lives, Pokkudan poignantly critiques even the language which differentiates between the deaths of a marginalized and an elite. As earlier writers, especially those belonging to the Indian progressive movements, understood caste solely on economic grounds, the matter of representation was understood solely as an economic inability and not as an act of collective social discrimination. In this sense, Pokkudan’s autobiography is a pathbreaking text that “offers a critique of the institution of publishing, which functions as a cultural site that reinforces the exclusion of Dalits in the mainstream history and print culture” (Thankappan 205)

At the thresholds of personal and collective memories, Pokkudan engages both with the established systems of power and with his own personal identity. The collective memory of pain and discrimination engages critically with the former as no individual can do so alone, and at the same time, a variegated personal identity is developed as a paradigm for a prospective, inclusive envisioning of print imaginations

Conclusion

The text *Life Amidst the Mangroves* was recanted and shunned by Pokkudan later, criticizing certain editorial interferences and choices, to publish *My Life* (2010) in collaboration with his son, Sreejith Paithalen, incorporating his “political experiences full of agony” which were not a part of the first autobiography

(Ajaykumar; Pokkudan 7). At the same time, the first autobiography, even while taking into account its shortcomings and flaws, was perhaps the first step in presenting a counterhegemony towards the mainstream understanding of the marginalized lives. As a critical insider, Pokkudan was able to transcend the personal to study and present the communal authentically to a wider audience that hitherto remained oblivious to certain social experiences. It was a political step in countering the established print culture within Malayalam and paving way for a wave of writings from the marginalized communities as well as a change in political vision which led to an added visibility to marginalized political thinkers and writers. The times changed, just as Pokkudan had stated at the beginning of his revised autobiography, “it’s the problem of the zeitgeist. It shall change. Just that I wont be around for it” (7).

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Re-contextualization and Representation of Folk Art in Advertising

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Abstract:

Although art and advertising are ideologically distant apart, yet they share a close and entwined relationship. Art imitates life and advertising imitates art to persuade. Advertising connects diverse and disconnected pieces of art to create semantic meaning in a message. The magic of an image with dots and lines can create powerful impact in an advertising message with a potential to influence people. The idea of appropriation of art or elements of art have been in practice for a long time. Advertising campaigns often re-contextualise popular imageries to influence people. The re-contextualization and representation of art, culture, motifs, patterns and designs of painting often help communicating advertising message effectively and lucidly. The current study focuses on investigating the appropriation of cultural characteristics and elements of folk-art and paintings to re-contextualise the creative expression of artists to communicate advertising messages. The study makes a qualitative analysis of 'GE Works' - the advertising campaign of General Electric (GE) launched a decade ago, which recontextualised and represented four distinct and colourful Indian folk-art forms.

Keywords: Appropriation, Recontextualization,

Representation, Folk-art and Painting, Advertising.

Introduction

Art and advertising, although separated by ideological notions, share a close and intertwined relationship. Art is a commentary presented to be appreciated for its beauty or emotional power (Oxford University Press, n.d.) and advertising persuades, influences and convinces the individual for something. If art imitates life, advertising imitates art to persuade and influence people. Art creates emotional response in audience. Advertising puts together the diverse and disconnected pieces of art to create semantic meaning in a message. Art, as integral part of advertising, acts as an inspiration. It also helps in the execution of the persuasion process through advertisements. Harnessing the influence of various forms of art, advertising can unite people together in thoughts and passions. But unlike art, advertising is not meant to be open to interpretation; it is intended to have a clear message that generates a specific outcome (Art in the age of advertising, n.d.). There are several examples of advertising campaigns that blend with folk performing art. However, the instances of advertising messages conceived and prepared with appropriation, re-contextualization and representation with folk paintings are minimal.

Until the 20th century, when fine art closed the gap between art and advertising, the relationship between

art and advertising was often portrayed as antagonistic and even exploitative. With the passing of time, the images of dot, lines and hues of paintings have caused magic through advertisement. While the words can act just as poetry or a musical lyric that pulls at our heartstrings, the images hit us instantaneously before we even have a chance to process the strategic prose written on any ad (Margolin, 2018).

The concept and practice of art in advertising is often viewed as contradicting and opposing each other. But in reality, both can co-exist and mutually benefit each other. They contribute to the formation of attitudes, the acquisition of knowledge, and the adoption of aesthetic values and beliefs (Duncum, 2002). Although the subject of art and advertising are two different worlds, the creative and marketing strategists have successfully integrated them together for commercial gains and benefits.

Advertising, being a means of visual communication, can present a message in explicit manner. While persuading and influencing people, advertisement often transfers the value associated with creative manifestation of painting to the advertising message of product or service. In contemporary culture, advertisements make up some of the public's most salient visual experiences (Goldman & Papson, 1996).

Scholarly discussions on the subject of collaboration between advertising and art has been limited in the past. One of the possible reasons could be due to the fact that both have distinctly different audience. Art critics have contended that, in comparison with fine art, advertising is ephemeral further, that featuring works of art in a commercial context spoils the pure nature of art (Efrat, 1976).

In regards to the role of an advertisement creating a new semantic meaning, the disconnection between the advertised product or service and the visual illustration is made up by audience's knowledge and beforehand or else the advertisement may fail to convey the intended message.

The practice of the appropriation of art in advertising is nothing new. There are ample examples of creative works of advertising campaigns being borrowed or appropriated from previously existing images or

artwork. The term 'appropriation' denotes usually the practice of using pre-existing objects or images in an artwork without altering the originals. Appropriation refers to the act of borrowing or reusing existing elements within a new work (Rowe, 2011). The act of 'appropriation of art' includes borrowing imagery or reusing elements of image in new way. The deliberate 'borrowing' of an image or elements of an image and moulding it for a new context is a process of 're-contextualization'. Several post-modern artists remarked borrowing of existing imagery or elements of imagery lead to appropriating and re-contextualising the original imagery or its elements. They believe that the act of appropriation allows viewers to renegotiate the meaning of the original more appropriate, timely or relevant to current framework. A strategy that has been used by artists for millennia, it took on new significance in the mid-20th century with the rise of consumerism and the proliferation of images through mass media outlets from magazines to television (MoMA Learning, n.d.)

The art in the advertising makes sense only when audience draws some meaning from the joining of the two. Hence, to make a successful advertisement with the use of art, marketing strategists often apply creative skills and techniques for the right and meaningful appropriation of art.

Marcel Duchamp, a renowned French-American painter, sculptor and writer, broke the boundaries between works of art and objects of everyday life. His irreverence for conventional aesthetic standards led him to devise his famous 'ready-mades' and heralded an artistic revolution (Lebel, 2019). He theoretically legitimised the common art practice of appropriation that was approved later by post-modern theory of cultural studies. "Appropriation can only be understood as a set of historical reactions to the determining events of social, industrial, and political modernity; that its shadow is cast well beyond Duchamp and the ready-made...." (Welchman, 2001) Duchamp's theory of 'readymade' is more than just picking anything random. He described every object that he liked with his theory of 'readymade'. He said

that he did deliberately choose ordinary, functional and ‘rather dull’ objects. He claimed to have picked ordinary objects“.....based on a reaction of visual indifference, with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste”. (Duchamp as quoted in The Art of Assemblage: A Symposium, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, October 19, 1961).

The appropriation of art for advertising has a history of several success stories. The advertisers and marketers use appropriated imagery to make a connection with audiences (McCartney, 2020). The act of appropriating imagery or elements of an image for advertising message helps the advertiser to provide audience a reference. The appropriation of fine art in advertisement in particular can have an effective advantage in selling the product for the company through the use of the prestige effect if the artwork is instantaneously recognizable and the product being sold has an understandable connection to the art piece (Garcia, n.d.)

The marketing strategist, designer and advertiser want the viewers to identify the image or image elements they borrowed. The advertiser expects that the viewers will remember the original image or the elements of the image to the new context as portrayed in the advertisement. It can be said that today advertisers look to the art world as a constant reference just like they did in the past, when it was a common practice in the advertising industry to commission recognized artists for the creation of pieces (Walzer, 2010). It supports people to understand the advertising message with ease.

Cultural appropriation-the adoption of an element or elements of a culture, has been part of recontextualisation or reappropriation of art for preparing creatives in advertising. The concept and practice of cultural appropriation is quite diverse. It involves adopting cultural products of one culture by another. This form of appropriation is related to stylistic appropriation of art. Sometimes artists are influenced by the art of a culture other than their own without

creating works in the same style (Young and Brunk, 2012).

The cultural appropriations of motif, pattern or design of painting are often visible in advertising. However, the folk paintings featuring in Indian advertising campaigns are minimal. The soft drink giant Coke in its ‘Come home on Deepawali’ experimented with the re-contextualization and representation of ‘Warli’ art for its highly visible campaign in 2010. The advertising campaign ‘GE Works’ of General Electric (GE), conceived and prepared by advertising agency BBDO, delivered its messages with a few Indian folk paintings in 2012.

This research paper makes an attempt to study the representation and re-contextualization of traditional Indian folk paintings to convey the selling idea of the advertising message. The objectives of the paper include the following:

- (a) To understand the appropriation of cultural and design elements of folk paintings in advertisement.
- (b) To study the re-contextualization of folk art to communicate the advertising message.
- (c) To examine the relationship between traditional folk painting and advertising message.

‘GE Works’ - the advertising campaign of General Electric (GE) launched nearly a decade ago while blending advertising message with Indian folk art, has been chosen to meet the objectives of the present study.

The technique of ‘purposive sampling’ has been selected for the study. The study is based on qualitative analysis of the advertising campaign of General Electric (GE) launched a decade ago, which was blended with four distinct and colourful Indian folk-art forms. With ‘GE Works’ as a case, the study attempts to analyse appropriation of culture, tradition and elements of folk paintings such subject, object, colour, motif, pattern, design, etc. to re-contextualise the Indian folk art to communicate the advertising messages.

GE Works campaign

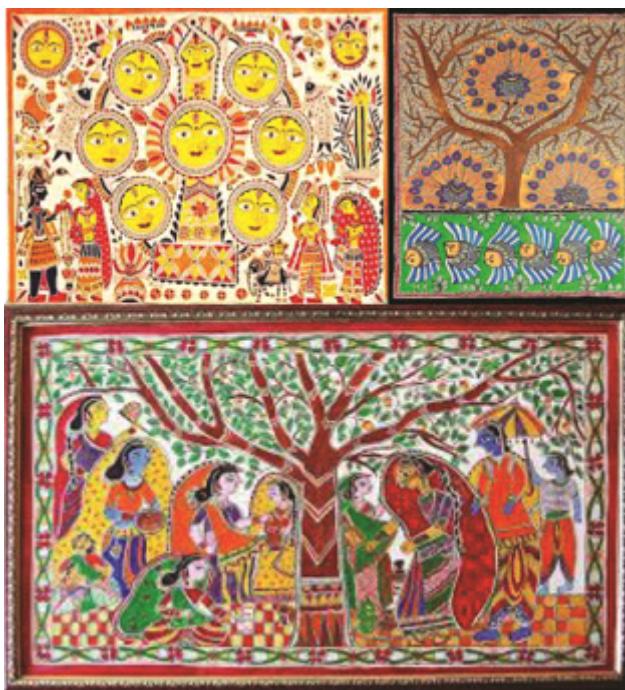


Fig:1

Assorted Madhubani art

Source: pinterest.com, en.wikipedia.org & culturalindia.net

General Electric (GE), an American multinational conglomerate incorporated in New York City, offers services and manufacture products in diverse sectors. The majority of GE's businesses namely aircraft engines, broadcasting, capital services, lighting, health care, industrial systems, plastics, power systems and transportation systems, have strong presence in India. Despite GE's century old legacy in India, its enduring presence and efforts to touch the hearts of millions of Indians with their works are less known to majority of the Indians.

The global positioning of 'GE Works' for the brand was first conceived and launched in the United States to showcase how the technology and employees of the company work in tandem to impact the lives of people, customers, communities and the world in positive ways. In fact, India was the first country after

the US, where the campaign of 'GE Works' was launched, which reflects the importance of Indian market for the company. As a part of General Electric's worldwide campaign 'GE Works', it conceived and launched a campaign in India in association with Indian office of World's leading advertising agency Batten, Barton, Durtine & Osborn (BBDO). GE's focus on developing localised products and solutions was the key behind co-creating the brand's message using Indian folk art for the campaign.

The core concept of the campaign was to depict GE's contribution to 'change' the ecosystem. The main objective of the campaign was to help craft in print advertisement the different ways that GE has brought changes in the lives of Indians. The agency prepared eye captivating campaign of 'change' in ecosystem while reconceptualising, re-contextualising and representing the idea with traditional Indian folk paintings- Patchwork art, Saura painting, Madhubani painting and Kalamkari painting. Each form of these painting was aligned to depict the four major GE's business attributes- 'Curing, Moving, Powering and Building' to improve the quality of life in the country.

Madhubani art and GE Works

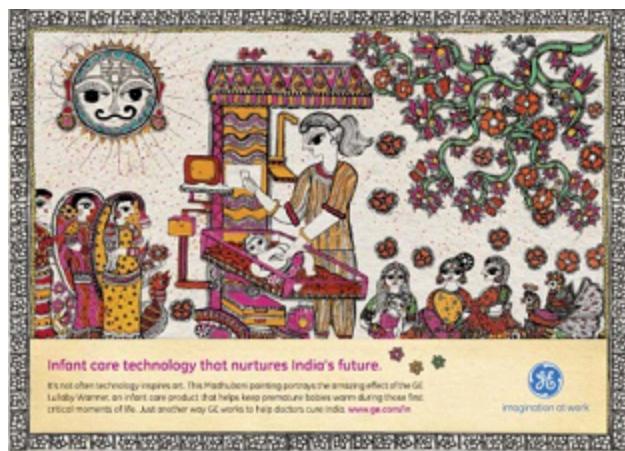


Fig:2

Madhubani painting in GE Works

Madhubani painting, also known as Mithila painting, is a traditional folk painting of Mithila region of Bihar. The artists of the painting use fingers, twigs, brushes,

nib-pens and matchsticks with natural dyes and pigments for colourful and creative expression of lives during birth or marriage and festivals such as Holi, Diwali, Kali Puja, Durga Puja, Upanayana, etc.

In the campaign of GE Works, the effort of the multinational giant to break down the barriers of cost, quality and access to healthcare and the invention to make life healthier, safe and more productive was re-contextualised by the cultural expressions and elements of Madhubani paintings. The painting depicts how GE healthcare has been working dedicatedly towards saving the lives of millions of new born babies through technologies like Lullaby Warmer. The artwork reflects how Lullaby Warmer help to keep premature babies warm during few initial critical moments of life.



Fig:3

Assorted Saura art

Source: ribesindia.com, flipkart.com & artsoftheearthindia.in

Like the traditional Madhubani painting, which is painted to decorate the freshly plastered mud walls and floors of huts, the artwork of the campaign re-contextualises the cultural and creative elements of the painting to convey the message of GE's efforts towards better healthcare for mankind. While representation of the core idea of 'Curing', the traditional geometrical shape and patterns such as triangle, squares and circles with motifs of flowers, birds, human, sun, tree and leaves were made the part of the painting used for GE print campaign. The colours of traditional Madhubani painting - pink, yellow, green, lemon, blue, black and deep red; and with the characteristic feature of leaving no space empty and blank, helped in relating the idea of the advertising campaign with the folk painting of Bihar. The headline and body copy have been presented with traditional and distinctive colours of Madhubani painting to enhance the context and concept.

Saura art and GE Works

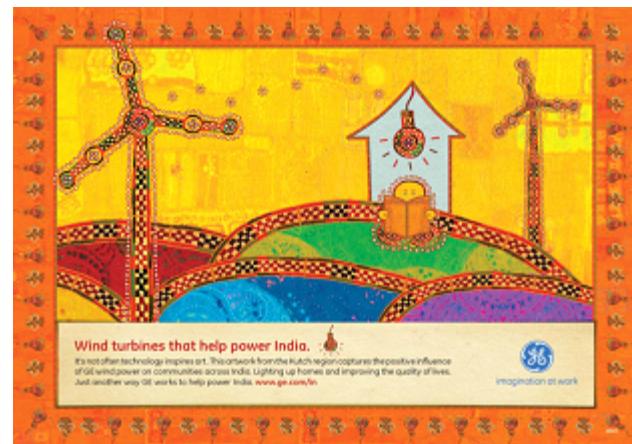


Fig:4

Saura painting in GE Works

The Saura painting, a tribal painting associated with the culture of Sauda tribes of Odisha, has religious significance. The paintings of the tribe have lot of similarities with Warli tribal paintings of Maharashtra. Even though, both Warli and Saura painters use geometrical shapes, they differ in their style and treatment of subjects. These paintings of Sauda tribes

usually made on walls, traditionally known as *italons* or *ikons* (or *ekons*) are dedicated to the main deity of the tribe called *Idital* (also *edithal*).



Fig:5

Assorted Patchwork art

Source: pinterest.com delhievents.com thesoftcopy.in

The global giant GE chose these paintings, based on the tribal folklore and sacred subjects to showcase the GE90-115B engine fitted to an aircraft. The features such as safe, comfortable and smooth travel experience and efficient transport facility of the GE's aircraft engine have been appropriated with cultural and artistic elements of Saura painting to present GE's core idea of 'Moving.' The advertisement with facets of happy lives of people in natural surroundings, the plane and motifs filled with white colours and sporadic use of yellow colours is a beautiful example of appropriation of art, motif, culture for the advertising message. The text in the form of headline and body copy in the distinctive shades of Saura painting help in re-contextualization of the culture of the tribe to communicate the advertising message.

Patchwork art and GE Works



Fig:7

Assorted Kalamkari art

Source: pixels.com, alibaba.com & wovensouls.com

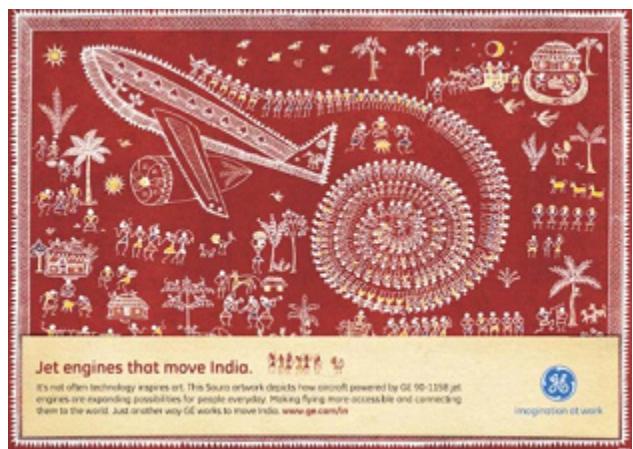


Fig:6

Patchwork art painting in GE Works

GE's idea of 'Powering' is represented with Patchwork art or 'pieced work'. This is a popular Indian artwork usually made with repeating patterns and built up with different shape of fabric or colours. Probably, this art form is derived from stitching blanket or quilt using small pieces of cloth. The Lambadi tribe or the Banjara tribe of Andhra, Telangana and Karnataka, who are known as nomadic tribe, who may have originated from Afghanistan or Marwar region of Rajasthan, are known for their beautiful patchwork of sewing blanket or painting with patterns of patchwork. With the help of the carefully measured and cut pieces in geometrical shapes, GE's core idea of 'Powering' is depicted with traditional patchwork of India. GE's expertise in designing and building wind turbines as reflected through contextualisation of the elements of the artwork articulated the advertising message with precision. In fact, the small story of lighting a bulb in a remote village that helps a little girl study in her house as depicted with the characteristic colours, fabric shapes and patterns of Patchwork help in re-contextualization of the traditional art to communicate the core idea of GE's campaign. The headline and body copy additionally help to highlight the advertising message.

Kalamkari art and GE Works

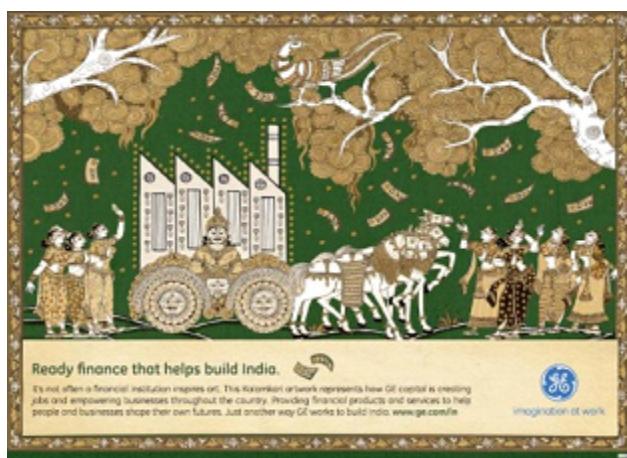


Fig:8

Kalamkari art in GE's campaign

The term Kalamkari consists of two words - 'kalam'

and 'kari', where 'kalam' means pen and 'kari' refers to craftsmanship. The painters of Kalamkari art create magic by narrating the legendary tales inspired from the folklore, scriptures and sacred texts with pen and natural colours. This traditional style of painting is believed to be born out of the tradition of storytelling. The stories and characters of epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata get special importance in Kalamkari art. This folk art of nearly 3000 years old has originated from Machilipatnam and Chittor of Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

General Electric (GE) re-contextualised the traditional art of pen and natural dyes to communicate the core idea of 'Building'. The colours, motifs and design patterns of a traditional Kalamkari painting smoothly appropriate the visual depiction of GE's efforts to build financial services, creating jobs and empowering business through GE Capital. The presentation of traditional motifs-peacocks, trees, flowers, paisleys, horses, men and women in ancient outfits with precision and selection of colours help in re-contextualising and representing the advertising message with the paintings' basic aesthetic essence. The painting with a group of women welcoming a king on chariot, currency notes flying on air, peacock on tree, chimney of industry, buildings, etc. in green, black and golden yellow colour has a blend of traditional essence with modernity. The text message-headline and body copy effectively explains the visual message in short.

The analysis and interpretation of the 'GE Works' paintings, with core ideas of 'GE Works' i.e. 'Curing', 'Moving', 'Powering' and 'Building' suggest that the campaign was a significant milestone in Indian advertising history for its courageous attempt to recontextualise and represent folk paintings to communicate the message of the campaign successfully.

Conclusion

The concept and practice of the appropriation of folk art in advertising have not been tried much in India. However, the success of 'GE Works' campaign

prepared with recontextualisation of Indian folk art and paintings establishes the fact that appropriation of folk art can penetrate through the emotional chords of people with ease.

The cultural appropriation of imageries, subjects, characters, narratives, objects, motifs, patterns, colours of Indian folk paintings in ‘GE Works’ made the campaign more of an array of beautiful traditional folk paintings than advertisements. The case study and analysis of GE campaign suggest that basic essence of the folk-art and paintings in the series of print advertisements of the multinational company helped to communicate its contributions to the betterment of the lives of Indians and the growth of the country effectively.

The present study of recontextualisation and representation of folk-art carried out in the light of ‘GE Works’ campaign enabled to establish the fact that appropriation of folk art can communicate advertising message with success if strategically integrated. The factors like popularity of the art form, prevalent narratives, characteristic colours, characters, motifs, pattern and design appropriated for the advertisement play crucial roles in the success of such attempts.

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Art Forms as Narrative of Resistance: A Glance at the Art Forms of Mavilan Tribe

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Abstract:

This paper attempts to delve into the art forms of the Mavilan tribe of the Kannur and Kasaragod districts of Kerala. The art forms focused in the paper include oral songs, theyyam and mangalamkali. The paper, based on ethnographic research, examines the efforts of the tribe to cope with the agricultural slavery that they were subjected to in the past and their voice of resistance against power and oppression. The songs they sang while they worked in the land of the landlord; theyyam, the ritual dance they performed annually; and mangalamkali, their nuptial dance manifest their different ways of resistance to lack of freedom and forceful change of their life style. The song of 'Muthukuttinayar thampuran' depicts how the tribe attempts to voice out their protest against the oppressive agricultural slavery. Similarly, it becomes a counter narrative when the oppressor becomes a devotee of the oppressed as the oppressed is metamorphosed into a deity in the form of theyyam. This role reversal aids in levelling the division based on the caste system and acts as a mode of resistance. The songs sung in the aniyara (make shift pandal erected for the purpose of theyyam) reinforce equality of all humans. The steps of mangalamkali reveal how the tribe silently tries to cope with the sexual advancement of the landlord as they beat themselves while dancing even on a happy occasion like wedding. These narratives of resistance reveal the need and longing of the tribe to construct an alternate egalitarian

world.

Keywords: Resistance, Art forms, Narratives, Theyyam, Mangalamkali

Art forms of Mavilan tribe represent the lived experiences of its people at various stages of their trajectory as a group. Against the backdrop of their agricultural slavery and the saga of sufferings, these art forms are viewed as means to express their resistance. The art forms discussed in this paper mainly focus on the tribe's oral songs, *theyyam*¹ and *mangalamkali*². These art forms manifest their histories of resistance to their lack of freedom and changed life style. This paper attempts to explore these narratives of resistance.

This paper is based on ethnographic research. Fieldwork was conducted in the hamlets of Mavilan tribe in both Kannur and Kasaragod districts during the period between 2011 and 2018. The tradition bearers namely, the elderly people of the tribe were the main informants of the study. Having built rapport with them the author listened to their ethnographic narrations of recalling and re-counting their lived experiences. The oral songs videotaped during the interactions and interviews were transcribed and reverted to the informants to clarify the unclear phrases and expressions. Further discussions and interviews with the experts and reference to secondary materials augmented the comprehensive view of the art forms. Observation, interviews, conversations, field notes, videography and reference to secondary sources are the tools employed to study the art forms *theyyam* and *mangalamkali*. *Mangalamkali* was observed

both in the formal and informal set up. Similarly, *theyyam* and the related rituals were observed and studied. At the vicinity of *theyyam* performance during the intervals, the author held conversations with the devotees to gather further data. An insider view is employed in analysing and interpreting the text. The author has translated the transcribed text employed in this paper from Malayalam to English.

The people of Mavilan tribe inhabit Kannur and Kasaragod districts of North Kerala. According to the census of the year 2011, their total population was 30,867 of whom 14,972 were males and 15,895 females. They were hunter-gatherers. During the course of time, the *janmi*³ encroached their habitats, coercing them to leave their traditional way of life and employing them as agricultural labourers. The *janmi* began to exploit the tribe and even tortured the members mentally and physically. He took charge of the tribe in the new social set-up. The people of the tribe were not entitled to any rights or privileges. They were not justly paid for their hard labour. The *janmi* controlled their lives as their "caretaker." He even targeted the young virgins of the tribe for his sexual pleasure. The community had to accommodate with the new system and be subservient, as they could not resist the absolute power and authority of the *janmi*. He became their *thampuran*⁴ as they were the *adiyan*⁵. It meant their tragic fall from freedom to slavery. Due to these unfortunate circumstances, they remain backward even after many decades of freedom from the clutches of *janmittam*⁶.

The art forms of the tribe functioned as narratives of resistance in this backdrop. Suzanne McKenzie-Mohr and Michelle N Lafrance define narrative resistance as "a concept that attends to power and oppression," and that which "provides a platform for tangible applications to support people's efforts to resist harmful storyings of their lives"(190). The sufferings of the members of Mavilan tribe evolved as narrative of resistance as well as counter narratives. Molly Andrews identifies counter narratives as "the stories which people tell and live which offer resistance, either implicitly or explicitly, to dominant cultural narratives" (1). Such counter narratives brought to light the

dominant cultural narrative of people belonging to the high caste that treated the tribe as untouchables. Therefore, the art forms of the tribe can be termed as "narrative acts of insubordination" (Lindemann⁸) that address those "culturally-rooted aspects of one's *history* that have not yet become part of one's *story*" (Freeman 298). In the process of their articulation, these narratives enable them to infuse "one's history with new meaning, complexity, and depth"(290) and to heal the scars of the past. The narrative resistance thus aid in constructing "another space to revise hierarchical discourse, to give voice to those without power to shape perception or invent alternative worlds" (Bona 2).

The narratives of resistance of Mavilan tribe attempt to bridge the gap between the oppressor and the oppressed. Their art forms question the fundamental basis of the discrimination that they faced/ face and their unequal status. The dehumanising experiences undermined their dignity. The art forms represent their struggles to re-establish an egalitarian society. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' report of high-level expert meeting, Vienna, 29-30 May 2017 explores the integral relationship between human rights and arts:

Much of the human rights agenda is directed at bridging attitudinal disparities, such as prejudices based on race, religion, gender, age, nationality, culture and identity. Art can help to overcome those barriers, by bringing a counter-discourse, contesting privileged narratives and perspectives. ... The arts dignify human experience by giving voice to thoughts and feelings, which trigger recognition of one's own humanity....(6)

The art forms of Mavilan tribe attempt to re-establish their dignity by raising their voice even in the controlled circumstances of oppression. The oral songs of the tribe was a means to voice out their right to equality and justice. Kakkoppuram Kunhiraman recounts that tribesmen had to continue working without any respite until the *janmi* arrived to evaluate the day's work. Therefore, until the *janmi* came to supervise, they sang songs related to him. Naturally, the tribe was expected

to sing his praises. However, in his absence they attempted to voice out their resistance to the system of agricultural slavery. The exhausted workers sang derogatory songs mocking his shrewdness and immoral ways. These pejorative songs provided them a platform to vent their pent up emotions. Through the songs, they satirized the *janmi* and the oppressive agricultural slavery.

The excerpt that follows is an instance of the satire of the social reality of *janmittam*:

*Onningu kekkenam paniyum
panikkaaru, O, workers kindly listen,
Nammude thampuran
Our thampuran
Ezhunnalli varunnantu.
Is solemnly arriving.
Kuthithazhanha vadiyeduthu,
With the worn out stick,
thantu kuzhinha kudayode,
And old umbrella,*

.....
.....

*Odinha kudayeduthu,
With the broken umbrella
poonu noolu cherippode.
Sacred thread and sandals.
Velere moothino kattottum illayo.
The sun is too hot and even no breeze.
Vayattil kudalilla,
No intestine in the stomach,
vaayil vellolla.
And in the mouth no water.*

(Sung by Kakkopuram Kunhiraman)

The text above juxtaposes the *janmi* and his workers. The miserly and unmerciful *janmi* commodifies the tribe while they are generous in offering their skills to cultivate his land. It is to be noted that the *janmi* is associated with the cultural components like the staff and sacred thread which are symbols of power and oppression while the tribesman are associated with their emaciated body and natural elements like breeze. It is evident that while the *janmi* is comfortable, the tribesmen cannot withstand the hunger and heat. The staff is a symbol of authority (Pattanaik 25). By

projecting the worn out staff of the *janmi*, the tribe is referring to the degenerated social system of intra-species discrimination based on birth. The text represents two worldviews as that of the ruler and the ruled. Though the tribe was not able to confront the unjust social system, songs of these types obviously served as a means of their protest as well as resistance and projected their hope for an alternate egalitarian society.

The following extract from the oral song “*Kaitharitaravaradu*” is another instance of the voice of resistance:

*Onnundu kelku nambyare
Please listen, Nambyar
Kaithari Nambyare,
Kaithari Nambyar,
Thodalum theendalam Untouchability and
unapproachability
Ningakkille nambyare?
Don't you, Nambyar, observe?
Pinnengana nambyare
How can then, Nambyar
Nhanaduthu varunnu?
I come near to you?
Annaram parayathundu
Then says
Kaithari Nambyar,
Kaithari Nambyar,
Karincholakkani penninu
Let Karincholakkanni girl
Theppum kulippottum venda.
Go barren.
Annaram parayathundu
Then says
Karincholakkani,
Karincholakkani,
Nammude thampuratti
Our goddess
Aladabhagavathi,
Alada Bhagavathi,
Nercha palathum
Much nercha?
koottiyathu kollunnu.
Is offered.*

*Karincholakkanni penninu
Karincholakkanni girl
Theppum kulippum undakunnu.
Becomes fecund.*

(Sung by Kakkoppuram Kunhiraman)

The text above exposes the double standard of the licentious *janmi* who observes untouchability and unapproachability. It is a challenge to the social norms that if untouchability exists it has to be in all the aspects. By projecting their deity as their saviour to lift the curse of the disappointed *janmi*, the tribe is reversing the situation and is voicing out their integrity and dignity. Though the tribe is not able to challenge the repressing forces due to their oppressive status, the song becomes a means of resistance of the unspeakable reality. In such a precarious situation, songs of these types reinforced their moral sense and affirmed them of their self-worth.

Every event in the life of the tribe revolved around the *thampuran* and his agricultural field. It had a direct influence even on the culture of the tribe. P.M. Karichi narrates that after the marriage the bride and bridegroom had to be taken to the house of the *janmi*, who would present them with gifts. C.J. Kuttappan, a renowned folk artist, states that the brides had to be offered to the *janmi* before the couple lived together. In such circumstances, the community had to endure the collective experience of exploitation, deprivation and misery. *Mangalamkali* or their nuptial dance, must be understood in this perspective.

At the final phase of *mangalamkali*, the steps are of thrashing oneself with hand on the back with heightened intensity. With folded left hand, they strike the left side of the body while they smack the area of shoulder blade with the right hand. The onomatopoeic singing of lashing reinforces the mood of the artists to enhance their performance. The singing goes on with the instructions to kneel down and dance, to stand up and dance and so on. *Mangalamkali* culminates with the intensified action of lashing oneself. This action must be viewed as their gesture of voicing their protest against the oppressive social structure:

The steps of self-torture is the manifestation of the hapless situation of an oppressed people.

Kuttappan states that this art form of self-torture originated against the prevailing social system of sexual oppression which could not be protested. It is significant that the gesture of self-torture is intensified at the song referring to the occasion of attaining puberty. (Abraham and Alex 48)

Theyyam, another art form of the tribe, is also a visible sign of protest against the caste system. In front of the *theyyam* artist who metamorphoses into a deity, even the oppressor becomes a devotee. This role reversal aids in levelling the division based on the caste system. *Theyyam* itself is considered a form of protest and counter narrative against the prevailing caste system. Raghavan Payyanad states, “Pulayan and Mayilon [Mavilan], who are engaged in agricultural labour, are looked upon as untouchables” (47) and were excluded. Therefore, they “developed a parallel system of *theyyam* performance and rituals” (53). Hence, *theyyam* became part of their existence and a mode of resistance against discrimination. As William Sener Rusk asserts, “the human being expresses himself in art forms which objectify his experience, physical, environmental, and transcendental.” The art form, *theyyam* objectifies the intense experience of alienation and distancing that the tribe endured. It is a means to voice out their resistance. Some songs sung in the *aniyara* (make shift *pandal* where the *theyyam* performer gets ready) reinforce equality of all humans. However, they were not able to express it openly as their *janmi* also watched the performance of *theyyam*. Yet, this song can be viewed as a powerful means of resistance against the egocentric attitude of the oppressors.

From the discussion above, it is evident that the tribe is not voiceless but their voice is suppressed. These rituals therefore become a means to express their resistance. It is argued that some of the songs and dance forms of Mavilan tribe evolved from the nadir of their subhuman existence under the *janmi*. These art forms became the expressive symbol of their silent protest against the prevailing system of social injustice. Their life and art forms cannot be separated. These art forms are the narratives of resistance.

To sum up, the oral songs of the Mavilan tribe, like *mangalamkali* and *theyyam* are unique means of resistance against the social injustice and oppression meted out to the tribe as agricultural slaves of *janmi*. These art forms not only aided them in coping with the trauma of being alienated as untouchables in the past, they aid them even today in their way of protesting against the injustices of their present contemporary ‘mainstream’ society.

Notes :

1. *Theyyam* is a ritual dance and a socio cultural art form wherein the performer metamorphoses into the deity he is representing. It is a live performance of god appearing in front of the devotees. ‘*Theyyam*’ is the corrupt form of *daivam* which means god.
2. *Mangalam* means marriage. *Mangalamkali* is the dance performed as part of wedding celebrations.
3. *Janmam* is hereditary property and the privilege of the person who has absolute right over the land. *Janmi* is the one who holds the *janmam*. *Janmitham* denotes this social structure. The word *janmi* stands for the plural as well in this paper.
4. The word denotes god, lord and landlord
5. *Adiyan* is almost like a bonded slave.
6. See note 3
7. Vow to god which will be fulfilled when the prayer or wish is granted

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Literary Texts towards negotiating the Practical Problems of Life : A Model

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Abstract:

The present paper discusses the association of literature with the real-life situation with reference to an essay "Of Studies" written by English essayist Francis Bacon. Bacon's text "Of Studies" well appropriates the purpose and utility of reading, writing or other activities associated with a text in hand. The term study and the skills related with the study itself invite an understanding of reading skills, listening skills, storage skills and retrieval skills for the practical criticism of life, the problems, its conditioning and the efforts that are made to accommodate concrete solutions or optional ones for solving them.

Best practices in teaching and learning environment are the life blood of any state-of-the art academic institution. It is the power of human resources that takes the reputation of any institution to greater heights. The training of human resources in accordance with the global needs is a big challenge. Asustainable, inclusive and forward moving management of human resources can fulfil the gaps in physical resources up to a certain level. It is high time that the boundaries of traditional disciplines of knowledge should shape themselves in a new order. The patterns of 'interdisciplinarity', 'multidisciplinarity' and 'cross disciplinarity' offer potent solutions in this challenging world order .

While practicing English studies in classrooms for over two decades, I have felt the scope of negotiating the literary canons with social requirements and urgencies,

and have experimented the scope of the application of literary knowledge in social sector. It is a kind of interpretation and reading of a text from the utilitarian perspective, and hereby, I have prepared a model where the study of any text takes a journey via several steps in a channel targeting the emotional responses from its stakeholders. It goes like this- "Text- denotation - connotation - reverberation- association- application." From this point of view, my students and I read different texts of English literature towards finding the solutions of different problems. The proposed paper is an attempt at discussing this model as 'best practice' in English classroom.

Broadly speaking, when we offer any graduate or postgraduate programme in English literature in India, we have the following objectives to realise with the learners:

Developing the core and applied knowledge of English studies across the globe with special emphasis on Indian, African and Caribbean, Australian, Canadian and SAARC Literatures.

- i. Developing creative synthesis of texts, society and culture
- ii. Developing critical thinking and humanitarian values
- iii. Developing the research skills and aptitude of the students
- iv. Making the students aware of the distinct shift from Eurocentric literature to Indian literature in translation

- v. Associating and sensitising the students to society, environment, gender and social inclusion policies, social inclusion and other issues of human dignity
- vi. Proposing plans and projects that emerge out of negotiating and /or non- negotiating mass groups towards welfare of society at large
- vii. Evaluating responses out of a cultural set-up that do communicative communal practices
- viii. Reading literature in general and language used for its associated purposes towards a discrete social category or non-discrete social category
- ix. Language and literature that is pivotal in the emergence of debates and discussions for purposes of the growth of human mind

Keeping these objectives in mind, I planned to explain the association of literature with the real-life situation with reference to an essay “Of Studies” written by English essayist Francis Bacon. This essay well appropriates the purposes or utility of reading, writing or other activities involved or associated with a text in hand. The term study and the skills related with the study itself invite an understanding of reading skills, listening skills, storage skills and retrieval skills for the practical criticism of life, the problems, its conditioning and the efforts that are made to accommodate concrete solutions or optional ones for solving them. Bacon’s statement that studies serve for ornament and ability etc. comes true when we associate it with literature in the broader sense of the term. He states that, “Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best, from those that are learned.”(‘Of Studies’, 3). It is a proven fact that literature can serve many applied and creative functions. I tried to explain it to the students with a guided task. The description follows hereunder.

Task : As the first step in this experiment, I explained, the philosophy , connotations and denotation of studies to the select students of MA English, semester I (2017-18) of the Department of English and MEL, University of Lucknow. Towards giving it a concrete shape, I asked them to read Bacon’s seminal text, an essay, ‘Of Studies’ and to make a categorical presentation mentioning the uses and abuses of studies. As a collaborative work, we prepared a chart on the uses and abuses of studies. Then the participating students were asked to find out the instances from the practical life situations and to associate the findings given by Bacon appropriating them. By completing these steps, the students were almost sensitized that reading literature not only gives them theoretical knowledge, it also caters for behavioural aspects of life. They can find texts and illustrations for every emotion and context, and by a thoughtful reading they can come up with solutions to any issue and concern in the life. Since Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* was prescribed to them in their syllabus, I shared with them a case study associated with this text. I narrated to them the statement of Queen Victoria that she had got solace in Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* (next only to the *Bible*), when her husband Prince Albert was no more. We find this incidence mentioned Stephanie Forward in *British Library Newsletter*. Citing it, we find that:

Queen Victoria’s husband, Prince Albert, died in 1861. In the years following, *In Memoriam* became increasingly seen as providing a model for public behaviour during the long period of the Queen Victoria’s mourning. The queen herself kept a copy of the poem by her bedside after Albert’s death and noted in her journal entry for Sunday 5 January 1862 that she was ‘Much soothed and pleased with Tennyson’s *In Memoriam*. Only those who have suffered as I do can understand these beautiful poems. (Forward , Stephanie,)

The participants were given the task to find out quite personalised texts, emerging suitable for the instances of their own life and behaviour, and to reappear for

the discussion after a week's time. By this phase of our collective effort, I could well notice them motivated and inspired.

Literature has the power of persuasion, and well loved literature can save a keen reader from depression, anxiety, low energy state of the lack of concentration, and give sensitive shoulder at the loss of person or matter. A text alters the experiences of the stakeholders, the readers, listeners, audience corresponding to its manner and forms of representation, creating an effect that helps them to criticise life, and sustain it presenting diversified solution to the problems plausible from everyday life. When one reads or rereads a text, or through interpretation or reinterpretation, understands a text, there occurs elevation of the spirit of heart and mind and even that of physical realization in the body that either elevates or devastates the human condition. The School of Constance, towards reception aesthetics, propagates the idea of understanding a text from the viewpoint of readers as an important entity in the meaning-making process. Reading itself is a process of many an approach that an individual adopts as per the background consciousness and knowledge that interferes with the approaches that the text offers him or her. In the ongoing brainstorming sessions of reading, the reader, in fact, is creating a text of his or her own i.e., creating yet another text in the parallel emergence and here my hypothesis of literary text as a curative entity works. To cite Wolfgang Iser in this context:

It is the virtuality of the work that gives rise to its dynamic nature, and this in turn is the precondition for the effects that the work calls forth. As the reader uses the various perspectives offered him by the text in order to relate the patterns and the "schematised views" to one another, he sets the work in motion, and this very process results ultimately in the awakening of responses within himself. Thus, reading causes the literary work.

(Iser "The Reading Process: A

Phenomenological Approach, 280)

However, the reader might suffer from the affective fallacy while going through the thought processes in understanding its meaning, as has been talked above in the text like Bacon's 'Of Studies', 'Of Gardening', 'Of Judicature' etc. In *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), the corpus categorically forms utilitarian approach that helps an individual or a group or a society in having ready filters of suggested proposals in handling and working out the important problems of routine life encountered by them.

There exists a rich storehouse of classics and their representations in different forms of human art or human artistic activities in the revelation and realisation of truth in a spiritually ambiguous world that allows the readers to handle the problems of life without being thwarted of their emotions. The world, indeed, is full of matters on the subjects that imbibe expressions from the themes like cheating, betrayal, truth, recovery, love, revenge, crime, punishment, advice and silence, and quite pertinent questions of life and death. As texts, in broader parlance, these themes express the trajectories of life in miniature. A reader or any other stakeholder is left in a smoke-world, struggling and trying to visualize the way out, getting stuck into the problems of choices in life. The following statement of Shakespeare via his character Hamlet, as expressed in Act III Scene 1 of *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, coheres with the context more closely:

To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them.

(Shakespeare, pp .98-99)

Authenticating Bacon's sources of understanding the utility of studies, a text takes an individual to discover and rediscover the modes that stand as a helping tribute in one's behaviour in evaluating the existence of mankind. It emotionally strengthens and widens the horizons to study any human situation anywhere on earth establishing a close dialogue that creates solutions

for those far away in time or space transcending the boundaries, as it is a popular saying in Hindi, “*jahan na pahuche Ravi wahan pahuche kavi*”, i.e. the flight of fancy of a poet is swifter than the rays of the Sun. It is the bash of readers, listeners or the stakeholders that stands supreme in judging and evaluating the intentions and contentions of the text for the specific purposes of life depending upon their individual competence, performance and personality. So is the relevance of the text floated by authors like Roland Barthes. Roland Barthes states that, “the text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.”(Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’146). Simply forwarding the views of Barthes , we can infer that a text is a series of phonetic sounds with variable meaning; depend on the purpose of the author. The author’s purpose for writing text is to share their experiences with culture. In his article, Barthes differentiates between the “scriptor” and the “author” by stating that the word “author” implies more authority over the reader’s interpretations. The author inflicts a certain viewpoint on the reader, which inevitably overshadows the reader’s creative mind.

Critics like Stanley Fish have spaced stakeholders and readers with supreme authority of establishing meaning of the text as per their choices and priorities of life that condition them. In his essay “Is there a text in the class”, Stanley Fish focuses on the subjective reception of text. A literary text or a text in general is an open opportunity towards yet another creation that engages a reader’s state of mind, understanding, wit, competence and intelligence towards a variety of inquisitiveness and queries that give courage to sustain the existence of life, even during the last hope of the lasting values on Earth. It is the formation of a poetics that has a capability of miraculous response to the riddles of life.

Conclusion: Out of our deliberations, practice and discussions, we can infer that literary texts can play a cathartic role in setting the mood, uplifting the lowered esteem, augmenting the emotions and whetting the

desires and cravings. Good literature, notwithstanding its origin and timeline, can provide food for thought, and works as ‘freshening April showers’ and a kind of ‘soothing balm’. This way, we could realise the application part of literature, and that in a way, stands as the *raison d'être* of literature in the current scenario where everything is to be justified and validated. ‘Art for art’s sake’ is giving way to ‘art for life’s sake’ paradigm.

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Nation and Nationalism: Feminization of the Nation and its Evolutionary Transcendence in Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*

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Abstract:

National movements aim to achieve a geographically and politically identifiable construct primarily based on the otherness of the colonized selves involved in comparison to the colonizers. The masculine nature of any freedom struggle is imperative given the patriarchal nature of society at large. The proposed article would try to assimilate and analyze the growth of the concept of nation, the nationalist movement in India and the rise of Bharat Mata as the symbol of nationalism to the transcendence of the same in the figure of Savitri in Sri Aurobindo's magnum opus: Savitri.

Keywords: Nationalism, Masculinity, Femininity, Motherland, Evolution

Nation, according to Max Weber is 'a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state' along with notions of common descent, though not necessarily common blood (Gerth and Mills 172-79). Layounasserts that nationalism constructs and proffers a narrative of the 'nation' and of its relation to an already existing or potential state. (410-11) Nationalism is both, a goal – to achieve statehood, and a belief – in unique collective consciousness. Nationalists envisage to achieve both statehood and nationhood.

The nation is an invented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1) which is a summation of 'imagining' a national past and present (Anderson6-7). According to Gellner, it is nationalism that engenders nations, and not

the other way around(49). Benedict Anderson's conceptualization of a nation or nation-space as an imagined community in a way tries to rationalize the individual's relationship with the nation in the domain of knowledge and cognition (6-7), but is unable to situate passionate self sacrifices for the nation (Smith 10-28), which is akin toNirad C. Chaudhuri's description in his autobiography:

An eagerness to serve and sacrifice ourselves was the third element in our patriotic emotion. Hence forward, we thought, we had no right to live any other life but a dedicated life. Our country was waiting for us to rescue and redeem her. (1969: 210-211)

Nationalist struggles tried to create or discover a national identity which was often inspired by a rediscovery of ancient custom and literature, resurgence of a suppressed language and an attempt to re-invoke the importance of ethnicity and religion. Nationalism and national identities in India started forming its roots from the 18th century onwards and the process was catalyzed by the revolt of native states, landlords, and disgruntled British Indian soldiers against the colonial rule from 1857 to 1868.

The nationalist movement for independence later emerged as the process of mobilization of the regional and community identities which were historically gendered symbols and identities.

The concept of a single-powerful nation state promoted masculine ideology for its own sustenance irrespective of its origin in modernism, unlike colonialism, anti-colonialism and nationalism, masculinity remained a transparent, inadequately theorized construct.

Masculinity acted as the hegemonic supremacy-oriented ideology of British imperialism in India. An elite ‘White’ masculinity presided above both the loyal but simple, martial or manly races and clever but treacherous, feminized or effeminate native men. According to Krishnaswamy, the idea of masculinity in a way legitimized the imperial rule by equating an aggressive, muscular, chivalric model of manliness with racial, national, cultural and moral superiority (15). Colonial masculinity was a cultural and epistemological project of colonial domination

The psychology of colonialism shows a language of homology between the sexual and the political in colonial culture. The British imperial ideology in India was hyper-masculine through maintaining a rigid dichotomy between the masculine and the feminine that was part of the gender ideologies of the post-Enlightenment West. The ideals of Victorian manliness, athleticism and militarism featured centrally in studies of British and Anglo-Indian society, especially in accounts of the colonial Indian bureaucracy and the Indian army (Sinha08-11).

The British defined their actions of intrusion into Indian private life as clear, precise, instrumentalist, technical, scientific true and above all beneficial to all who came into contact with it. Pre-colonial Indian societies worked with flexible identities in which ‘softer’ forms of creativity and intuition were not identified with femininity nor values of violence and power with masculinity. These fluid and permeable identities were undermined by the British rule and the Victorian colonial culture with its rigid and dichotomous ideologies of gender was enforced. Thus, an analogy between political and sexual dominance of the British as evident in the manliness, rationality, courage and control of the British rulers was that juxtaposed against

degenerated, effeminate and superstitious subjects.

Nationalism was a conglomeration of ‘manly virtues’, described by Mosse (1996) as ‘normative masculinity’, which included willpower, honour, courage, discipline, competitiveness, quiet strength, stoicism, sang-froid, persistence, adventurousness, independence, sexual virility tempered with restraint, and dignity, and which tried to establish the ideals as liberty, equality, and fraternity (Bederman7). The process, of setting boundaries and of articulating national character, creating national history, and chalking out a plan of the nation-state for future tend to emphasize both unity and ‘otherness’. The creation of national identity and cultural boundaries tends to engender nationalist ethnocentrism.

The nationalist leaders were in a dilemma as they had to find methods of negotiating the traditional past they had inherited and the sense of modernity they received from the colonial education system. The issue of creating a national identity where India could be represented as a single cultural and political entity became their prime concern.

The figure of the woman was important in the construction of identities as a distinguishing element between the nationalists and colonizers. Nationalism redirects men’s passions to a higher purpose and projects a stereotype of human beauty which transcends sensuousness. Manliness comes to mean freedom from sexual passion, the sublimation of sensuality into the leadership of society as the nation.(Mosse 13)

During the early period of nationalism there was no indigenous idea about masculinity but the Victorian conservationist notions that tried to appropriate colonial gender norms like self-discipline and militarization. The immediate influence of Western masculinity in India was the reordering and revival of traditional conceptions of masculinity. Hence, three streams of masculinity emerged in the colonial period: firstly,

brahmanic masculinity which tried to propose hard asceticism, renunciation and sublimation, secondly, *kshatriya* masculinity, which emphasized a hard aggression, pleasure and good living and thirdly, androgyny, particularly for men, that evolved out of Indian tradition and was held up as a spiritual ideal (Krishnaswamy 42).

Partha Chatterjee argues in the same line that now the distinction between the home and the world (*Ghar* and *bahir*) was appropriated in Indian Nationalist discourses to form a new patriarchy in which men must continually compromise with Western ways in the world and women become the guardians of Indian spiritual values at home (1989).

Partha Chatterjee's article on the question of women during the nationalist movement is relevant in this regard. He writes on the subtle strategies of Indian patriarchy:

..... the adulation of woman as goddess or as mother. It served to emphasize with all the force of mythological inspiration what had in any case become a dominant characteristic of femininity in the new construct of woman standing as a sign for nation, namely the spiritual qualities of self sacrifice, benevolence, devotion, religiosity and so on. This spirituality did not, as we have seen, impede the chances of the woman, moving out of the physical confines of the home; on the contrary it facilitated it, making it possible for her to go into the world under conditions that would not threaten her femininity. (1999:256-57)

Thus the idea of Deshmata (Motherland) was engendered and a clarion call was given by the nationalists to free 'Mother India' from the shackles of foreign rule. It is interesting to note that the figure of 'Bharat Mata' was first perceived as an image by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in *Ananda Math* (1882) and pictorially created by Abanindranath Tagore in 1905. Abanindranath portrayed *BharatMata* as a four-armed Hindu goddess wearing saffron-colored robes, holding the sheaves of rice, a white cloth, manuscripts, a mala, thereby signifying food, clothing,

secular learning and spiritual knowledge (Sinha3). The image of *BharatMata* was an icon to create nationalist feeling in Indians during the freedom struggle. Sister Nivedita, an admirer of the painting, opined that the picture was refined and imaginative, with *BharatMata* standing on green earth and blue sky behind her; feet with four lotuses, four arms meaning divine power; white halo and sincere eyes; and gifts Shiksha-Diksha-Anna-Batra of the motherland to her children (Rama swamy15). Henceforth, the idea of India was sacralized and feminized.

Sri Aurobindo is an interesting figure in the re-structuring of the *BharatMata* concept when he proposed the worship of Bharat Mata as the re-invigorated form of Adishakti:

"For what is a nation? What is our mother-country? It is not a piece of earth, nor a figure of speech, nor a fiction of the mind. It is a mighty Shakti, composed of the Shaktis of all the millions of units that make up the nation, just as Bhawani Mahisha Mardini sprang into being from the Shaktis of all the millions of gods assembled in one mass of force and welded into unity."

(*Bhawāni Mandir*)

Sri Aurobindo's concept of freedom was a conglomeration of the ideals of a revolutionary political leader in the initial phase and of the poet and the mystic in the later phase. Freedom was not merely geographical and historical achievement but a natural urge towards unity through evolution, transcendence of the self and the whole aspiring beyond the limits of commonality, an inherent aspect of human existence.

In his magnum opus: *Savitri*, he renders his idea of freedom and helps to transcend the figure of *BharatMata*, from being the deity of the freedom fighters to the spirit of evolution: Savitri, who aims at universal upliftment and evolution of mankind for a better tomorrow.

The legend of Savitri and Satyavan is a symbolic representation of human development and evolution in Sri Aurobindo's magnum opus: *Savitri*. In *Savitri*, King Aswapathy seeks the absolution of all existential

problematic of humanity by achieving the goal of transcendent evolution that triumphs over death Sri Aurobindo through the character of Aswapathy attempts to bring the esoteric goal of Hindu life to a more-grounded and realistic scenario. Aswapathy envisages to achieve the appeasement of the Divine Mother, to bring onto earth the human being who would “break the iron Law, Change Nature’s doom by the lone Spirit’s power.” Savitri is the solution given to Aswapathy by the Divine Mother.

The philosophical debate in *Savitri* between Yama, the God of Death and Savitri in a way represents the appeasement of the national identity by the colonizers as a potent tool to disorient the independence movement. The God of Death much like the hegemonic colonizer uses various ruses and arguments to convince Savitri, the alternative identity of Mother India, that she does not need independence and suzerainty. Yama represents the fragility of the emotion of love as an akin emotion to freedom which has been misused by humanity and hence needs to be averted. Yama’s arguments tend to paint humanity (the colonized race) incapable of handling immortality (freedom). Love, be it of freedom or motherland or an individual, according to Yama, jeopardizes the logic of existence on earth. His satiric tone seems unquestionable as it is placed in the chaotic world the poet initially posits. Savitri, who attempts to reshape the future of the nation, as well as transcend the boundaries of the same and bring freedom to the entire mankind does not accept the present reality but postulates an independent, evolutionary and higher form of life that will change earthly existence forever. The achievement of paradise is not what Savitri envisages for; rather it is the worldly emancipation from the mortality of existence on earth and a permanent relief from the pains of life and death is the definitive finality that she aims at, and here is the evolutionary transcendence of the conceived Bharat Mata of Sri Aurobindo in the Savitri symbol. She transcends the boundaries of state and nation to a larger domain of the dynamic world order then existent as well as the future unseen.: “Imperfect is the joy not shared by all”, says she (Book 11, Canto 1). She wants humanity to manifest divinity, and evolve into an entity capable

of manifesting divinity on earth.

The triumph over colonization would be the proper achievement of the nationalist Sri Aurobindo but he envisages through Savitri to achieve the universal “Life-Divine” with the disappearance of pain, suffering, and associated problems of humanity. The transfiguration of life on earth through spiritual exoneration of mankind from all negative emotions is the goal of “Life Divine” which in the mortal domain seems impossible. Savitri tries to assimilate the duality of the search for knowledge and the human liberation from ignorance. Evolution thus becomes the watchword of Aurobindo. The awakening of the self or raising the life and existence to a higher level of consciousness, the ideal of freedom according to Aurobindo, is achieved through the empowerment of Savitri, the evolved form of Bh?ratM?t?. Aurobindo recognizes woman as the symbol of shakti, the creative power and in this context. Aurobindo seeks to ensure the progress of humanity and fulfillment of its destiny through the achievement of unity, peace and happiness.

The qualities of strong individuality, equality, and the desire for transcendence of the self and society are all found in the epic: *Savitri*. Savitri, as an individual, exhibits growth in consciousness. She rejects the two negations - the ascetic’s denial of life and the sensualist’s denial of the spirit. Her concern is with the welfare of humanity in general. She sees salvation in depersonalization by uplifting mankind. She is a seeker of truth and knowledge. She successfully actualizes her potential by manifesting her real self through self-upliftment. She symbolizes the evolution of the human love and human soul towards the Ultimate Reality of evolution.

The figure of Savitri thus becomes the evolved form of nationalism which achieves an unification of liberty and transcendence of self and society: ‘Krinvanto Vishwam Aryam’ (To make the world noble). The nationalist zeal of geographical and political liberation transcends to a world view rarely paralleled.

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The Use of Food Imagery and Representation of Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Part* and *A Man of the People*

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt— to critically analyse the food and food habits of the Igbo society, to understand how the dominant discourses of the society shape the symbolic significance of or meanings associated with food, and in the process to examine the use of food imageries and its relation to the representation of culture in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart (1958) and A Man of the People (1966). The two novels have been selected for study, to highlight the changes that came into the Igbo food habits and subsequently to its culture during the Igbo society's transition from pre-colonial to the post-colonial era. Achebe's Things Fall Apart is set in the pre-colonial times, when the Igbo society was beginning to come into contact with the British coloniser's culture, whereas the setting of A Man of the People is post-independent Nigeria. This paper argues that food imagery is a significant trope used by Achebe to represent and critique the Igbo culture in his fictions. The methodology used in the paper involves a close reading of the primary texts and an exploration of relevant criticisms on the theme of food and culture in Achebe's fiction. The ideas on food and culture that emanates from a reading of Achebe's fictions, and the stance of African critics like— F. Abiola Irele, Harry Olufunwa, Christopher Anyokwo and Ifi Amadiume on those themes, serve as a theoretical frame of reference in examining the texts, and in

establishing a relationship between food and culture in those fictions.

Keywords: Food, culture, tradition, beliefs, power, discourse, social status.

Food and food habits are integral to the culture of society for they provide an identity to that society. It offers a crucial lens to view and understand the characteristic cultural traits of a society. Igbo society depicted in Chinua Achebe's fictions is no exception to that rule. The availability of food or kinds of food in a geographical area is determined by nature. However, the meanings associated with, or the symbolic significance of, the food is determined by the dominant discourses of the society. This paper is an attempt— to critically analyse the food and food habits of the Igbo society, to understand how the dominant discourses of the society shape the symbolic significance of or meanings associated with food, and in the process to examine the use of food imageries and its relation to the representation of culture in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *A Man of the People* (1966). The two novels have been selected for study, to highlight the changes that came into the Igbo food habits and subsequently to its culture during the Igbo society's transition from pre-colonial to the post-colonial era. Stuart Hall asseverates that "cultural identity" is in a constant state of flux, it keeps changing. Referring to Hall's statement one may claim that the food habits of the Igbos, that was so integral to their

cultural identity, was bound to change with time and space. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is set in the pre-colonial times, when the Igbo society was beginning to come into contact with the British coloniser's culture, whereas the setting of *A Man of the People* is post-independent Nigeria. This paper argues that food imagery is a significant trope used by Achebe to represent and critique the Igbo culture in his fictions. In the essay "Eating with Kings: Food and Ambition in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*" Harry Olufunwa examines the various meanings food, eating, and hunger acquire in the portrayal of Okonkwo, the protagonist of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Shirin Edwin in "Subverting Social Customs: The Representation of Food in Three West African Francophone Novels" tries to highlight the social symbolism and meanings associated with food, eating habits, and culinary customs in West African societies. In the essay "Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*" Diana Akers Rhoads shows how food imagery is integral to many Igbo proverbs and how these proverbs are significant to the Igbo life and society. Christopher Anyokwo in "Re-Imagining Gender in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*" examines the relationship between food and gender. In the chapter titled "Transforming Hunger into Power: Food and Resistance in Nigerian Literature"¹ Jenni Ramone emphasises the significance of commensality² to Igbo society and attributes colonialism for the undoing of commensality from that society. In the book *The African Imagination: Literature in Africa and the Black Diaspora* F. Abiola Irele highlights the centrality of the yam to the Igbo culture and delineates the meanings associated with it. A review of literature on the theme of food and culture in the novels of Achebe reveals that very little research has been done so far in this area. Some research has been carried out taking up the themes of food and culture individually or separately, however, there seems to be a dearth of research examining the relationship between the two. This paper is an attempt to critically examine and establish the relationship between food and culture in the novels of Achebe.

Sense of community is a vital cultural trait of the Igbo community depicted in the novels of Achebe. Food is an indispensable component of almost all major Igbo customs and festivities. The food habits of the Igbos, largely, are instrumental in generating and sustaining the community feelings among the Igbos. The feast of New Yam was very significant to the Igbo community. It was held every year before the harvest began, to honour the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits of the clan. The earnestness with which the Igbos celebrated the New Yam festival suggested the kind of respect they had for the earth goddess and their ancestral spirits. The Igbos regarded Ani, the earth goddess, to be the source of all fertility. This suggests how food and fertility were very integral to the Igbo culture. Almost every special occasion among the Igbos, like marriage, acquiring a title etc. was marked by feasting. Such feastings provided a platform for the people of the community to come together and exchange their feelings. In *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo offers a feast to his mother's people to show his gratitude to them for sheltering him for seven years. He humbly tells them, "I have only called you together because it is good for kinsmen to meet" (*TFA* 119). In "Subverting Social Customs: The Representation of Food in Three West African Francophone Novels" Shirin Edwin, emphasising the importance of eating together, has rightly pointed out that the feastings, where people shared food, were instrumental in fostering and strengthening the already existing social and political ties, and networks among the people. Mbiti very well encapsulates the sense of community of the Igbos through these lines, "I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am" (Mbiti 141).

Igbo society was a polygamous society where a man had multiple wives. It is interesting to note that the children of the different wives of the family often shared food. When a mother was unable to cook food, her children would be fed by the other wives of the family. This act of sharing food enhanced the bonding between the children of the family. Further, the children in addition to their mother regarded all the other wives of their father as their own mother. Referring to the

bonding the children shared with their mothers Buchi Emecheta, in “Feminism with a Small ‘f’!”, shares the anecdote where the small son of one of her group-members in London told his teacher that he had two mummies. “My Mummy number one is working. Mummy number two will come and collect me” (555). The teacher did not understand until she realised that the boy’s father had two wives. In *Things Fall Apart* when Ojiugo, the youngest wife of Okonkwo, goes to plait her hair in her friend’s house and does not return early enough to cook the afternoon meal, her children were invited to eat “with the children of his [Okonkwo’s] first wife” (*TFA* 21).

The Igbo society, depicted in *Things Fall Apart*, had a gendered division of crops. Yam, the king of crops was regarded as a man’s crop, while coco-yams, cassava, and beans were regarded as women’s crops. The narrator says, “Yam the King of crops, was a very exacting king. For three or four moons it demanded hard work and constant attention from cock crow till the chickens went back to roost” (*TFA* 24). The amount of masculine energy involved in the cultivation of Yam perhaps made it a man’s crop. In “Re-Imagining Gender in Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*” Christopher Anyokwu very distinctly highlights the gendered division of crops in Umuofia. He agrees to the narrator of *Things Fall Apart* who claimed that in Umuofia yam stood for manliness and one who could feed his family on yams from one harvest to another was regarded a great man. Further, cultivation of food crops in the distant wild forests, in virgin land, conferred masculinity to the person involved. In *Things Fall Apart* Chika, the priestess reprimands Unoka for his laziness and explains to him the reason for his failure. She tells him that he failed because did not dare to work like a man. When his neighbours went out with their axe to cut down virgin forests, he sowed his yams on exhausted farms that took no labour to clear (13).

In the Igbo society in *Things Fall Apart* yam was a symbol of power and social status. More the number of barns full of yams a man had, the greater was his social status. The narrator of *Things Fall Apart* proclaims the success of Okonkwo: “He was a wealthy

farmer and had two barns full of yams, and had just married his third wife” (*TFA* 6). The traditional Umuofian society was agrarian, there a man who had more barns was acknowledged to be capable of feeding more wives, hence could marry many wives. His wives and their offsprings eventually would assist him in his farming and thereby increase his chances of prospering more. Moreover, in “Eating with Kings: Food and Ambition in Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*” Harry Olufunwa emphasises the fact that Okonkwo’s skills were quintessentially physical—wrestling, farming, and war; all the three activities were organically connected to food. Food and farming are interconnected. Farming is a physically demanding activity that requires strength, skill, and endurance to produce food. Again, food will provide the necessary nutrition and strength required for farming. Okonkwo understood the importance and value of both food and farming to be successful, and that was perhaps the reason why he could succeed at a young age.

Among the Ibos, foods like kola nut and palm wine have religious significance. The Ibos have their personal god and they worship their ancestral spirits. In *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo worshipped his personal god and his ancestral spirits “with sacrifices of kola nut, food, and palm wine, and offered prayers to them on behalf of himself, his three wives and eight children” (*TFA* 10). Breaking of kola nut was regarded auspicious in the negotiation of marriage, as it marked the beginning of a new relationship between two families. When the bridegroom’s family came to marry Obierika’s daughter, the latter offered kola nuts to his in-laws. While breaking the first kola nut Obierika’s eldest brother wished, “Life to all of us, and let there be friendship between your family and ours” (*TFA* 84).

The Igbo society gave great emphasis on oratorical skills and food. There are an ample number of Igbo proverbs having food imageries that provide universal wisdom. The narrator in *Things Fall Apart* emphasising how highly the Ibos regarded the art of conversation mentions that for them “proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten” (*TFA* 5). As palm-oil is integral to the process of eating, it facilitates the

act of eating, in the same way, dexterous choice and use of words help one to express or convey his/her thoughts and feelings in a lucid manner. Among the Igbos, hard work was revered more than age and birth. In *Things Fall Apart* Okonkwo was not born in a wealthy family. However, by his hard work and diligence he, at a very young age, was able to attain fame and success. The narrator informs that Okonkwo at a young age had won fame as the greatest wrestler in the nine villages. He was a wealthy farmer who "had two barns full of yams, and had just married his third wife (*TFA* 6). The appreciation of Okonkwo's hard work and success is very well encapsulated in the Igbo proverb, "if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings" (*TFA* 6). In other words, if a person worked hard diligently it was certain s/he would be successful. The Igbos respected industry and success, however, they abhorred arrogance in a man. In *Things Fall Apart* an old man condemning Okonkwo's arrogance and the brusqueness with which he dealt with less successful men exclaims, "Looking at a king's mouth, one would think he never sucked at his mother's breast" (*TFA* 19).

In *A Man of the People*, Achebe uses the phrase "national cake" in a sarcastic manner. It is used to suggest the selfishness and greed of the native leaders of post-independent Nigeria. Those leaders, instead of contributing to the development of the nation, were exploiting its riches. Imitating their leaders, the common people too were looking for ways to exploit the national resources. However, the priorities of the two were different, the native leaders wanted to loot the national exchequer to become richer, while the common mass desired amenities like clean water to drink, good roads, and electricity supply etc. If the common people received those then they were contented thinking that they have received their share of the national cake.

A reading of Achebe's two novels *Things Fall Apart* and *A Man of the People* shows that with the changing times certain changes have come to the food habits and the meanings associated with the food habits of the Igbos. In the book titled *Chinua Achebe*, C. L Innes places before us the feelings Achebe had,

growing up at Ogidi in the thirties. Achebe describes his experience as living "at the crossroads of culture"³. Achebe elaborates, "On one arm of the cross we sang hymns and read the bible night and day. On the other my father's brother and his family, blinded by heathenism, offered food to idols" (*Chinua Achebe* 4). The practise of offering food to their personal god and ancestors which was a characteristic trait of the traditional Igbo religious beliefs are now regarded as an uncivilised or a heathen practice. One can notice that the prominent food imageries used in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* were yam, palm-wine, cassava, and beans etc., however, in *A Man of the People* the prominent food imagery used is cake. The movement from yam to the cake is indicative of the transformation that had come to the Igbo society in its transition from pre-colonial to postcolonial times. It is suggestive of the native elite's tendency to reject their traditional beliefs, and blindly imitate the western values and practices. The native Igbo leaders of the newly independent Nigerian nation, in particular, tend to put on, in Fanon's phrase, a "while masks"⁴ over their black skins. However, Fanon believes that such an effort on the part of the natives to blindly imitate the west will turn out to be futile and disastrous.

In the traditional Igbo society shown in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* social feasting was an occasion and a medium to enhance community feelings among the people. Food, in that society, literally served the purpose of satiating one's hunger. However, in the modern Igbo society depicted in Achebe's *A Man of the People* feasting has become an occasion for demonstrating one's social class and status, instead of bringing unity among people it only serves to widen the social gap between people based on class and status. Food now instead of remaining a metaphor for nutrition has become a symbol of extravagance. In Achebe's *A Man of the People*, Mrs Nanga sarcastically points out to Odili about embassy parties, " 'What can you enjoy there?' she asked with great spirit. 'Nine pence talk and three pence food. 'Hallo, hawa you. Nice to see you again.' All na lie lie' " (*AMOP* 36).

However, with the changing times, from pre-colonial to the postcolonial, the Igbo natives' attitude towards cooking and gender has not changed conspicuously. In Achebe's *A Man of the People* the cook who came in search of work to Naga's place informed the latter that he was proficient in cooking European dishes, however, he declared that he did not know how to cook native food. He unhesitatingly mentioned that it was unmanly and a shameful thing to cook local native food, for he believed that cooking such food was the job of a woman. Odili theorising the cook's attitude towards foreign food and the act of cooking says: "As long as a man confined himself to preparing foreign concoctions he could still maintain the comfortable illusion that he wasn't really doing such an unmanly thing as cooking" (*AMOP* 47).

An analysis of the food and food habits of the Igbo societies depicted in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *A Man of the People* enables one to realise the social significance of the food imageries, and also to understand how dominant social discourses are instrumental in defining meanings to those food imageries. In the traditional Igbo society in *Things Fall Apart* feasting was a medium to enhance community feelings among the people. However, in the post-independent Nigerian nation depicted in *A Man of the People* feasting is more a symbol of extravagance. Instead of enhancing community feelings, it widens the gap between people based on social class and status. A barn full of yams was a symbol of power in the traditional Igbo society, however, in the post-independent Igbo society material wealth has become a symbol of power. However, with this transition from pre-colonial to post-colonial times, there was no conspicuous change in the Igbo societies attitude towards food and gender. The natives of post-independent Nigeria still consider cooking to be an unmanly activity, a domain for the women to take care of. Thus, one may conclude that Achebe through the use of food imageries has been able to effectively represent and critique the Igbo culture in his fictions.

Notes:

1. This essay appears in the book *The Routledge*

Companion to Literature and Food edited by Lorna Piatti-Farnell and Donna Lee.

2. Commensality may broadly be understood as the social custom of eating and drinking together. It is instrumental in creating and cementing relationships. However, it also sets boundaries, including or excluding people according to a set of criteria defined by society.
3. Refer to C. L. Innes book titled *Chinua Achebe*, page no. 4.
4. Refer to Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*.

Abbreviations used:

Things Fall Apart: TFA

A Man of the People: AMOP

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From Marginality to Congruity: Revisiting Marginality through a Canonicity of Jain and Sikh Literature

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Abstract:

This paper examines the influence of Jain and Sikh literature, attempted to provide a critical discourse on marginality as a response to the widespread cultural and political violence, radical upheavals and individual differences. Marginality is universal phenomenon, mentioned in different cultural and genres with a complex set of frameworks. In analyzing the literary over view of Jain and Sikh literature, it is an attempt to find the solutions underlying in the values of harmony, peace, unity and tolerance. The texts of both Jainism and Sikhism, written and evaluated within and outside the academia, preeminently foster a deep sense of kinship, albeit making the face of justice bright and subjugation burnt, in different centuries and cultures.

Keywords: Marginality, Exclusion, Culture, Scripture, Institutions, Peripheralization

Introduction

In his *A Bend in The River*, Naipaul said, “Like many isolated people, they were wrapped up in themselves and not too interested in the world outside” (Naipaul 34). By all counts, this observation by Naipaul answers a fundamental issue of Indian philosophy and literature – cutting through the demands of mundane life, the ancient *rishis* per se chose to remain aloof and trod on a path of spiritual practice, long-term penance, gritty determination, self-consciousness. Modern scholars might wonder how the most ordinary and plain-looking

yogis manifested equality, inclusiveness and homogenization through their knowledge, sermons and texts. At the same time, I would also assert that such trait of rising towards spiritual zenith or ultimate truth had originated a legacy of great intellectual thinking in India; a hallmark of this deep contemplation was vividly expressed in diverse literary genres against the adoption of extremist ideals which resulted in marginalization or social exclusion. The *Rigveda* propagates: “*Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti* (Cosmic truth is one, but the wise express it in many ways)” (Jamison 595). The essence of this philosophy is that the whole creation is an expression of a single element; only the expressions are diverse, “one” has been expressed in various forms, so there is no distinction, conflict and therefore there should be holistic development. Thus, if exclusion and marginalization and are to eradicate and there is to be peace, unity and welfare in the world, then we will have to come on this path. Much before we start doing evaluation of this succinct phrase, we need to discover those distinctive texts, motivated to refine the lives of marginalized community. The phrase is perhaps this slice of life, equally powerful and significant, that entire Jain and Sikh literature, though not strictly a proponent of Vedic texts, are reconcilable with this belief.

A View on Marginality

What is significant despite getting down to the nitty-gritty of marginality as Robert Park has suggested in “Migration and the Marginal Man” that “marginality is type of personality trait that arises out of the conflict

of races and cultures" (Park xvii) or the conventional notions of this term borrowed from Georg Simmel, Jung Young Lee, Werner Sombert, Stonequist etc., marginality itself manages to become a microcosm of the world within which multidimensional conditions take place. Almost all the theorists, be Western or Indian, without an exception would agree that marginality is not static; needless to say, the status of marginality changes through time and across boundaries. I propose here, unhesitatingly, to revisit the western structural analysis of marginality, leaping out of shadowy terrains, and have a fresh investigation of the term for certain flexibilities, even ambivalence, to resurrect the conventional notions of the term. The discourse of marginality, while understanding its inherent organicity, may apply everywhere, reverberating in all cultural contexts and its operational limits may have to be looked upon in reference to a reciprocal discourse. It is the very raison d'être of marginality's multi-dimensional narratives that I emphasize to understand the possibility of its operational and contextual differences.

Contrary to the discourse of marginality, the *Veda* sproliferated a philosophy of integration. Vishnu was not so popular in ancient times, at that time Gods like Indra, Mitra, Varuna etc. were popular. But there is no difference among all these deities, it is not an individual but an expression of the "one." Later, the *Saivas* named the Omnipotent as *Siva* and *Vaishnavas* praise Him as Vishnu, the Jains respectively named Him, *Arihant*¹, and the Sikh Gurus call Him *Sat SriAkal*². It is imminent that fluidity of the time, cultural contexts and emergence of different types of literary compositions as per the social milieu enabled the society to shed its maudlin sentimentality and archaic traditions. While within the Buddhist *Tripitikas*³, there is a recognition of sixty two types of cults and a descriptions of two eighty two types of sects in Jain texts, it is dialectic of tradition that today many of them must have become obsolete. In the history of mankind due to ego clashes, notions of power and oppression, dilemmas of cross-cultural identities, political, social and economic disadvantages, we may discern an eruption of chronicled difference in the community and, thus, marginality crept in, almost

indiscernibly. Let us take an instance from Ottoman Empire in which many rich merchants who were Jews and Greeks were actually deprived of equal rights as compared to their Muslim peers.

In Indian tradition, there happened an eternal process and whenever there is a discussion on marginality; our sacred texts suggested a way or the *dharma* of a man to oppose the tyranny. At this juncture, I would illustrate simply; the earth is one, but there are different states, attachments, and struggles. The ancient Indian texts developed a unified vision of the earth. The terms "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" and "*Sarva Dharma Sadbhava*" deserve special mention here; the former implies "that all members of the human race in reality belong to a single, extended family" (Singh 06). These famous terms demonstrate the global outlook of Indian texts, developing a counter-philosophical discourse in order to govern marginality and generating a solidarity with global community. Shalibhadra, a famous poet, philosopher, in a first book of Jainism *Bharateshwar Bahubaliras*, has propounded dejection, salvation and harmony. Sahlibhadra can be seen as a messiah of the marginalized, dejected, de-privileged people who emphasized to develop feelings of harmony, love, friendship, and finally attain *nirvana*.

A View on Jain Texts

The Jain literature is primarily focused on how *samyakacharitra* i.e. right conduct come in the practice of life. The feelings are estrangement and unhappiness may end if there is an observance of the *Panch Mahavratas*⁴. A Jain text ploughs fresh ground into a trenchant of social discourse as, "The man who incessantly observes all the supplementary vows and *sallekhanā* (together, these are called *seelas*) for the sake of safeguarding his vows (*vratas*), gets fervently garlanded (a gesture to indicate her choice for a husband) by the maiden called liberation (Jain 117-118).

While seeking to resolve the ambivalence of marginality, the two other characteristics of Jain philosophy are indeed significant to the world – *Anekantavad*⁵ and

*Syadvada*⁶. According to Jainism, perfection is a very broad thing and cannot be measured. Why do all conflicts happen? Why there is *heimatlos*, stateless in a cultural sense? For assimilation and enlightenment, the *Anekantavada* teaches that what you are seeing is true but it is not absolute truth. It is just like looking one side of the mountain, and ignoring the other. On the other hand, the doctrine of *Satvada* seems to unify, harmonize the notions of an individual into a predictable whole.

The poetry tradition in Jainism is an outcome of ethical practices. The Jain Bhakti poets, often seen as proponent of discontented towards the dominant cultural norms. What imbues often in Jain literature is that a large number of literatures have been penned by anonymous poets, called as Stavan poets who varies from poetry to prosaic. There are, in fact, not at all didactic poems, rejecting mundane attachments, rather many of the texts ended up with positive lyric models. The ancient teachings of *Arihantas*, as an essence, can be traced in “The Navakar Mantra.” A hallmark of Jain literature, often seen as a revived positivism, is a deconstruction to arbitrary powers and to the discourse of marginality; and this is something that Jain literature conveys. As Shah observes:

The preaching’s of Mahavira and his successive *aacaaryas* influenced the whole of society and his teachings were delivered simply and in the language of common people. He taught the equality of souls, self-reliance and responsibility of one’s own actions, non-violence and reverence for life, truth, non-stealing, non-attachment, relative pluralism and an easily understood spiritual path to liberation for all (Shah 155).

What constitutes appropriate philosophical readings of another popular Jain texts and its *mise-en-page*, for instance, *Ratnakar* and *Shravakachhaar* and *Purusarthsiddhiupaya*, is to deal with the politics of performing marginality. The notion of *Samyak Darshan*⁷ in *Ratnakar* and *Shravakachhaar* has been emphasized and relied upon developing empathy for the pains and pleasures of human beings. Excluded

from the power centre, the Jain munis during the Mughal reign, in *Ratnakar* and *Shravakachhaar* professed that dominant culture shall pay a price for disparity, but the ruled lines should embrace the philosophy of *Samyak Darshan*. It professed that *Samyak Darshan* is better than knowledge and character. Understanding this fact, one should make effort to gain it. For this reason, it is called steersman in the path of salvation. Acharya Shri Amrit Chandrasuri in *Purusarthsiddhiupaya* along with the deliberations of *Samyak Darshan* discuss seven qualities vis-à-vis honesty, dispassionateness, tolerance, forgiveness, joyousness, and self-respect which were viewed as chronological developments to withstand against the institutionalized rituals of marginality.

During the fourth century, the Jains, in Gujarat particularly, found themselves removed from the political discourse. Hiravijaysuri, in his *Tapa Gaccha*, warns the power that his community should be treated equally. The texts like *The Satkhandagama*, *The Nishitha Sutra*, *Vipakasutra*, *Harivamsapurana*, *Mulachara*, *Samayasaar*, *Aaptamimansa* etc just to name a few, motivate the mankind to follow the path of *dharma* so that the prevailing evils, political policies of impartiality and malpractices can be curbed. These texts also demonstrate insights and spiritual liberation of women, presenting an oxymoronic position of women as narrated by modern feminist theorists.

Sikh Literature

Nothing appears more fascinating that the central sacred text of Sikh literature, i.e. *Adi Granth* or *Sri Guru Granth Saheb*, compiled by Guru Arjan Dev in 1604. Guru Arjan Dev composed this text by compiling the voice of saints and poets from different sects and castes of India. The sacred text imbibes almost all the major scriptures including *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, just to name a few, and, today, it has become an integral part of Sikhs lives. Guru Nanak, in the *Jot Bigas*, glorifies the saints and destroys the wicked. Nanak says that all human beings are “one” and incarnation of God; the Guru is a guide to all the devotees. He justifies the position of a Guru who can act as a messiah of the deprived individuals

or groups.

The Guru is the ladder, the Guru is the raft,
The Guru is the boat that will take me to the Lord,
The Guru will carry me across the ocean, the Guru is the Shrine, the river;
If he wishes, I will bathe in the pool of truth, and become, Radiant and pure. (Ghosh 04)

The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb when forcibly converted Kashmiri *Pandits*, Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth Guru of Sikhs, unhesitatingly decided to fight against the oppression. Guru Gobind Singh in *Bachitar Natak* observes the martyrdom in the following words which reminds that Sikhism propagated to challenge the agency and power;

...He gave his head but never cried out in pain.
He suffered from the sake of his faith.
He lost his head but revealed not his secret.
He disdained to perform miracles or juggler's tricks,
For such fill men of God with shame... (Grewal 116).

Carrying forward the legacy of Sikh Gurus, steeped in sacrifice and human compassion, Guru Gobind Singh also sacrificed his life to root out the prevailing inequalities among the disadvantaged section of the society. The Guru was a great poet, and it was this quality through which he disseminated his spiritual knowledge on diverse issues of life; a critical vigilance of the Guru's poetry shows his attempt to eradicate the social doers, evils, and an opposition to the power structures, radical upheavals and ideological destabilization of his period. To encounter the inequality, the Guru introduced inter-dinning among Sikhs, irrespective of caste, creed, race and colour. Hamstrung by the cultural and political disturbance of his time, the Guru associated the sword with God. But at the same time, his poetry has this unerring tendency to awake the masses for self-respect, dignity, self-defense and the protection of weak and depresses. The *Guru's Japu Sahib* seeks cultural and emotional integration, something the Mughals, dominant and tyrant rulers hardly imbibed. The Guru in *Akal Ustat*, suggests a counterproductive, and reminds uselessness of

material gains: "God provides to all, why then waiver, O my mind/ The Beauteous will take care of these also" (Kaur 176). Grewal writes, "Apart from the praises of God, the *Akal Ustat* embodies Guru Gobind Singh's outlook on the nature of God, unity in diversity, *premabhagti* (loving devotion), God's omnipresence and omnipotence, the equality of human beings, and various sectarian dispensations" (Grewal 71). All odds notwithstanding, the Sikh literature attempted to establish subversive discourse, setting a valorized oppositions within the ambit of Indian cultural and values. Both in conviction and belief, the Guru gave befitting reply in *Zafarnamah* to Aurangzeb, very studiously and punctiliously, when he was inspired by his erudite acolytes, to the Mughal style rendered in *Arzdasht*. The Guru had the audacity to counter the authority.

*KasePushtuftadpaseshernar
Na gird buz o mesh o aahuguzar*

As one protected by the lion
Is set free from all fear,
He cannot then be harmed
By goats, sheep and dear (Singh 18).

Conclusion

In the examination of Jain and Sikh cultures through their literary texts, which submit itself readily with a variety of voices and styles, I would argue that a vast body of literary texts from both traditions are considerably liberated and interpreted from diverse perspectives. We cannot afford to disassociate ourselves from the important features of Jain and Sikh texts which may lead us to have a cognizance of marginality, and create a shift in our persistent paradigm leading to decentralization of our existing conceptual insights, inequalities and stereotypical mindsets. Interestingly enough, the creative visions of Jain and Sikhs writers and poets enable the readers to analyze, completely out of self-approbation, a successful challenge against the obsessive culture of centrality. To encapsulate, I would submit, even though conventional discourses of marginality chase mirage of exclusion and marginalization, exceptions to the rules

can be found in examining Jain and Sikh texts as they unravel the various strands of discourses and by doing that instill a holistic perspective into reader's mind.

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Love, Compassion and Relationship: Balancing the Act in Andrew Stanton's *Finding Nemo*

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Abstract:

The concerns for the environment, fish biology and oceanography have gained growing importance in children's literature. A considerable number of literary and visual texts have been found exemplary and exciting in disseminating knowledge, so far as children's psyche is concerned. It offers healthy entertainment for children, where they may feel like deliberating and delineating the discourses on the animals and the organisms in waterbodies. Rivers, seas and oceans are a treasure of innumerable flora and fauna that has amazed the professionals and their imaginations from time immemorial. Guardians and parents are often eager to find texts and related stuff for children that are enchanting, knowledgeable, exciting and entertaining too. Visual imagination and sophistication have amazed kids in cinematic text, and Finding Nemo offers quite interesting acquaintances with sea creatures. Finding Nemo offers a rare story of love, compassion and courage for children, centering it on hope and survival through a balanced act of a clownfish called Nemo. The present article is a working analysis of Stanton's Finding Nemo, a significant visual text for children, charting its association to kid's world of imagination and concerns for the environment.

Keywords: Environment, Children's Literature, Cinema, Visual imagination, Relationship

While going through the experiences of young minds

of the children, it is very convincing to read them like crazy, curious and inquisitive human brains, inventing in their own unique terms. The knowledge volumes of the *Junior Encyclopaedia for Curious Young Minds*, too could be an inseparable companion for children. Many children are seen not letting their fingers stop in the study of amphibians. Especially fish is quite a popular object among children. One can easily find these children telling the stories of their imagination, underwater. The children find millions and millions of species of fish and other water creatures as their close friends. Interestingly, they do not exactly understand how to count millions of varied aquatic lives under water. When it comes to water, it is the oceans that they can count on fingertips, to speak of Arctic, Pacific and Indian Ocean, of course, at such ease and defined the aura of their shaped imagination as if they are talking of something as the next-door ponds or lakes. One can observe them finding a lot of fish talking to them right out of Yellow Sea, the Black Sea, the Red Sea. The younger mind's fantastic imaginary exploration keeps elevating everyone's spirit to remain intact with the aquatic lives, specifically the varied variety of fish, and their beautiful hues and fins that they sketch, draw and colour in. The children put them in their imaginary seas and oceans that occupy pages in their drawing books and stickers. The cravings for procuring print outs, stickers, books, magazines and encyclopaedia that shape and talk of fish, make them dance, sing to their tunes, language, colours, flippers and flappers that only they can understand.

In their charged conversations, the children may be seen to share with parents and others that the Gray Whale is the longest mammal that can swim up to ten thousand kilometres, only to leave anyone stunned and surprised. One would be amazed to find the same, elaborating the details on page 99 of *Junior Encyclopaedia for Curious Young Minds* that gives complete information of the swimming skills of the Gray Whale in the subtropical waters of Baja, Mexico. It is to our surprises and amusements that they often play fish-related games, as their favourite ones, again to reveal their knowledge of Piranha fish, often transforming their roles into one of those piranhas that feed on almost anything that comes her way in the fresh-water rivers of South America. Interestingly, they can be found describing the Piranhas' natural habitat as one of the significant creatures, and that there are those quite harmless piranhas – the vegetarians that live on a diet of fruits. The conception of Piranhas being tiny creatures with scathing teeth which can even eat big sharks and humans would obviously be filtered with an added knowledge that the children often ask us to refer from books. For instance, one such stuff is written by Anita Ganeri, where Michel Posen has illustrated Piranhas at page number 13, that it "can strip the meat off a cow in minutes" (Ganeri13). These beautiful inquisitive minds often talk about the working of Fighting Fish, Shooting fish, Scaly Armour, fish that change colours, Hammer-Head Fish, Sharks, Mermaids' Purses, Ray Fish, Hag Fish, Shrimp, Porcupine Fish, the Mud Skippers, Angler Fish, Floating Fish, Cold Fish, Gentle Giant, Sea Anemone, Sea Urchins, Stone Fish, the Flounder, the Great Barracuda, the Siamese, Jelly Fish, Clown Fish, Blue Whale, Discus, Shoals, Saw Fish, Sea Horses, Crabs, Star Fish, Clams, Slugs and Snails, Squids, Oysters, Cutlet Fish, Sun Star, Sea Cucumbers, etc. They talk about Round white coins called Bottom Dollars, Dolphins, Porpoises, Singing Whales, Back Scratchers, Narwhals and Bottle Noses, Brainy Whale, Octopus and some sea monsters, Molluscs, Tube Worms, Lobsters, Neon tetra, and a number of Bizarre Beings.

Coloured with the fanciful, imaginary and knowledge

power pack, an interesting children's film, and an exemplary visual text called *Finding Nemo* directed by Andrew Stanton deserves special attention. *Finding Nemo* is an American animated film. Representing the genre of an animated adventure film, it was released in 2003, and since then it is reining the imagination of children around the world. The screenplay of *Finding Nemo* is credited to be written by Bob Peterson, David Reynolds, and Andrew Stanton from a story written by Andrew Stanton.

Primarily *Finding Nemo* is the story of finding a baby clown fish Nemo by his father -clown fish Marlin. Father fish Marlin used to keep his little son Nemo in a much pampered and protected zone. Unfortunately, on an ominous day, Nemo is lost, and here starts the adventure where Marlin sets on overcoming the odds with Dory, a regal blue fish tang.

Finding Nemo, a 2003 Pixar animation style, exemplifies a visual text, a vision of images and rare unexpected beauty of nature in its varied colour and form that brings the life under the sea, the flora and fauna of shallow water, somewhere close to Australia. It is a moving story that swings the emotions of the audience – kidding at times and tragic at the other moments. It connects to the hearts of children at large. The story brings to the kids, the adventures of little Nemo, a clownfish. Although born with an underdeveloped fin, Nemo, with a curious mind always thinks to invent and discover the world around. Nemo has a desire to see and find how the world, round it, works. The kids find themselves being attached not only with its colourful bodily aura but also with 'the entire time carefree attitude.' They want to swim with Nemo across the sea and want to enter the world of colourful tropical fish, and to penetrate the zones generally prohibited by Nemo's father Marlin.

Marlin is anxious and worried about Nemo's craziness and crafty character that frequently encourages Nemo to follow up the root hidden to it. Any guardian or parents of a son or daughter would find Marlin, the father of Nemo as one's close associate who would advise the children to be cautious of the dangers and the life-threatening vibes and would often ask to take

measures and precautions before entering the ways of the world. Marlin, like any father, is obsessed of his love to the only child whom he could save after a much-exaggerated warlike situation, when he and his wife Coral, the female clownfish could not protect all those four hundred eggs that were lost to the attack by Barracudas. It is shown in the film that on the first day of his school, Nemo receives many advising and warnings from his father Marlin, for instance, to stay away with the mess in the class and avoid the dangers of the deep water. Marlin, after the loss of his wife Coral and their other eggs, could not accept the risk of losing Nemo anymore. His advice to his son reminds the similar fatherly guidance as of Polonius to Laertes as a caution one should keep in mind apropos to the ways of the world, in William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. All adults, perhaps, would associate with the genuineness of the advice of father Marlin to his little clownfish Nemo on an average estimate of this kind of relationship that binds humans together.

The children may be observed to be anxious and astonished to find little Nemo, forgetting all advice of his father Marlin, when it, suddenly, was caught up by a pair of scuba divers through a speed boat at a greater distance from the Great Barrier Reef. The Great Barrier Reef was the place where Nemo used to live, over Sea Anemone, with his father Marlin. It flashes across immediately that the great Barracuda has been known to attack humans. The *Junior Encyclopaedia for Curious Young Minds* reads that "these creatures vary in size, the biggest reaching up to two metres, and they have very long and sharp teeth. They are known for many attacks on divers, especially the ones that have a lot of shiny stuff on them. This is because they confuse the shiny objects with the shiny scales of their prey. They love bright and glittering things, so the next time you want to go deep-sea diving you might want to leave your jewellery at home" (160).

The untoward incidence is a heavy penalty that Nemo had to pay in disobeying his father's concerns, for which he was often unintentionally embarrassed during his dropping at Nemo's school. The story, then, is fabricated to cover the adventurous journey that Nemo's

father Marlin took on, along with his friend and companion Dory, a female Blue Tang, who suffers from a short-term memory loss. Nemo has been shown to be a captive in the saltwater aquarium of a dentist in Sydney, where he meets many a fellow fish mate. It is here that he learns to fight for the big escape. Nemo's thoughts on dentist's niece Darla often horrify him on the pretext that his other fellows of the tank shared regarding Darla's careless attitude and maltreatment towards fish in the aquarium. It is because of dentist's niece Darla they have lost some of their dear fish mates in the recent past. The sympathetic attitude of Migel, a pelican, towards the fish in the tank gang, has been amazing and awesome to bring about the incredible elements of the plot towards the final escape of little Nemo and the final happy meeting of Nemo with his father Marlin. The ending of the story and the happy meeting of Nemo with his father Marlin comes alive with a twist in the story when Dory, in the whole process, is caught up by a fishing boat. It is now that brave Nemo enters the net to pass an order, and to cast influence upon the fish to make them swim downward in order to break the boat's net. It is all with a purpose to escape, and they remain successful. It is here that Nemo's aunty Dory reunites with his friend Marlin, Nemo's father. The children are taken to make up a big bang, clapping for the safety of the fish whose lives are saved underwater.

Clownfish as of Marlin and Nemo do not seem to be clowns at all, they exemplify rare courage and patience and a story of faith and belief, a warm relationship that binds them together. Their story inspires every human being. What one cannot forget in the deep blue-black waters of the sea is that when Nemo's father Marlin and his friend Dory, the Blue Tang were engulfed by a blue whale, leaving the children dumb and silent. However, the episode energises the children with the hope that the clownfish and the Blue Tang would be able to make up their survival. *Junior Encyclopaedia for Curious Young Minds* states that "the largest of all the sea animals are the whales. These creatures look like huge fish but in fact, they are mammals; they breathe air and are warm-blooded

creatures. This means that their bodies remain warm, even if the sea is cold. Whales breathe air just as we human, do and often have to come to the surface for air every five to seven minutes. If they stay underwater for too long, they can drown" (173). It is amazing to find Blue Tang Dory, communicating their plight of finding Nemo in the eastern Australian currents to the Blue Whale (that engulfed Dory and Marlin), and the Blue Whale helping and carrying them to Sydney Harbour, expelling them through his blowhole.

Similarly, it amuses the children to find the scene of Seagulls fighting for the prey Marlin and Dory who were saved by Nigel, the pelican. The language and behaviour of the porcupine fish, the Sea Star peach, Cleaner Shrimp, the Blow Fish Bloat, Royal Gramma Gurgle, the Dam Selfish Deb, celebrating the arrival of Nemo, and contributing to his training of making a narrow escape from the dentist's aquarium, offer some beautiful sights to look and enjoy at. The devastation of the aquarium at Darla's arrival, and the ultimate culmination of the movie taking the fish off the aquarium into their way back home sea, gives a lot of satisfaction to the kids and audience at large.

The cinematic text, *Finding Nemo*, effectively portrays, nature's own set of rules and frameworks that know to make up a fine balance in the environment. It questions the human understanding of handling fish aspects. The rebellious nature of the environmental lives has much to speak on the factors and measures that should be facilitated to penetrate each and every organism's space in the environment.

The film for the children speaks on the relationship that binds us together in the environment, a story of rare courage, skill and training towards hope and survival. It is, indeed, such a visual text that delivers the mysterious world of water, and the treasures that the water bodies have, since the time immemorial, to the cause of the beauty of nature and environment. *Finding Nemo* shares many subplots with *Pierrot the Clownfish*, a children's book that, to an extent, establishes a few similar thematic understanding (Perhaps that is the cause that allowed the author of *Pierrot the Clownfish*, Franck le Calvez to sue Disney for infringement of his intellectual rights. However, the judgment was ruled against him on the pretext, citing the colour differences between Pierrot and Nemo). The book *Pierrot, the Clownfish* and the film *Finding Nemo*, both are worthy of being significant texts in the category of Children's literature.

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Partition Trauma, Nostalgia and Rootlessness: A Reading of Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

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Abstract:

The violence of the Partition of India in 1947 is comprised not only of physical wounding but of psychological wounding as well. The different tales of memory, nostalgia and trauma remain embroiled not so much in the national discourse as in the subjectivities of individuals who have been directly or indirectly afflicted by the event. A close examination of Indian Partition fiction provides us with an understanding of the anguish and despair of the people who have been victims of the Partition holocaust. Narratives such as Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters call attention to the long drawn and multifaceted effect of this historical event on the psyche of the women of the country. What is significant here is that women's experience - the way they recall the event, the tales of their nostalgia, trauma and agony, provide a new perspective in looking into Partition history. This research article makes an attempt to analyze how far Partition fiction provides us with an understanding of the nature and extent of psychological trauma and sufferings of women who were compelled to adapt themselves in a new place after being uprooted from their homes. The study has been carried out with reference to Manju Kapur's novel, Difficult Daughters in an attempt to highlight the multidimensional aspects of the nostalgia, trauma and sense of rootlessness experienced by the women of the country during the Partition holocaust. The present study is based on a critical

analysis and interpretation of Manju Kapur's novel, Difficult Daughters from the perspective of trauma theory. It highlights the issues relating to the multidimensional aspects of the nostalgia, trauma and sense of rootlessness experienced by the women of the country during the Partition holocaust and their representation in the selected novel by Manju Kapur.

Keywords: Partition, Trauma, Women, Nostalgia, Rootlessness

The Partition of India in 1947 is not just an incident in the country's political history but it has also directly affected the common people of the nation, bringing about a myriad of suffering to the masses. Partition line had been inscribed between the two newly born countries, India and Pakistan in the name of according people their rightful places where their religion would be safeguarded and all their interests would be protected. The question that pertinently arises is how far the dream of the common people of the nation who endured immense hardships to reach the promised new and pure land had been fulfilled.

Partition narratives very often portray a dismal picture of the state of the people who somehow managed to reach the land of their dreams, leaving behind their homes and states. The different tales of memory, nostalgia and trauma remain embroiled not so much in the national discourse as in the subjectivities of individuals who have been directly or indirectly afflicted by the event. A close examination of Indian Partition fiction provides us with an understanding of the anguish

and despair of the people who have been victims of the Partition holocaust.

This research article makes an attempt to analyze how far Partition fiction provides us with an understanding of the nature and extent of psychological trauma and sufferings of women who were compelled to adapt themselves in a new place after being uprooted from their homes. The study has been carried out with reference to Manju Kapur's novel, *Difficult Daughters* in an attempt to highlight the multidimensional aspects of the nostalgia, trauma and sense of rootlessness experienced by the women of the country during the Partition holocaust.

The present study is based on a critical analysis and interpretation of Manju Kapur's novel, *Difficult Daughters* from the perspective of trauma theory. It highlights the issues relating to the multidimensional aspects of the nostalgia, trauma and sense of rootlessness experienced by the women of the country during the Partition holocaust and their representation in the selected novel by Manju Kapur. The primary source consulted is Manju Kapur's novel, *Difficult Daughters*. Besides the primary source, secondary sources have been consulted as well, together with utilization of various library resources and internet materials.

The partition of India is a human tragedy and an epoch making event of far reaching impact on the life of the people of the subcontinent. The violence of the Partition is comprised not only of physical suffering but of psychological wounding as well. Even decades after the historical event, the Partition continues to live on in the minds of the people of the country.

Narratives such as Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* call attention to the long drawn and multifaceted effects of this historical event on the psyche of the women of the country. It is not that the psychological impact of the event on women differs in degree from that on the men of the country, but it definitely differs in terms of dimension. What is significant here is that women's experience - the way they recall the event, the tales of their nostalgia, trauma and agony provide a new perspective in looking into

Partition history.

Both men and women have been affected and traumatized by the Partition holocaust and realities but the violation of women's sexuality distinctly connects the mind and the body in a most obvious manner. Nowhere is this link between the physical and psychological trauma so apparent than in the experiences of the female victims of the Partition riots. Therefore, the female experience of the violence, and their dislocation and trauma presents a new dimension to the event. The women who were tarnished in the hands of the men of rival communities, if not dead, faced social deaths i.e. were not accepted back by their own family members. Many of them were compelled to stay at rehabilitation camps, many perished, some were sold off, while some others found their ways to brothels or if fortunate enough, got married to their abductors and settled in a new country, severing all ties with their natal families.

Both the distress of women who had been sexually dishonoured and of those who managed to escape it by migrating to the other country is related to physical trauma. While the former group faced sexual violation, the latter group was physically ripped off from their homes and their birth places. This article examines Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* to understand the nature of the trauma of the women during India's Partition, associated with the reality when one's home and roots are destroyed and intruded upon. In a broader sense, it can be said that the Partition holocaust witnessed the breaking down of many women's personal worlds.

Narratives such as Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* show that the agony and distress associated with migration remain permanently imprinted in the psyche of the people. The scar remains fresh and memory interminable, even years after the eventuality. In the novel, the character Swarnalata's utterance summarizes the distress of an entire generation witnessing the destruction of the hopes they had nurtured for their free nation. As Ida asks Swarnalata if she had also left Lahore after Partition, the mental suffering of the older woman becomes quite evident:

Her voice fluttered and trembled over the division that had ploughed furrows of blood through her generation ... Nothing was going to make us forsake it... We had always coexisted. Why not now? (Kapur 124)

Ida narrates how Swarnalata, who has always been a strong believer of the integrity of the diverse communities of her country, had to flee from Lahore once communal tension broke up as a result of the Partition:

When they received the worried, secret warning from a Muslim friend they too hastily departed ... As it was they were hanging on by a long emotional thread that needed but one direct threat to snap. (Kapur 124)

Initially, Swarnalata and her associates could not believe that they had to leave their beloved city where they had spent their youth, carried out processions, conducted rallies and held conferences in support of national integrity in the face of British imperialism. Swarnalata's disbelief becomes a metaphor for the sheer absurdity of the act of partitioning one country on the basis of religion. Alok Bhalla writes in connection with this tragedy when millions of such people had to take the decision of leaving their homes almost overnight and also comments on the futility of religious fastidiousness as the basis of dividing a country and its people:

A majority of the migrants were ordinary Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs who were more concerned with the problems of survival in their daily lives than with their religious identities ... Many who crossed the newly marked borders, even those who had supported the various demands of separate countries, did not want to leave the places that they had come to regard as their zameen, their piece of ground, their home. (Bhalla 4)

Like thousands of people during the time of Partition, Swarnalata's family also left behind all their properties and belongings with the hope of coming back, once the abnormal situation would get over. They were sure

that it was just a passing phase, absurd and temporary. Swarnalata's recollection of her plight helps the readers to understand how an entire generation of the nation became mendicants overnight and what hardships they had to face to rebuild their lives in an entirely alien and new surrounding. But what is emphasized by most of the narrators of the partition story is that even if these uprooted people, through immense struggle, could regain establishment and material comfort, they could not escape the sense of loss and pain throughout their lives. After the interview with Swarnalata, Ida reflects:

Swarnalata's nostalgia is so strong that I felt it too. We live in the long shadow of those times. We live in the long shadow of those times, I thought as I sit before her, my pen my votive offering to her age and history. (Kapur 125)

The expression of this sense of nostalgia acquires different manifestations in different persons. While Swarnalata is expressive about her experiences during the Partition days, her friend Virmati chooses to remain completely silent on this subject. Ida comments on her mother's unwillingness to talk about the past, "No use thinking about the past", had been my mother's axiom, blanketing everything in oblivion." (Kapur 125)

There are several references to this reluctance to speak about that time by many survivors of the holocaust in Urvashi Butalia's book. She writes:

One of the commonest responses I encountered when I began work was people's (initial) reluctance to speak. What, they asked me, is the use of remembering, of excavating memories we have put behind us? (Butalia 10-11)

However, this reluctance to remember the past does not necessarily quell the people's sense of suffering and nostalgia associated with the eventuality. For instance, Virmati's silence did not repress her trauma. It communicates her pain not only for the loss of her homeland but also for the loss of her conviction in the Utopia she believed she could build with the person she loved.

As in several novels written on the background of this turbulent time where the story of a young protagonist is narrated, in *Difficult Daughters* too, the narrative provides us with two parallel trajectories that demand to be read against each other. The happenings of the public sphere collide with the happenings of the protagonist's personal life. The nation's freedom struggle reaches its pinnacle as the protagonist's struggle for personal emancipation eventually etches the line of partition between her and her family members. Virmati's refusal to recollect the past conveys her mixed feeling for the time and space within which she had strived to find an independent life of her own and subsequently lost her innocence and girlhood.

Trauma theorists often emphasize how the survivors of holocaust remain silent about their trauma that subsequently gets expressed through the second generation. Virmati's silence instead of repressing the memory, underlines it. This could be the reason why her daughter Ida is driven to uncover the past. She makes a visit to the place where her parents met for the first time, the Government College of Lahore. This can be read as an interesting case of what in trauma theory is known as the "conspiracy of silence". It is the behavior of a group of people that by unspoken consensus, does not mention, discuss, or acknowledge a given subject. Diane Harvey in her treatise on how the Jewish Holocaust has a deep impact on the children of the survivors, discusses the manner in which children growing up with an undercurrent of bereavement and mourning unwittingly inherits the trauma of their predecessors. She writes:

During their childhood, children of Holocaust survivors or second generation survivors, as they have come to be known, have been the unwitting recipients of their parents' trauma. Survivor parents have unconsciously transmitted onto their children much of their own traumas, as well as investing them with all their memories and hopes.

(Harvey 23)

Harvey's hypothesis finds a literary substantiation in Kapur's narrative. The novel opens with Ida's

comment, 'The one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother.' This is further emphasized by the title of the novel, *Difficult Daughters*. Ida counters with Virmati in every possible occasion and tries to mould herself in an exactly opposite manner than that of her mother. Yet, Virmati's suppressed nostalgia and rootlessness are inherited by her daughter. The narration describing Ida's exhilaration on visiting Lahore reinforces this point:

Going to Lahore is not easy. It takes me two months. The queues in the visa section are long, the atmosphere between the two countries as usual hostile... until I thumbed through the pages of people's memories, and saw my questions as a bookmark in their leaves. (Kapur 126)

The use of words like 'possessively' and 'hunger' explain that Ida, who was otherwise born and brought up in post-partition India, nurses this intense love and passion for the land of their ancestors. As Ida goes to visit the Lahore Government College, the place where her parents met each other, her intense sense of satisfaction seems to stem from her finding of her roots:

And the Oxford of the East. I saw Government College Lahore, first from the road ... I take photographs of every turn in the staircase, the corridors, the classrooms, outer and inner aspects, knowing I may never be able to come again. (Kapur 126)

Kapur's narrative highlights how the memory, nostalgia and feeling of rootlessness get transmitted through different generations.

From the above discussion on trauma of women resulting from an acute sense of nostalgia and rootlessness arising from one's loss of homeland, it can be concluded that there has been an intense psychological turmoil for the women of the subcontinent as they had been affected by the Partition of India. Narratives like Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* quite effectively bring out not only the wide range of the partition trauma but also the gendered nature of it. The trauma of women in Partition thus acquires

multiple dimensions as they were not only physically assaulted but also simultaneously denied kinship structure and were shorn off their basic identity. The process involves according to Antjie Krog's contention, denial of the very self as the body becomes "the site of torture and severe trauma". It also incorporates what in Jenny Edkins' words "a betrayal of trust", as the family disowned the victimized women. The fiction written on this historical period thus helps the reader to understand the wide range of psychological trauma of the women victims of the Partition.

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Dr. Bashabi Fraser's *The Ramayana: A Stage Play and A Screen Play*

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To condense an epic of 24000 verses into a limited sphere without causing any harm to the age old sentiments that is associated with it is not a very easy task. However, Professor Emerita Dr. Bashabi Fraser in her book *The Ramayana: A Stage Play and A Screen Play* has done the above mentioned task commendably. As Professor Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay states in the Introduction of the book, 'Fraser has successfully transformed the epical into the dramatic' (xiv). The cover page designed in the style of Kangra or Nagarkot style of painting gives us a feel of the ancient and medieval times. It transcends our mind to an era and before we start reading our mind is ready to encounter the society in which the epic is set.

For people who have grown up in India *The Ramayana* is a known story and our lives at some point of time has invariably been affected by the story irrespective of the communities to where we belong. And for people belonging to a different cultural background *The Ramayana* has always been a hazy spot, almost like an 'exotic' landscape full of Gods and sages, demons and the ultimate triumph of the good over the evil. Fraser in her storytelling has catered to both the above mentioned groups. Her form of storytelling is simple yet elegant, short but does not hamper the essence of the story in any way all the while marking the relevancy of the story in today's world. It is a book which will keep you glued to the pages, a story known will unfold

before you in various unknown aspects and will hold all your attention till the last page.

Fraser has completely preserved the zeitgeist of an epic - the book has a character list which gives the readers a short bio-note about their clan; the story begins in media res – in the middle of a jungle where Dasarath mistakes a blind man for a deer and shoots him and ultimately receives a curse which makes the wheel of fate and destiny revolve.

The stage play, told from the perspective of an omniscient narrator is an excellent and effective adaptation. The intelligent division of the scenes into various acts keeps our interest intact and makes it easier for us to perform the play. Even while reading, the short and crisp dialogues and the apt breakup of scenes plays out like a play in our head. We can actually visualise the events and hear the conversations between the characters - Ram and Lakshman fighting with the demons, the grand marriage ceremony of the four prince brothers of the Kosala kingdom, the desolate condition of Dasaratha when he was forced to banish Ram, his favourite son, into the forest for 14 years and make his younger son Bharata king to keep his promise to his second wife, Kaikeyi. The war scenes are replete with powerful imagery, 'a missile misses Ram as Lakshman's arrow diverts it' (Fraser 11) and Fraser has brought about various contemporary references which help the readers to connect with the actions 'beer belly' (Fraser 19). The use of modern equipments

like back screen to project certain events juxtaposes the ancient and the modern but does not cause any damage to the pace of reading. The various mythological characters have been described in mere one-liners so as to not confuse the readers with too much information but are enough to mark out distinctly the characteristics that make each and every one of them unique. The author has not burdened the readers with her own judgement or opinions about any character or event but has fully left this particular sphere to the discretion of her readers. The elaborate description of the props and setting: ‘the King’s bed chamber...on a carved king-size bed with an elaborate canopy’ (Fraser 5) and the exact movement of the characters: ‘moaning and shaking his head from side to side in his sleep’ (Fraser 5) and the timely intervention of music helps in imagining the exact lifestyle and the physiognomical details of the characters and at the same time serves as an effective guide if one wishes to enact the play.

The screen play, told from Sita’s point of view gives a much needed feminist perspective that has been long due to the epic. The prologue of the screen play gives a brief over view about the background of the story before the action actually begins. Instead of only focusing on Ram, Sita also tells us about the story of Lakshman and gives minute, yet, accurate details that help in effective understanding of the layers of the epic. And when Sita states that it is not only Ram and Lakshman’s story but her story too we are immediately reminded of the unjust trial or ‘agni pariksha’ that Sita had to undergo to prove her loyalty towards her husband: ‘the story of my undeserved trial which upset everything forever, and nothing was the same again’ (Fraser 88). The screen play metaphorically grounds the relevancy of the story as the narrator, Sita, states that: this story is about a curse and promises, about love and loyalty, about good and evil and a mighty battle (Fraser 88)

making it aptly clear that this is the ongoing trial between good and evil which will exist as long as human beings exist on the earth. Whenever we read a traditional retelling of Ramayana our entire attention span focuses on the bravery of Ram, Lakshman and Hanuman who uses their powers to ‘save’ Sita. But nobody talks how Sita also remains firm in her stand and effectively dodges all the tricks played on her by Ravan and saves herself within the limited spheres of captivity. The last lines of the screen play: ‘But this is not the end of my story or Ram’s story...It goes on...’ (Fraser 133) makes it clear that the story does not have a definite ending and probably this has kept the story etched in our memories for centuries.

Overall the book is a delightful read and an excellent re-telling of the epic *The Ramayana*. It successfully and neatly ties the story and after turning the last page we realise that it has and will effectively cater to both the target groups. For people who have not read *The Ramayana* it will give a condensed idea about the main story line of the epic and for people who have been associated with the book since birth it will bring back a treasure trove of memories.

The Ramayana: A Stage Play and A Screen Play

Author : Bashabi Fraser

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Year of Publication: 2019.

ISBN: 978-93-87799-28-8

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নগাঁও জিলাৰ ভাওনাৰ প্ৰধান আহাৰ্য্য ছোঁ-মুখা এক বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়ন

হিমাঞ্চলী হাজৰিকা

গৱেষিকা ছাত্রী

আধুনিক ভাৰতীয় ভাষা আৰু সাহিত্য অধ্যয়ন বিভাগ, গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

সংক্ষিপ্তসাৰ :

মুখাশিঙ্গ আহাৰ্য্যৰে এক অংগ হিচাপে ধৰা হয়। ভাওনাত ভয়ানক বা বীভৎস বস প্ৰকাশৰ বাবে আৰু দৰ্শকসকলক অলৌকিকতাৰ স্বাদ দিবৰ বাবে বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ মুখা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। এই মুখাশিঙ্গকে ছোঁ-মুখা নামেৰে অভিহিত কৰা হয়। এই ছোঁ শব্দটো সংস্কৃতৰ ‘ছায়া’ বা ছা শব্দৰ পৰা সৃষ্টি হৈছে বুলি কোনো কোনো পণ্ডিতে ক'ব খোজে। আনহাতে আন এচাম পণ্ডিতৰ মতে ‘ছোঁ’ শব্দটোৱে গা-অংশক আৰু ‘মুখা’ শব্দটোৱে মুখৰ অংশসমূহক বুজায়। ইয়াৰ উপৰি ভাওনাত ব্যৱহৃত সকলোৰোৰ আহি আহিলাকে ছোঁ বুলি কোৱা হয়। সেই দিশলৈ চালে ছোঁ শব্দই ভাওনাত মুখাভিনয়ৰ বাবে ব্যৱহৃত আহিলাকে বুজোৱা হয় বুলি ক'ব পাৰি।

ভাওনাত ছোঁ-মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ শক্ষৰদেৱেৰ কৰিছিল। চৰিত পুথিত ছোঁ মুখাৰ উল্লেখ পোৱা যায় এনেদৰে-

“কাহাকো নানান ছোঁ সাজিবাক দিলা।

বাম যাদ্বাৰ গীত আপুনি কৰিলা।”

(দৈত্যাৰ ঠাকুৰৰ চৰিত)

প্ৰথম নাট চিহ্ন্যাত্মাতে শক্ষৰদেৱেৰ ব্ৰহ্মাৰ মুখা, শিৰৰ মুখা, গৰড়ৰ মুখা, বিষুৱে অনন্ত শয্যা, দেৱতাৰ বাহন আদি ছোঁ-মুখা নিৰ্মাণ কৰি চমক সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। তেওঁ মুখাশিঙ্গৰ ব্যৱহাৰ চহা বাইজৰ মাজৰ পৰাই বুটলি লৈছিল বুলি ক'ব পাৰি। ড° নিৰ্মল প্ৰভা বৰদলৈ এ এই ক্ষেত্ৰত কৈছে যে- মানুহে শাক-পাচলিৰ বাৰীত হোৱা ভাল বস্তুৰ ওপৰত নজৰ বা মুখ নালাগিবৰ বাবে মানুহৰ আকৃতিৰ বিবিধ আহিলা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে-

সেয়ে হ'ল মুখাৰ প্ৰথম উদ্ভাৱন। ইয়াৰউপৰি মৰনা মাৰোতে গৰুৰে খেব খাব নোৱাৰাকৈ মুখত বাঁহেৰে এক বাঙালি বাঙ্গি দিয়া হয়, যাক মোখোৱা বুলি কোৱা হয়। এই মোখোৱা যি টোমৰ ‘মোৰেৰে’ৰে বৈ উলিওৱা হয় সেই ‘মোৰ’ মুখাছোঁ তৈয়াৰ কৰাতো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। সেয়ে ক'ব পাৰি যে সাধাৰণ গঞ্জা বাইজৰ পৰাই এনেদৰে সমল লৈ উন্নত কপত তেৰাই ছোঁ মুখাৰ উদ্ভাৱন কৰিছিল। আনহাতে, আন এচাম গৱেষকৰ মতে বাৰ বছৰ ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত ভৰণ কৰাৰ অভিজ্ঞতা জ্ঞানৰে ফচল হ'ল ছোঁ-মুখা। শংকৰদেৱ, মাধৱদেৱৰ পৰৱৰ্তী নাট্যকাৰ সকলেও ভাওনাত ছোঁ-মুখা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল।

এনেদৰেই বাঁহ কাঠি, বেত, কাপোৰ, মাটি আদিৰে সাঁচটো সাঁজিলৈ তাৰ ওপৰত কাপোৰ, কাগজ বা মাটিৰ লেওদি, তাত চৰিত্ৰ অনুযায়ী বিবিধ বং দি মুখা প্ৰস্তুত কৰা হয়। ছোঁ মুখা বা পুষ্ট মুখাই ভাওনাত দৰ্শকৰ মনত এক কৌতুহলৰ সৃষ্টি কৰে। লগতে হাস্য, বীৰ আঙুত আদি বসৰো যোগান ধৰে। ব্ৰহ্মা, নবসংহ, হনুমান, বাৱণ আদি চৰিত্ৰই মুখা পিঙ্কি যেতিয়া বাইজৰ আগত অভিনয় কৰে সেই অভিনয়ে স্বাভাৱিকতে জনসাধাৰণক কৌতুহলী কৰাৰ লগতে মনোৱঙ্গনৰো যোগান ধৰে। লোক পৰম্পৰাৰ চানেকি দেখিবলৈ পোৱা মুখাশিঙ্গক অংকীয়া নাটসমূহত সুকুমাৰ কলাৰ চৰ্চাৰ দিশত এক উল্লেখযোগ্য আৰিহণা হিচাপে গণ্য কৰা হয়।

এই গৱেষণা পত্ৰত নগাঁৰ ভাওনাৰ ছোঁ-মুখাৰ ওপৰত আলোকপাত কৰা হ'ব। বিশেষকৈ ছোঁ-মুখাৰ ভিন্ন ভিন্ন ভাগবোৰ দেখুৱাৰলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা হ'ব। এই শিঙ্গক কেনেদৰে জীয়াই ৰাখিছে সেইয়াও দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা হ'ব।

সংকেত শব্দ — ভাওনা, আহাৰ্য্য, ছোঁ, মোখোৱা, মোৰ, পুষ্ট

আৰণ্ডণি :

সত্ৰসমূহেই শক্ষৰদেৱে দি যোৱা নাট্য সংস্কৃতিৰ প্ৰসাৰতাৰ গুৰি ধৰিছিল। ঠায়ে ঠায়ে, সত্ৰৰ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধিৰ লগে লগে অসমত নাট্য পৰম্পৰাও বিকাশ লাভ কৰিবলৈ সুবিধা পালে। সত্ৰীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ প্ৰাণ স্বৰূপ মধ্য অসমতো বহু সত্ৰ গঢ়ি উঠিল। বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্মাচাৰ্যসকলে উজনি নামনি অসমত বিভিন্ন সত্ৰ স্থাপন কৰি মধ্য অসমতো অৰ্থাৎ বিশেষকৈ নগাঁও জিলাত বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলত ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰ কৰি ভিন্ন ভিন্ন ঠাইত সত্ৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰে। এই সত্ৰসমূহে নগাঁৰ ধৰ্ম-সমাজ-সংস্কৃতিৰ বিশেষ প্ৰভাৱ পেলালে। নগাঁও জিলাৰ সত্ৰ সমূহৰ নাট্য অভিনয় কলাৰ ভেটি সুদৃঢ় হ'ল, এই সত্ৰসমূহে অঙ্গীয়া নাটৰ পৰম্পৰাক জহি-খন্থি যাবলৈ নিদি জীয়াই বাখিলে। নগাঁও জিলাৰ সত্ৰসমূহৰ নাট্য পৰম্পৰাব এক নিজস্ব বৈশিষ্ট্য আছে, এই কথা সত্ৰৰ বুৰঞ্জীসমূহ চালেই বুজিৰ পাৰি। গুৰু দুজনাৰ সঁচিপতীয়া নাটৰ উপৰিও বৰ্তমানলৈকে সত্ৰাধিকাৰসকলে লিখা নাট সত্ৰসমূহত সংৰক্ষিত হৈ আছে। শক্ষৰদেৱে নাট বচনা কৰাৰে পৰা বৰ্তমানলৈকে নাট লিখি ভাওনা কৰাৰ বীতি সত্ৰ- নামঘৰসমূহ চলি আহিছে।

ভাওনা আৰু অভিনয়ৰ ভাগ :

ব্যৱহাৰিক দিশেৰে চালে নগাঁৰ ভাওনাৰ আঠেটা ভাগ পোৱা যায় —

- ১। নাট নিৰ্বাচন আৰু চৰিত্ৰ
- ২। নাট সধা বা নাট মেলা
- ৩। বহিঃ আখৰা
- ৪। উঠি আখৰা
- ৫। বৰ আখৰা
- ৬। নাট উপস্থাপন কৰা
 - ক) পূৰ্বৰংগ বা ধেমালী
 - খ) নাটৰ কাহিনীভাগ ৰূপায়ণ কৰা
- ৭। মুক্তিমংগল ভট্টিমা
- ৮। নাট সামৰা

উল্লেখিত এই আঠেটা ভাগৰ উপৰিও ভাওনাৰ আৰু কিছুমান ভাগ আছে। যিবোৱক ভাওনাৰ নেপথ্যৰ ভাগ বুলিব পাৰি। নগাঁৰ ভাওনাত কৃষ্ণ নাচ দুখন। সেয়া হৈছে —

- ক) দিন ভাওনাৰ কৃষ্ণ নাচ আৰু
- খ) বাতি ভাওনাৰ কৃষ্ণ নাচ

দিন ভাওনাৰ কৃষ্ণ নাচখন অলপ চুটি আৰু বাতি ভাওনাৰ নাচখন অলপ দীঘল। দুয়োখন নাচতেই সত্ৰীয়া নৃত্যত ব্যৱহৃত চটা, চলনা, জলক আৰু মুৰৰকা এই চাৰিটা সংযুক্ত হস্ত

দেখা পোৱা যায়।

কৃষ্ণ নাচৰ দৰেই সূত্ৰ নাচো দুখন —

- ক) দিন ভাওনাৰ সূত্ৰ নাচ
- খ) বাতি ভাওনাৰ সূত্ৰ নাচ

অৱশ্যে সূত্ৰ নাচৰ এই দুয়োখন নাচৰ ইখনৰ লগত সিখনৰ সাদৃশ্য আছে। এইখনিতে উল্লেখযোগ্য যে সূত্ৰাধীৰ দুবিধ নাচ ভাওনাত দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। এবিধ হৈছে ভট্টিমাৰ নাচ আৰু আনবিধ হৈছে শ্লোকৰ নাচ। বছৰ বাগৰাৰ লগে লগে কৃষ্ণ আৰু সূত্ৰাধীৰ নাচৰ বৈশিষ্ট্যসমূহ কিছু সলনি হৈছে। ইয়াৰ উপৰি দিন ভাওনা আৰু বাতি ভাওনাৰ দুয়োখন নাচ নকৰি কেৱল এখন নাচহে কৰাৰ বীতি বৰ্তমান প্ৰাৰ্থিত হৈছে। আজিৰ পৰা পঞ্চাশ বা যাঠি বছৰ আগতে সত্ৰৰ মজিয়াত নাটৰোৰ যিমান দীঘল আছিল সেই কলেৱৰ বৰ্তমান হাস হৈছে। গায়ন-বায়নৰ ক্ষেত্ৰে সময়ৰ পৰিকল্পনাৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰি ধেমালীৰ অংশটো চমু কৰা হৈছে। আগতে গায়ন-বায়নৰ জোৰাত বাবখনলৈকে ধেমালী বজোৱা হৈছিল। তাৰোপৰি একোখন ধেমালী তিনিবাৰলৈকে বজোৱা হৈছিল। বৰ্তমান ভাওনাত নাচৰ অংশ চুটি কৰাৰ দৰে ধেমালীৰ অংশও চমু কৰা হ'ল। সত্ৰৰ মজিয়াৰ চাৰিবেৰৰ পৰা ভাওনা যেতিয়া বাহিৰলৈ ওলাল, আজিৰ জনগণৰ ঝচি অনুকূলে ধেমালীৰ অংশকে ধৰি নৃত্য, বচন আদি সকলোৰোৰ বাজনা বা নাচেই চুটি কৰা হ'ল। বৰ্তমান সময়ত অসমৰ বাহিৰেও ভাৰতবৰ্যৰ বিভিন্ন প্ৰান্তত ভাওনা পৰিৱেশন কৰাৰ সময়ত গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰি সকলোৰোৰ নাচেই চমুৱাই কৰাত তাহানিৰ ভাওনা এখনৰ কলেৱৰ বৰ্তমান নাই।

ভাও বা অভিনয়ৰ ভাগ মুঠতে চাৰিটা। সেইকেইটা হ'ল —

- ১। আঙ্গিক
- ২। বাচিক
- ৩। আহাৰ্য্য
- ৪। সাত্ত্বিক

এই চাৰিওটা ভাগৰে বৈশিষ্ট্যসমূহ সুকীয়া সুকীয়া। আঙ্গিক হ'ল ভাৱৰীয়া বা অভিনেতা এজনে নিজৰ অঙ্গ-প্ৰত্যঙ্গ সঞ্চালনেৰে কৰা অভিনয়। বচনৰ প্ৰক্ষেপনৰ দ্বাৰা কৰা অভিনয়েই হৈছে বাচিক। আহাৰ্য্য হৈছে ভাওনাত বাহিৰৰ পৰা আহৰণ কৰা বন্ধুবিশেষ, যিবোৰৰ সহায়ত ভাও দিয়া সুচল হয় আৰু সাত্ত্বিক হ'ল প্ৰাণৰ আৱেগ প্ৰকাশেৰে আন্তৰিক ভাৰসমূহৰ দ্বাৰা কৰা অভিনয়।^১

আহাৰ্যৰ ভাগ ৪

নগঁৱৰ শক্রদেৱৰ ভাওনাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য আঙ্কিকগতভাৱে, বাচিকগতভাৱে আৰু আহাৰ্য্যগত ভাৱে অন্য ঠাইৰ ভাওনাতকৈ ভিন্ন। বিশেষকৈ আহাৰ্য্যগত বহুতো বৈশিষ্ট্য চকুত পৰে। আহাৰ্য্য হ'ল ভাওনাৰ বহিৰ্গত বস্তু বিশেষ। যাক আহৰণ কৰা হয় বাহিৰৰ পৰা। এইক্ষেত্ৰত প্ৰধানকৈ অস্তুকৃত বস্তুকেইবিধি হ'ল —

ক) পুস্ত — মুখা, পৰ্বত আদি

খ) সাজ-সজ্জা বা সাজ-পাৰ — ভাৱীয়াৰ পোচাক

গ) অঙ্গৰচনা - শৰীৰৰ বিভিন্ন অঙ্গত কৰা ৰূপসজ্জা

ঘ) অলঙ্কাৰ - পৰিধান কৰা বস্তু

ঙ) সঞ্জীৱ - বিভিন্ন জীৱ-জন্ম আদিৰ প্ৰস্তুতকৰণ

আহাৰ্য্য ভাওনাৰ এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভাগ। এই আহাৰ্য্যৰ ওপৰতেই নিৰ্ভৰ কৰি চৰিত্ৰসমূহ দৰ্শকসকলে নিৰ্কপণ কৰে। গোটেইকেইটা ভাগৰ ভিতৰত এই ভাগটোতেই সবাতোকৈ বেছি বৈশিষ্ট্য পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। আহাৰ্য্যই স্বকীয়তা বজাই ৰখাত সহায় কৰে। যিহেতু মানুহৰ নিজৰ বিচাৰ বুদ্ধিৰ প্ৰয়োগ আহাৰ্য্যত হ'ব পাৰে, সেয়ে নিজ লোক সংগ্ৰহ, লোকস্থিতিৰ জৰিয়তে নন সৃষ্টি আহাৰ্য্যত সন্তোৱ। আহাৰ্য্যই ভাওনাক বিশ্বৰ আগত স্বকীয়তাৰে উপস্থাপন কৰাত সহায় কৰিছে। এই আহাৰ্য্যৰে প্ৰধান ভাগ ছোঁ-মুখা ব্যৱহাৰ নগএও ভাওনাত বহু আগৱে পৰা আছে আৰু বৰ্তমানো প্ৰচলিত।

মুখা :

মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ মানুহে অতি প্ৰাচীন কালৰ পৰা কৰিছিল। অসমৰ পাহাৰীয়া জনগোষ্ঠীৰ মাজত মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ আছিল। জীৱ-জন্ম বা কাঠেৰে সজা বা অন্যান্য প্ৰাকৃতিক বস্তুৰে সজা মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত দেখা পোৱা যায়। পাহাৰীয়া লোকসকলে নিজৰ ঘৰৰ মূধত বা ৰাজহৰা ঠাইত মুখা বনাই আঁৰি থয়। এই মুখাবোৰে অপায়-অমংগল নাশ কৰে বুলি তেওঁলোকে অস্তকৰণেৰে বিশ্বাস কৰে। লোকশিল্পৰ এক অন্যতম আধাৰ হিচাপে মুখা শিল্প তাহানিৰে পৰা অসমীয়া সমাজৰ পৰিচিত আছিল। শক্রদেৱেৰ তীৰ্থ ভ্ৰমণৰ অভিজ্ঞতাৰে পুষ্ট হৈ অসমৰ এই লোকশিল্পক ধ্ৰুপদী শিল্পলৈ উন্নত কৰিলে বুলি ক'ব পাৰি। তেওঁৰেই এই কলাক পোহৰলৈ আনিলে। শক্রদেৱেৰ প্ৰথম নাট চিহ্ন্যাত্মাতে ব্ৰহ্মাৰ মুখা, শিৱৰ মুখা, গৰুড়ৰ মুখা, বিষ্ণুৰ অনন্তশয্যা, দেৱতাৰ বাহন আদি ছোঁ-মুখা শিল্প নিৰ্মাণ কৰি চমক সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। শ্ৰী শ্ৰী দ্বাৰিকা নাথ দ্বিজৰ ‘সন্তোৱলী’ পুথিত চিহ্ন্যাত্মাত যে ছোঁ-মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছিল তাৰ বৰ্ণনা আছে এনেদৰে —

পাগ জমা নাট্যকক দিল পৰিপাটি।
ছোঁ মুখা সাজিলেক কাঠ বাংশ কাটি ॥
অঘ বক চক্ৰবাত পুতনা ধেনুকা।
প্ৰলম্ব অৰিষ্ট দৈত্য কলিয় বেনুকা ॥
ইসৰৰ ছোঁ মুখা অনেক সাজয়।
দেখি দৰ্শকৰ যেন মনক মোহয় ॥^১

ভাওনাত শক্রদেৱেৰ নৱৰসৰ লগত নিমজ্জিত হৈ থকা ভক্তিৰসৰ স্বৰূপ প্ৰদৰ্শন আৰু সফল ৰূপায়ণৰ বাবে ছোঁ-মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। ভাওনাত ভয়ানক বা বীভৎস বস প্ৰকাশৰ বাবে আৰু দৰ্শকসকলক অলৌকিকতাৰ স্বাদ দিবৰ বাবেও বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। বৈয়াকৰণিক অৰ্থত ছোঁ-মুখা এটা যুৰীয়া শব্দ। ছোঁ শব্দই গা অংশক আৰু মুখা শব্দই মুখাংশক বুজায় বুলি কোৱা হয়। কোনো কোনো পণ্ডিতে ক'ব খোজে যে সংস্কৃতৰ ‘ছায়া’ বা ‘ছা’ শব্দৰ পৰা ছোঁ শব্দটো সৃষ্টি হৈছে। আনহাতে ভাওনাত ব্যৱহৃত সকলোবোৰ আহিলাকে ছোঁ বুলি কোৱা হয়। ভাওনাত ব্যৱহৃত আহিলাবোৰ থোৱা ঘৰটোকো ছোঁ ঘৰ বুলি কোৱা হয়। সেয়ে মুখা যিহেতু ভাওনাত ব্যৱহাৰ হয়। এই মুখাৰ লগত আহিলা শব্দটো নাহি ছোঁ শব্দতো হ'ল অৰ্থাৎ ছোঁ-মুখা বা মুখা-ছোঁ এই যুৰীয়া শব্দটোৰ প্ৰচলন হ'ল।

বিভিন্ন চৰিতত ছোঁ-মুখাৰ উল্লেখ থকালৈ চাই ক'ব পাৰি যে ভাওনাত এই আহিলাবিধৰ ব্যৱহাৰ এক অপৰিহাৰ্য্য অংগ আছিল। গুৰু চৰিত পুথিত শ্ৰীৰামচৰণ ঠাকুৰে মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ কথা এনেদৰে লিখিছে—

ভাওনার চোঁ যত সভা ঘৰে নিল।
আৰবস্তু দিয়া তাক তৈতে ঢাকি থৈল । । । ৪৮০
চোঁ গোট আৰে তাক যত্ন কৰি থৈলা ।
নৱগোটা মতাক একত্ৰ কৰি লৈলা ।
গৰুড়ৰ মুখা সৰ্বজয়ক দিলন্ত ।
কেতাইখায়ে খোল দোহাৰে ধৰিলেন্ত । । । ৪৮১^১

শক্রদেৱেৰ পৰৱৰ্তী কালতো এই ছোঁ-মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ ভাওনাবোৰত বৰ্তি থাকিল। সত্ৰসমূহে এই মুখা শিল্পৰ চৰ্চা কৰি এই শিল্পক জীয়াই বাখিলে। নগঁৱৰ চামগুৰি সত্ৰ, কৰতিপাৰ পুৰণি সত্ৰ, নসত্ৰ, ভেটিয়নি সত্ৰ, কৰচোঁ সত্ৰ, বালিসত্ৰ, শলগুৰি সত্ৰ, নৰোৱা সত্ৰ, পুৰণি ঘৰ সত্ৰ আদি সত্ৰ এই শিল্পৰ চৰ্চাৰ কেন্দ্ৰ হৈ পৰিছিল। লাহে লাহে ছোঁ-মুখা শিল্পৰ চৰ্চা কমি আছে যদিও চামগুৰি সত্ৰ, নৰোৱা সত্ৰ, পুৰণিৰ সত্ৰত এতিয়াও এই শিল্পৰ চৰ্চা আছে।^২ বিশেষকৈ কলিয়াবৰৰ পুৰণিৰ সত্ৰেৰ সত্ৰাধিকাৰে এতিয়াও ছোঁ-মুখা সাজি এই পৰম্পৰাক জীয়াই

ৰাখিছে।

শক্ষবদেৱে মুখাশিঙ্গৰ সৃষ্টি বাজি চহা বাইজৰ অভিজ্ঞতাৰ পৰা বুটলিছিল। অৱশ্যে তাৰ লগত তেখেতৰ বাবৰ বছৰ ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত কৰা অমগৰ অভিজ্ঞতাও মিহলি হৈ আছিল। মৰনা মাৰোঁতে গৰুৰে খেৰ খাব নোৱাৰাকৈ মুখত বাঁহেৰে এক বাঞ্ছনি দিয়া হয়, যাক মোখোৰা বুলি কোৱা হয়। এই মোখোৰা যি টোমৰ ‘মোৰে’ বেৰে উলিওৱা হয় সেই ‘মোৰ’ ছোঁমুখা বনোৱাতো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। সেয়ে ক’ব পাৰি গএগা বাইজৰ পৰাই এনেদৰ সমল লৈ উন্নত ৰূপত শক্ষবদেৱে ছোঁ-মুখাৰ উদ্ধৱন কৰিছিল।

ভৰত মুনিৰ নাট্যশাস্ত্ৰৰ আহায়ভিনয়ৰ ভাগ ‘পুষ্ট’য়েই সত্ৰীয়া বা চৰিত ভাষাত ছোঁ-মুখা বুলি নাবাযণ চন্দ্ৰ দেৱগোস্মামীয়ে ‘সত্ৰীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ স্বৰ্ণৰেখা’ শীৰ্ষক গ্রন্থত কৈছে।¹⁴ কিন্তু অঙ্গীয়া নাটক ব্যৱহৃত ছোঁ-মুখাক দুটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি বুলি নৰ্গাবৰ সত্ৰৰ সত্ৰাধিকাৰসকলে কয়। সেয়া হৈছে—

(ক) ছোঁ-মুখা আৰু (খ) পুষ্ট মুখা

(ক) ছোঁ-মুখা : যি মুখা ভাওনাত ভাৱীয়াই গোটেই শৰীৰ ঢাকিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে, তেনে মুখাকে ছোঁ-মুখা বোলে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে ভাওনাত ৰাবণ, কুণ্ঠকৰ্ণ, ঘোঁৰা, বৰাহ, হাতী, জটায়ু আদি চৰিত্ৰাই ছোঁ-মুখা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি দৰ্শকক মনোৰঞ্জন দিয়ে।

(খ) পুষ্ট মুখা : কেৱল মুখখন ঢাকিবৰ বাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা মুখাই হৈছে পুষ্ট। ব্ৰহ্মা, নৰসিংহ, হনুমান আদি চৰিত্ৰাই পুষ্ট মুখা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে।¹⁵

মুখা বনোৱাৰ সামগ্ৰী, ইয়াক উপস্থাপনৰ কৌশল আদিৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি ছোঁ-মুখাক তিনি প্ৰকাৰে ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি—

(ক) সন্ধিম

(খ) ব্যাজিম আৰু

(গ) বেষ্টিত¹⁶

(ক) সন্ধিম : জন্মৰ ছাল, কাপোৰ, বেত, বাঁহ আদিৰে যি মুখা সজা হয়, সেই ছোঁ-মুখাসমূহেই হৈছে সন্ধিম।

(খ) ব্যাজিম : যান্ত্ৰিক পদাৰ্থৰ দ্বাৰা নিৰ্মিত মুখাই হৈছে ব্যাজিম।

(গ) বেষ্টিত : যি মুখা শুদ্ধ কাপোৰেৰে লৰচৰ কৰিব পৰাকৈ সজা হয় তেনে মুখাকে বেষ্টিত ছোঁ-

মুখা বোলে।

ভাওনা এখনত এটা চৰিত্ৰ উপস্থাপন কৰিবলৈ যাওঁতে যি আৱৰণৰ সহায়ত অন্য ৰূপ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰা হয় তাকে মুখা বুলি কোৱা হয়। সাধাৰণভাৱে মুখাক দুটা ভগত ভগাৰ পাৰি। এটা হৈছে— লৌকিক মুখা আৰু আনটো হৈছে অলৌকিক মুখা। (ক) লৌকিক মুখা : যি মুখৰ অবয়ব মানুহে দেখা পায় থাকে অৰ্থাৎ জীৱ-জন্তু, মানুহ আদি প্ৰাকৃতিক গঢ়ত সাজি উলিওৱা মুখাকে লৌকিক মুখা বোলে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে— ৰজা, মন্ত্ৰী, গৰু, ভালুক, গাহৰি, ঘোঁৰা, সিংহ আদিৰ মুখাক লৌকিক মুখৰ ভিতৰত অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰা হয়। কোনো অতিৰিক্ত ব্যঞ্জনা এই মুখাবোৰত দেখা পোৱা নাযায়। সচৰাচৰ লোকচক্ষুৰ আগত থকা চৰিত্ৰকে উপস্থাপন কৰিবলৈ ভাওনাত এই মুখাবিধিৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়।

(খ) অলৌকিক মুখা : যি মুখা মানুহৰ বাবে অস্বাভাৱিক। মানুহে তাৰ ধাৰণা কেৱল শাস্ত্ৰৰ বৰ্ণনাৰ দ্বাৰা বা কল্পনাৰ দ্বাৰা কৰিব পাৰে। তেনে অস্বাভাৱিক মুখাকে অলৌকিক মুখা বোলা হয়। যি মুখাত অপ্রাকৃতিকতা বিদ্যমান অৰ্থাৎ অলৌকিকতা বিবাজমান ভাওনাত ব্যৱহৃত তেনে মুখাই হৈছে অলৌকিক মুখা। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে— কালীনাগ, বৰাহ, নৰসিংহ, পুতনা, অঘাসুৰ, বঘাসুৰ আদিৰ মুখা অলৌকিক মুখা।

আনহাতে, কেৱল মুখাক নিৰ্মাণ কৰা আহিলা অনুসৰি, ছোঁ-মুখাক চাৰিটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি—

(ক) বাঁহৰ মুখা

(খ) কাগজৰ মুখা বা সাঁচৰ মুখা

(গ) কাঠৰ মুখা আৰু

(ঘ) কাপোৰৰ মুখা

(ক) বাঁহৰ মুখা : বাঁহৰ কাঠিবে কৰা মুখাই হৈছে বাঁহৰ ছোঁ-মুখা। সকলোবোৰ বাঁহৰেই মুখা তৈয়াৰ কৰা নহয়। পৈগত জাতিবাঁহৰেহে কৰা হয়। এই জাতিবাঁহৰো আকৌ নিৰ্বাচন প্ৰণালী আছে। যি জাতিবাঁহ একে সৰল বেখাত থকা, আলু উঠা, দুই আটে বছৰীয়া বাঁহ ছোঁ-মুখা সজাৰ বাবে সেয়া উন্নম। মুখৰ বাবে ১/২/৩/৪ পাৰৰ বাঁহৰ টুকুৰা কৰি দুই-তিনি দিন পানীত গোৱাই ৰ'দত লেৰেলাই লোৱা হয়। তাৰপিছত সৰু সৰু কাঠি কৰি মানুহৰ মূৰৰ আৰু গাৰ জোখমতে কাঠিবিলাকেৰে একোটা সাজ তৈয়াৰ কৰা হয়। গএগ বাইজে ধানৰ কঠিয়া সাঁচিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা মোৰটোৱেই ছোঁ-মুখা সাজোঁতে ব্যৱহাৰ হয়। এই মোৰটোকে লথিমী মোৰ বুলি কোৱা হয়। মুখা বোৱা শেষ হোৱাৰ পিছত বাঁহৰ শলি, কামিৰে সুন্দৰকৈ খোল খাৰ

নোরাবাকৈ বান্ধি পেলোরা হয়। তার পিছত ইয়ার ওপৰত কুমাৰৰ মাটি লগাই মুখাৰ বিভিন্ন অংশৰ সুন্দৰ কৃপ ফুটাই তোলা হয়। এই কুমাৰৰ মাটি কাঠিৰ ওপৰত পোনে পোনে নলগাই সৰং সৰং কাপোৰ মাটিখিনিৰ ওপৰত লেটিয়াই ভাঁজ নোখোৱাকৈ ইখনৰ পাছত সিখন লগোৱা হয়। পিছত এই মুখা শুকুৱাই হেঙ্গল-হাইতাল, ক'লা বৰ্জৰ বাবে জাতিলাওৰ খোলাৰ ছাই, বগাৰ বাবে ধৰল মাটি, নীল আদি বিভিন্ন বঙ্গেৰে আঁকি দিয়া হয়। এই বাঁহৰ ছোঁমুখাক তিনিটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰা হয়। সেয়া হৈছে—

- (i) মুখ মুখা
- (ii) লোটুকুৰি মুখা আৰু
- (iii) বৰমুখা

(i) মুখ মুখা : কেৱল মুখ ঢাকিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা বাঁহৰ মুখাকে মুখ মুখা বোলে।

(ii) লোটুকুৰি মুখা : যিৰোৰ মুখা হাত, ভৰি, মূৰ, মুখ আদি লৰচৰ কৰিব পৰাকৈ সজা হয় তেনে মুখাই লোটুকুৰি মুখা। মুখাৰ সন্ধিস্থলবোৰত কাপোৰ লগাই সম্বলিত কৰিব পৰাকৈ বনোৱা হয়। কেতিয়াবা কেতিয়াবা বৃহৎ আকাৰৰ লোটুকুৰি মুখা কৰি সজা হয়। আনহাতে, মুখ মুখাকো কোনো কোনো সময়ত লোটুকুৰি মুখা কৰি সজা হয়।

(iii) বৰমুখা : এই মুখা বৃহৎ আকাৰৰ বাবে ইয়াক বৰমুখা বোলে। এই মুখাৰ মুখখনহে মেলিব-জপাৰ পৰাকৈ সজা হয়। আন কোনো অংশই লৰচৰ কৰিব পৰা নাযায়। পেট আৰু বুকুৰ মাজৰ অংশত মানুহে কান্ধত লৈ নচুৱাৰ পৰাকে দুডাল কান্ধ মাৰি বান্ধি দিয়া হয়। ভাৱীয়াই ভাও দিওঁতে দেখিবৰ কাৰণে মাৰি দুডালৰ পোনে পোনে জালনা এখন দৰ্শকে ধৰিব নোৱাকৈ দিয়া থাকে।

(খ) কাগজৰ মুখা বা সাঁচৰ মুখা :

এই মুখাৰ একেবাৰে ওজন নাই বাবে ভাওনাত ইয়াৰ ব্যৱহাৰ বেছিকৈ কৰা হয়। পথমে মাটিৰে মুখাৰ সাঁচ তৈয়াৰ কৰি তাত কাগজ লগাই ভালদৰে চোকা ব'দত শুকুৱা হয়। তাৰ পিছত মাটিৰোৰ সাঁচটোৱ পৰা উলিয়াই প্ৰয়োজন অনুসৰি বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ বং সনা হয়। কেৱল মুখাংশৰ বাবেহে এই মুখা

ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়।

(গ) কাঠৰ মুখা :

এই মুখা অলপ ওজন হোৱা বাবে ইয়াৰ প্ৰচলন কম। কিন্তু এই মুখা বহুত দিনলৈ ভালে থাকে। কাগজৰ মুখা, কাপোৰৰ মুখাতকৈ এই মুখা বেছিদিনলৈ সংৰক্ষণ কৰি থ'ব পাৰি। কাঠকাটি মিহিকৈ খোলনি কৰি ইয়াক ভাওনাত ভাৱীয়াসৱে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। এই মুখাও কেৱল মুখ অংশৰ বাবেহে প্ৰস্তুত কৰা হয়। সমগ্ৰ শৰীৰ ঢকা ছোঁ-মুখা ইয়াৰে তৈয়াৰ কৰিব নোৱাৰিবি। কাঠৰ মুখাত দিয়া বং বহুতদিনলৈ ভালে থাকে। বাবে বাবে বং বুলোৱাৰ প্ৰয়োজন নহয়।

(ঘ) কাপোৰৰ মুখা :

কাপোৰ, তুলা লগতে বেজী, সূতা আদিলৈ তাৰে সাঁচ তৈয়াৰ কৰি এই মুখা প্ৰস্তুত কৰা হয়। মুখ মুখাৰ বাহিৰেও সমগ্ৰ শৰীৰ ঢক খোৱাকৈও এই মুখা সজা হয়। চুলি, ডাৰি, নোম আদি এইবিধি ছোঁ মুখাত লগোৱা হয়। কাপোৰৰ বাবে এই মুখা পিঙ্কিৰলৈ যথেষ্ট সুবিধা। সেই হেতুকে ভাওনাত এই ছোঁ মুখাৰ বহুল প্ৰয়োগ হোৱা দেখা যায়। কাপোৰৰ বাবে এই মুখা পিঙ্কি সমগ্ৰ শৰীৰ সংঘালন কৰিবলৈও সুবিধা, সেয়ে এই মুখা বৰ্তমান ভাওনাবিলাকত বেছিকে ব্যৱহাৰ হয়।

নগএঞ্চ ভাওনাত মুখাৰ প্ৰচলন বেছি। সত্ৰসমূহে এই শিল্পৰ চৰ্চা বৰ্তমানো অব্যাহত বাখিছে। ভাওনাত ৰাবণ, কুস্তকৰ্ণ, ঘোৰা, বৰাহ, হাতী, জটায়ু আদিৰ বাবে ছোঁ-মুখা আৰু অন্যান্য চৰিত্ৰ যেনে— ব্ৰহ্মা, নৃসিংহ, হনুমান আদিৰ ভাও ল'বলৈ পুষ্ট মুখা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়।

বাঁহ কাঠি, বেত, কাপোৰ, মাটি আদিৰে দৈনন্দিন ব্যৱহৃত বস্তুৰে জকাটো সাজি লৈ তাৰ ওপৰত কাপোৰ-কাগজ বা মাটিৰ লেও দি, তাত চৰিত্ৰ অনুযায়ী বিবিধ বং দি মুখা প্ৰস্তুত কৰা হয়। আজিকালি কোনো মুখা শিল্পীয়ে মিহি তাঁৰেৰেও জঁকা সাজি লৈ তাৰ ওপৰত কাপোৰ আৰু মাটিৰ লেও দি মুখা প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ লৈছে। মুখা প্ৰস্তুত কৰাৰ ই আধুনিক কৌশল বুলিব পাৰি। ছোঁ-মুখাই ভাওনাত দৰ্শকৰ মনত এক কৌতুহলৰ সৃষ্টি কৰে। লগতে হাস্য, বীৰ, অঙ্গুত আদি ৰসৰেও ৰাইজৰ মন সংঘালিত কৰে। ব্ৰহ্মা, নৃসিংহ, হনুমান, ৰাবণ আদি চৰিত্ৰই ভাওনাত যেতিয়া মুখা পিঙ্কি দৰ্শকৰ আগত ভাও দিয়ে, সেই ভাওৰে স্বাভাৱিকতে জনসাধাৰণক কৌতুহলী কৰাৰ লগতে মনোৰঞ্জনৰো যোগান ধৰে।

হেঙ্গল, হাইতাল, হালধীয়া বং, নীল আৰু ঢলমাটি বা বগামাটিহে মুখাসমূহ বং দিবলৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছিল। আজিকালি

অৱশ্যে এনে ৰং ব্যৱহাৰ নকৰি বজাৰত উপলক্ষ সুলভ ৰঙৰেই
মুখাসমূহ ৰং দিয়া হয়।

সামৰণি :

ভাওনাত মুখাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ শক্ষবদেৰৰ পৰৱৰ্তী
নাট্যকাৰসকলেও কৰিলে। মাধৰদেৱ, গোপাল আতা,
পুৰুষোত্তম ঠাকুৰ আদিৰ পৃষ্ঠপোষকতাত অসমৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত
সত্ৰ গঢ়ি উঠিল। শক্ষৰী যুগৰ নাটসমূহৰ উপৰিও শক্ষৰোত্তৰ
যুগতো এইসত্রবোৰৰ সত্ৰাধিকাৰসকলে নাট বচনাৰ পৰম্পৰা
অক্ষুণ্ণ ৰাখিলে। শক্ষৰোত্তৰ যুগৰ এই নাটসমূহত যুদ্ধ-বিগ্ৰহৰ
পয়োভৰ বাঢ়িল। বধকাব্যসমূহক লৈ নাট বচনাৰ পৰম্পৰাই
মুখ্য ভূমিকা গ্ৰহণ কৰিলে। অসুৱ, ৰাক্ষস, ভগৱানৰ বিভিন্ন
অৱতাৰ, অতিকায় চৰিত্রসমূহ ৰূপায়ণ কৰোঁতে মুখাৰ পয়োজন
হ'ল। এই মুখাবোৰ সত্ৰসমূহত নিজে সাজি লোৱাৰ ব্যৱস্থা হ'ল।
সেয়ে নগাঁৰকে ধৰি অসমৰ প্রায়বোৰ সত্ৰতেই মুখা গঢ়াৰ শিল্পই
গঢ়ি লৈ উঠিল। নগাঁৰৰ কলিয়াবৰ অঞ্চলৰ চামগুৰি সত্ৰ
মুখাশিল্পৰ এখন বিখ্যাত সত্ৰ আছিল। ইয়াৰ উপৰি বালিসত্ৰ,
চিপহা সত্ৰ, কৰচোঁ সত্ৰ মুখাশিল্পৰ চৰ্চাত আগৰণুৱা সত্ৰ
আছিল। কলিয়াবৰৰ পুৰণিঘৰীয়া সত্ৰৰ হৰেণ মহন্তই বৰ্তমানো
মুখাশিল্পৰ চৰ্চা অব্যাহত ৰাখিছে। তেওঁ তাঁৰেৰে জকঁটো সাজি
তাৰ ওপৰত মুখা নিৰ্মাণ কৰি মুখাশিল্পক এক আধুনিক ৰূপ
দিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিছে।^৮

নগাঁৰৰ সত্ৰসমূহে মুখাশিল্পক নৰ প্ৰজন্মৰ মাজত জনপ্ৰিয়

কৰিবলৈ সময়ে সময়ে বিভিন্ন কাৰ্যসূচী হাতত লৈ আছিছে।
কোনো কোনো সত্ৰই নিজৰ সত্ৰতে কৰ্মশালা পাতি এই
পৰম্পৰাক আগুৱাই নিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিছে। এই শিল্প একেবাৰে
নোহোৱা হৈ যোৱা সত্ৰসমূহৰো কিছু কিছু সত্ৰই নতুনকৈ
মুখাশিল্পৰ চৰ্চা কৰি, ইয়াৰ উন্নতি সাধনৰ বাবে যত্নপৰ হৈছে।
লোকপৰম্পৰাৰ চানেকি দেখিবলৈ পোৱা মুখাশিল্পক অক্ষীয়া
নাটসমূহত সুকুমাৰ কলাৰ চৰ্চাৰ দিশত এক উল্লেখযোগ্য
অৱিহণা হিচাপে গণ্য কৰি এই মুখাক সংৰক্ষণ আৰু শ্ৰী-বৃন্দিৰ
ব্যৱস্থা গ্ৰহণ কৰিব লাগে।

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১. [https://bn.m.wikipedia.org>wiki](https://bn.m.wikipedia.org/wiki)
২. সুৰ্য হাজৰিকা (সম্পা.) : শ্ৰীশ্রী দ্বাৰিকানাথ দ্বিজ কৃত
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৩. বসন্ত কুমাৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্য (সম্পা.) : গুৰুচৰিত, পৃ. ৩২৫। ১ম
প্ৰকাশ, ১৯৮৫।
৪. সংবাদদাতা হৰেণ মহন্ত, কলিয়াবৰ। তাৎ ইং ০৯-১২-২০১৬
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পৃ. ৬১৭। ১ম প্ৰকাশ, ২০০৫।
৬. সংবাদদাতা— ভূৰন বৰা, কলিয়াবৰ। তাৎ ইং ০৯-১২-
২০১৬।
৭. নাৰায়ণ চন্দ্ৰ দেৱগোস্বামী : পুৰোক্ত প্ৰস্তুতি, পৃ. ১২১। ২০০৫।
৮. সংবাদদাতা দেৱানন্দ গোস্বামী, বৰদোৱা। তাৎ ইং ০৯-
১২-২০১৬।

প্ৰসঙ্গ পুঁথি

ক) অসমীয়া গ্ৰন্থ :

নেওগ, মহেশ্বৰ	ঃ	প্ৰাচ্য শাসনাবলী। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। গুৱাহাটীঃ অসম প্ৰকাশন পৰিষদ, ১৯৭৪। মুদ্ৰিত।
(সম্পা.)	ঃ	গুৰু চৰিত কথা। ২য় সংস্কৰণ। গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ঃ প্ৰকাশন বিভাগ, ২০০৩। মুদ্ৰিত।
(সম্পা.)	ঃ	শ্ৰী শ্ৰী শক্ষবদেৱ। ৭ম সংস্কৰণ। গুৱাহাটীঃ চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰকাশ, ১৯৮৭। মুদ্ৰিত।
(সম্পা.)	ঃ	পৰিত্ৰ অসম। ৩য় সংস্কৰণ। গুৱাহাটীঃ লয়াৰ্ড বুকষ্টল, ১৯৯১। মুদ্ৰিত।
দেৱগোস্বামী কেশৱানন্দ (সম্পা.)	ঃ	অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ৰূপৰেখা। ৯ম তাৰিখ। গুৱাহাটীঃ চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰকাশ, ২০০০। মুদ্ৰিত। নৰোৱা আতাসকলৰ নিৰ্বাচিত নাট। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। নগাঁওঃ শ্ৰী শ্ৰী নৰোৱা বালিসত্ৰ, ২০১৩। মুদ্ৰিত।
(সম্পা.)	ঃ	অক্ষমালা।
(সম্পা.)	ঃ	সত্ৰ-সংস্কৃতিৰ ৰূপৰেখা। ৫ম সংস্কৰণ। ডিব্ৰগড়ঃ বনলতা, ২০০০। মুদ্ৰিত।
(সম্পা.)	ঃ	অক্ষীয়া ভাওনা। ৩য় সংস্কৰণ। ডিব্ৰগড়ঃ বনলতা, ২০০০। মুদ্ৰিত।

- ঃ নাম প্রসংগ নামৰ পংক্তিআৰু নাম সামৰা। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। নগাঁও
- ঃ শ্ৰী শ্ৰী নৰোৱা বালিসত্ৰ পৰিচালনা সমিতি, ২০১৫। মুদ্ৰিত।
- ঃ সত্ৰীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ স্বৰ্ণবেৰ্খ। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। গুৱাহাটীঃ লয়াৰ্ছবুক ষ্টল, ২০০৫। মুদ্ৰিত।
- ঃ বামানন্দ দিজ বিৰচিত শ্ৰীগুৰু চৰিত। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। গুৱাহাটীঃ বাণী মন্দিৰ, ২০১৪। মুদ্ৰিত।
- ঃ (সম্পা.) বামচৰণ ঠাকুৰ বিৰচিত গুৰুচৰিত। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। চিহ্নঃ চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰকাশ, ১৯৮৫। মুদ্ৰিত।
- ঃ শ্ৰী শ্ৰী দ্বাৰিকানাথ দিজ কৃত সন্তাৱলী। ২য় সংস্কৰণ। গুৱাহাটীঃ এছ. এইচ. এডুকেশনেল ট্ৰাষ্ট, ২০০৮। মুদ্ৰিত।
- ঃ এগুটি ভাওনা কৰি পাৱয় সকল। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। নগাঁওঃ ক্ৰান্তিকাল প্ৰকাশন, ২০১৪। মুদ্ৰিত।

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গ) অসমীয়া আলোচনী আৰু স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থ :

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- বৰা, নবীন চন্দ্ৰ (সম্পা.) : কাঁচিয়লি। নগাঁওঃ কলিয়াবৰ শাখা সাহিত্য সভা পত্ৰিকা, ১৯৮৮। মুদ্ৰিত।
- বৰা, বুবুল (সম্পা.) : শ্ৰীশ্রী বগাজন সত্ৰ (স্মৰণিকা)। ১ম প্ৰকাশ। নগাঁওঃ বগাজন সত্ৰৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা দিৱস, ২০০৮। মুদ্ৰিত।
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- বৰা, লক্ষ্মীনন্দন (সম্পা.) : গৰীয়সী। গুৱাহাটীঃ সাহিত্য প্ৰকাশ, ছেপ্টেম্বৰ, ২০১০। (সপ্তদশ বছৰ, দ্বাদশ সংখ্যা)। মুদ্ৰিত।

ঘ) Internet Sources :

ঙ) গরেঘণা গ্রন্থ :

হাজৰিকা, হিমান্তী

ঃ নগাঁও জিলাৰ সত্ৰসমূহত শক্ৰোভৰ যুগৰ নাট-ভাষণাৰ চৰ্চা। গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়,
২০১৯। অপৰকাশিত গ্রন্থ।

চ) সংবাদপত্র :

আজিৰ অসম। আলোকপাত। কৃষ্ণৰাম বৰুৱা— প্ৰৱন্ধ ‘ঐতিহ্যমণ্ডিত কলিয়াবৰঃ কিছু ইতিহাস আৰু কিছু উপহাস’।

পৃষ্ঠা ৫। ১১ জুলাই, ১৯৯৩।

আজিৰ অসম। দেন্তবৰীয়া আলোচনী। প্ৰফুল্লপ্ৰাণ মহন্ত—প্ৰৱন্ধ ‘শ্ৰীমত শক্ৰবৎ অসমীয়া সাংস্কৃতিৰ স্বৰ্ণযুগ’। পৃষ্ঠা ক। ৮ছেপ্টেম্বৰ,
১৯৯৬।

ছ) সংবাদদাতাৰ তালিকা :

নাম	বয়স	লিঙ্গ	বাসস্থান
দেৱানন্দদেৱ গোস্বামী	৫৪	পুৰুষ	বৰদেৱা
ভূৱন বৰা	৫৬	পুৰুষ	হাটবৰ
হৰেণ মহন্ত	৬৪	পুৰুষ	পুৱথৰীয়া

□ □

অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব

লক্ষ্যজিৎ বুঢ়াগোহাঁই

গৱেষক, অসমীয়া বিভাগ, ডিএঙড় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

সংক্ষিপ্তসাৰঃ ভাষা বিশেষতঃ স্বাধীনভাৱে অৰ্থপ্ৰকাশ কৰা মূল প্ৰাকৃতিবোৰক শব্দ বুলি কোৱা হয়। একেটা ভাষাৰ বিকাশ আৰু সমৃদ্ধি সাধনত শব্দই প্ৰধান ভূমিকা পালন কৰে। ভাষাৰ আলোচনাত শব্দৰ বিশেষ গুৰুত্ব আছে। আধুনিক ভাষাবিজ্ঞানত ব্যৱহৃত শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব হৈছে ভাষাৰ ব্যৱহৃত শব্দবোৰৰ প্ৰায়োগিক আৰু গাঁথনিক^১ দিশ সম্পর্কে বিচাৰ-বিশ্লেষণ কৰা এক পদ্ধতি। পৃথিৰীৰ পথ্যেক ভাষাই মৌলিকভাৱে নিজা শব্দ বহন কৰা উপৰিও বিভিন্ন ভাষিক-সামাজিক কাৰণত জন-জীৱনৰ লগত পাৰম্পৰিক ভাৱৰ আদান-প্ৰদান কৰোঁতে ইচ্ছাকৃত বা অনিচ্ছাকৃতভাৱে অন্য ভাষাৰ শাব্দিক উপাদান গ্ৰহণ কৰে। শব্দভাণ্ডাৰৰ দিশত অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাসমূহ যথেষ্ট চহকী। যদিও অসমত টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ ছয়টা কপ পোৱা যায়, এই গৱেষণা কৰ্মৰ বাবে আইনল, খামতি, খাময়াৎ আৰু ফাকে এই চাৰিটা ভাষাক নিৰ্বাচন কৰা হৈছে। যিহেতু আহোম ভাষাৰ বৰ্তমান বহুলভাৱে কথিত কপত পোৱা নাযায় আৰু টুৰং ভাষা চিংফৌ ভাষাৰ সংমিশ্ৰণত স্বকীয় কপৰ পৰিৱৰ্তন ঘটিছে, সেয়ে গৱেষণা কৰ্মৰ মজিয়াত এই ভাষা দুটা নিৰ্বাচন কৰা হোৱা নাই।

(সংকেত শব্দঃ ভাষাবিজ্ঞান, প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব, শব্দতত্ত্ব, শব্দ-গঠন, টাইমুলীয় ভাষা।)

০.০ অৱৰতণিকা

এচিয়া মহাদেশৰ বিস্তৃত অঞ্চলত বসবাস কৰা মংগোলীয় প্ৰজাতিৰ এটা বৃহৎ মানবগোষ্ঠী হ'ল টাইসকল। ইতিহাসৰ পৃষ্ঠাত টাইসকল প্ৰৱজনকাৰী জাতি হিচাপে পৰিচিত। জৰ্জ আৱাহাম গ্ৰীয়াৰ্ছনৰ মতে ইন্দোচীনৰ বিস্তৃত অঞ্চলত বসবাস কৰা টাইসকলে প্ৰাচীন বাসস্থান দক্ষিণ-পশ্চিম চীনৰপৰাই উত্তৰ-বাৰ্মালৈ প্ৰৱজন কৰিছিল।^২ এডেৱার্ট গেইটৰ মতে টাই শব্দটোৱে চীনা ভাষাৰ সৰগীয় (*Celestial*) শব্দ অনুসৰি মহীয়ান (*Glorious*) অৰ্থ বুজায়।^৩ টাই শব্দৰ অৰ্থ হ'ল — ‘মুক্ত’, ‘স্বাধীন’ বা ‘বহুনহীন’।^৪ ন্তৃতাত্ত্বিক দৃষ্টিভংগীৰে টাইসকল মংগোলীয় প্ৰজাতিৰ লোক। অৱশ্যে ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক দিশৰ পৰা টাইসকল কোনটো ভাষা পৰিয়ালৰ অন্তৰ্গত সেই লৈ ভাষাবিদিসকলৰ মাজত মতভেদ আছে। গ্ৰীয়াৰ্ছন, সুনীতি কুমাৰ চেটাজী, নগেন ঠাকুৰ আদি পণ্ডিতসকলে টাই ভাষাগোষ্ঠীক চীন-তিব্বতীয় ভাষা পৰিয়ালত অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰিছে যদিও আধুনিক পণ্ডিতসকলে টাইমুলীয় ভাষাগোষ্ঠীক টাই কাদাই (Tai Kadai) নামকৰণেৰে সুকীয়াকৈ শ্ৰেণীবিভাজন কৰা দেখা যায়। আমেৰিকাৰ ভাষাবিদ Paul K. Benedict-য়ে ১৯৪২ চনত American Anthropologist নামৰ গৱেষণা পত্ৰিকাৰ ৪৪ তম সংখ্যাত প্ৰকাশিত *Tai kadai and Indonesian: A New Alignment is South-eastern Asia* শীৰ্ষক প্ৰৱন্ধত প্ৰথম কাদাইপৰিভাষাটো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল। তেওঁ গেলাও (Gelao), লাকুআ (Laqua) আৰু লাচি (Lachi) এই তিনিটা ক্ৰা (kra) পৰিয়ালৰ ভাষাক হলাই (hlai) ভাষাগোষ্ঠীটোৱে সৈতে একেলগ কৰি কাদাইবুলি অভিহিত কৰিছিল। পৰৱৰ্তী পৰ্যায়ত টাই-কাদাই ভাষা আৰু সংস্কৃতি বিষয়ে ১৯৯৮ চনৰ জুন মাহত থাইলেণ্ডৰ মহিদল (*Mohedol*) বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত অনুষ্ঠিত কৰা প্ৰথমখন আন্তজাৰ্তিক আলোচনা সভাই টাই-কাদাই ভাষা পৰিয়ালক স্বীকৃতি দিলে।^৫

Benedict মতে- Kra languages placed three (Gelao, Laqua (Qabiao) and Lachi) together with Hlai in a group that he called "Kadai", from *ka* meaning "person" in Gelao and Laqua (Qabiao), and *Dai* a form of a Hlai autonym।^৬ অৰ্থাৎ কাদাই = কা + দাই ; গেলাও (Gelao), লাকুআ (Laqua) ভাষাত কা মানে মানুহ আৰু হলাই

ভাষাত দাইহৈছে মানুহৰ সমষ্টিগত সমার্থক শব্দ। Paul K. Benedict- ক সমর্থন কৰি Edmonson, A Jerold, David B. Solnit আদি পণ্ডিতসকলে কাদাই নামটো অধিক গ্ৰহণযোগ্য বুলি মত পোষণ কৰে।

এই গৱেষণা কৰ্মত প্ৰজননৰ জৰিয়তে অষ্টাদশ শতিকাৰ শেষভাগত অসমভূমিত প্ৰৱেশ কৰা টাইমুলীয় আইতন, খামতি, খাময়াং আৰু ফাকে ভাষাত ব্যৱহৃত শব্দৰ গাঁথনিক দিশ সম্পর্কে সমকালীন ৰূপৰ ভিত্তিত প্ৰকাৰতাত্ত্বিক পদ্ধতিৰ সহায়ত বিচাৰ-বিশ্লেষণ কৰা হৈছে।

০.১ গৱেষণা কৰ্মৰ গুৰুত্ব আৰু উদ্দেশ্য

সম্প্ৰতি UNESCO-ৰ সমীক্ষাত অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় আইতন, খামতি, খাময়াং আৰু ফাকে ভাষা Endangered Language^a-ৰ তালিকাত Vulnerable^b-ত স্থান পাইছে, অৰ্থাৎ বিপন্নপ্ৰায় ভাষা হিচাপে চিহ্নিত হৈছে। গতিকে এই ভাষাকেইটা সংৰক্ষণৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা আছে। নিজস্ব লিপি আৰু লিখিত সাহিত্যত চহকী টাই ভাষিক লোকসকল সম্প্ৰতি একবিশ্ব শতিকাত বিভিন্ন ভাষিক-সামাজিক-শৈক্ষিক আৰু বৃত্তিগত কাৰণত দ্বিভাষী অথবা বহুভাষী হৈ পৰিছে। ফলস্বৰূপে ভাষাকেইটাৰ ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক বৈশিষ্ট্য লোপ পাইছে বা পৰিৱৰ্তিত হৈছে। গতিকে টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শুন্দি ভাষিক বৈশিষ্ট্য বৰ্ক্ষাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত বিজ্ঞানসম্মত আৰু প্ৰণালীবন্ধুভাৱে শব্দৰ গাঁথনিক দিশৰ অধ্যয়নৰ গুৰুত্ব আছে।

অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব শীৰ্ষক বিষয়টো অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্যকেইটা হ'ল—

- (ক) টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দভাণ্ডৰ আৰু বৰ্তমান কথিত ৰূপৰ ভিত্তিত শব্দৰ গাঁথনিক বৈশিষ্ট্যসমূহ চিনান্তকৰণ কৰা।
(খ) শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্বৰ আধাৰত অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় আইতন, খামতি, খাময়াং আৰু ফাকে ভাষাৰ শব্দসমূহৰ আন্তঃসম্পর্কীয় বৈশিষ্ট্য বিচাৰ কৰা এই গৱেষণা কৰ্মৰ অন্যতম উদ্দেশ্য।

০.২ গৱেষণা কৰ্মৰ পদ্ধতি

অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব— শীৰ্ষক বিষয়টো অধ্যয়নৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত তাত্ত্বিক পদ্ধতি হিচাপে শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব আৰু বিষয় বিশ্লেষণৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত বৰ্ণনাত্মক আৰু বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছে। তথ্য সংগ্ৰহৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত টাই ভাষিক ব্যক্তিৰ পৰা ভাইচ বেকৰ্ডৰ সহায়ত পাঠ সংৰক্ষণ, পাঠ অনুবাদ কৰাৰ লগতে টাই ভাষাৰ শব্দকোষ, অভিধান আৰু ব্যাকৰণৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে।

১.০ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব আৰু অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দ-গঠন

সাম্প্ৰতিক কালত ভাষা অধ্যয়নৰ ক্ষেত্ৰখন বহুধা-বিভক্ত হৈ বিকাশ লাভ কৰিছে। পৰম্পৰাগত ধ্যান-ধাৰণা আৰু চিন্তা-চেতনাৰ মাজত আৱৰ্দ্ধন নাথাকি বৰ্তমান ভাষা অধ্যয়ন ৰীতিত জ্ঞান অন্বেষণৰ দিশটোও সংযোজিত হৈছে। প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব হৈছে আধুনিক ভাষাবিজ্ঞানৰ এটা অন্যতম শাখা। প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব শব্দটো প্ৰকাৰ + তত্ত্ব = প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব, এইদৰে সংযুক্ত ৰূপত ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছে। প্ৰকাৰশব্দটোৱে কোনো বিষয়ৰ স্বৰূপ বা ধৰণ সম্পৰ্কে ধাৰণা দিয়ে। অন্যহাতে তত্ত্ব হৈছে মানৰ চিন্তা আৰু কৰ্ম পৰিধিৰ দোষমুক্ত আৰু পদ্ধতিগত বিচাৰ (Critical analysis of thought)। প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্বৰ ইংৰাজী প্ৰতিশব্দ হৈছে Typology। গ্ৰীক ভাষাত Typostlogy-ৰ সহযোগত ইংৰাজী Typology শব্দটো গঠিত হৈছে। Typos-ৰ অৰ্থ হৈছে Types (প্ৰকাৰ) বা kind (ধৰণ) বা class (শ্ৰেণী)। যি একেধৰণৰ লক্ষ্য বা বৈশিষ্ট্য বহন কৰে আৰু logy মানে বিজ্ঞান বা জ্ঞান অন্বেষণৰ শাখা। ভাষাবিজ্ঞানত ব্যৱহাৰত এই শব্দটো জীৱবিজ্ঞানৰ Taxonomy শব্দটোৰ পৰা লোৱা হৈছে।^১ যি জীৱৰ শ্ৰেণীসমূহৰ অধ্যয়ন আৰু ব্যাখ্যাক বুজায়। ভাষাবিজ্ঞানত ব্যৱহাৰত প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব ঐতিহাসিক ক্ৰমবিৱৰ্তনক গুৰুত্ব নিৰ্দিয়াকৈ ভাষাসমূহৰ সমকালীন গাঁথনিক ৰূপৰ আধাৰত পৃথিবীৰ বিভিন্ন ভাষাবোৰৰ সম্ভৱপৰ পাৰ্থক্যসমূহ চিনান্তকৰণ আৰু শ্ৰেণীকৰণ কৰে। যি ভাষাৰ পাৰ্থক্যসমূহ কিয় হয়, কেনেকৈ হয়, পাৰ্থক্যৰ সীমাৱদ্ধতা নিৰ্ণয় কৰা আদি দিশবোৰতো সমানেই গুৰুত্ব প্ৰদান কৰে।

ভাষাবৈজ্ঞানিক প্ৰকাৰতাত্ত্বিক অধ্যয়নৰ এক অন্যতম শাখা হৈছে শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব। ইংৰাজী ‘Lexicology’ শব্দটোৰ অসমীয়া প্ৰতিশব্দ হিচাপে শব্দতত্ত্ব শব্দটো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। Lexeme মানে শব্দসাৰ

আৰু Logy মানে তত্ত্ব। আনহাতে শব্দ হ'ল ইংৰাজী Word-ৰ প্রতিশব্দ। ভাষা বিশেষত স্বাধীনভাৱে অর্থ প্ৰকাশ কৰা মূল প্ৰাকৃতিবোৰক শব্দ বোলা হয়। শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰভৰত ভাষা একোটাত ব্যৱহৃত শব্দভাণ্ডাব আৰু সেই শব্দবোৰৰ প্ৰায়োগিক আৰু গাঁথনিক দিশ সম্পর্কে বিচাৰ-বিশ্লেষণ কৰা হয়। পৃথিৰীতি প্ৰচলিত বিভিন্ন ভাষাসমূহ ৰূপৰ সংযোগত সৃষ্টি হোৱা শব্দ বা শব্দাংশৰ গঠন, মৌলিক শব্দ, যৌগিক শব্দ আৰু ঝণকৃত শব্দ এই অধ্যয়নৰ অন্তৰ্গত বিষয়। ইয়াৰ উপৰিও দ্বিৰক্ষিসূচক শব্দ, পাৰিভাষিক শব্দ, সমাৰ্থক শব্দ, সুৰীয়া শব্দ, বিপৰীতাৰ্থক শব্দ সম্পর্কেও শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্বই অধ্যয়ন কৰে। মূলতঃ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্বই ভাষাৰ স্বকীয় বৈশিষ্ট্য নিৰূপণ কৰি পৃথিৰীৰ ভাষাসমূহৰ মাজত থকা সাদৃশ্য-বৈসাদৃশ্য আৰু আন্তঃসম্পর্ক চিনাত্ব কৰি ভাষাসমূহক একোটা নিৰ্দিষ্ট গোটত শ্ৰেণীবদ্ধ কৰে।

শব্দভাণ্ডাব দিশত অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় আইতন, খামতি, খাময়াং আৰু ফাকে ভাষা যথেষ্ট চহকী। অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দসম্ভাৰক তলত দেখুওৱা ধৰণেৰে ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি —

ক) নিজা বা মৌলিক শব্দ : এই শ্ৰেণী শব্দবোৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ নিজা আৰু স্বকীয় বৈশিষ্ট্যসম্পন্ন।

খ) ঝণকৃত শব্দ : এই শ্ৰেণী শব্দবোৰ ভাৰতীয় ভাষামূলজ আৰু বহিৰ্ভাৰতীয় ভাষামূলজ পৰা আহা। ভাৰতীয় ভাষামূলজ শব্দবোৰ অসমীয়া, বাংলা আৰু হিন্দী ভাষাৰ লগতে আৰ্যভিন্ন শব্দবোৰ চীন-তিৰতীয় আৰু অস্ত্ৰিকমূলীয়।

গ) অৱগীৰ্কৃত শব্দ : এই শ্ৰেণী শব্দবোৰ হ'ল — বিপৰীতাৰ্থক, দ্বিৰক্ষিবাচক আৰু নৱনিৰ্মিত শব্দ।

শব্দৰ গাঁথনিগত দিশৰ ভিত্তিত অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দবোৰক মৌলিক, যৌগিক আৰু সাধিত এই তিনি ধৰণেৰে ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি। তলত অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় আইতন, খামতি, খাময়াং আৰু ফাকে ভাষাৰ শব্দ-গঠন প্ৰক্ৰিয়া সম্পৰ্কে আলোচনা কৰা হ'ল—

১.১ মৌলিক শব্দ (Simple or root Word)

এক বা একাধিক বৰ্ণৰে গঠিত স্বতন্ত্ৰভাৱে অর্থ প্ৰকাশ কৰিব পৰা শব্দবোৰেই মুক্ত বা মৌলিক শব্দ। অৰ্থাৎ মুক্ত ৰূপৰোৰে গাইগুটীয়াকৈ অর্থ প্ৰকাশ কৰিব পাৰে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

টাইমূলীয় শব্দ	অসমীয়া শব্দ
কুন্	‘মানুহ’
নাম্	‘পানী’

১.২ যৌগিক শব্দ (Compound Word)

টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত দুটা মৌলিক শব্দমূল লগ লাগি যৌগিক বিশেষ্য শব্দ গঠন কৰা হয়। অৱশ্যে দুয়োটা শব্দ সুকীয়াকৈ প্ৰয়োগ হ'লে এক নিৰ্দিষ্ট অর্থ সূচায় যদিও সংযুক্ত ৰূপত নতুন অৰ্থবাচক যৌগিক শব্দ গঠন কৰে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

মৌলিক শব্দ	+	মৌলিক শব্দ	=	যৌগিক শব্দ
মে ‘মাক’	+	মান् ‘দেশ’	=	মে মান্ ‘মাত্ৰভূমি’
চিপ্ ‘দহ’	+	লোঞ্চ ‘এক’	=	চিপ্ লোঞ্চ ‘এঘাৰ’
বান ‘দিন’	+	চাই ‘বেলি পৰা’	=	বান চাই ‘আবেলি’
মৌলিক শব্দ	+	মৌলিক শব্দ	+	মৌলিক শব্দ = যৌগিক শব্দ
পা ‘শেষ’	+	চান ‘থকা’	+	কিন্ ‘শৰীৰ’ = পা চান কিন্ ‘মৰিশালি’
মৌলিক শব্দ +	মৌলিক শব্দ +	মৌলিক শব্দ +	মৌলিক শব্দ =	যৌগিক শব্দ
ম্যাঙ্গ ‘দেশ’	+	ন্যূন ‘কপাহ’	+	চ্যাঙ্গ ‘দলিচা’ + খাম ‘সোণ’ = ম্যাঙ্গ ন্যূন চ্যাঙ্গ খাম ‘অসম’

১.৩ সাধিত শব্দ (Derived Word)

অসমৰ টাইমলীয় ভাষাত মৌলিক শব্দৰ সৈতে কিছুমান শব্দসাধনমূলক কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ সংযোগ কৰি নতুন অৰ্থযুক্ত শব্দসাধন কৰা হয়। সেইবোৰ হ'ল—

ক) টাইমলীয় ভাষাত ভিন্ন অৰ্থবাচক শব্দৰ আগত বা পাছত কিছুমান সুকীয়া নিজা অৰ্থসূচক কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ সংযোগ কৰি নতুন অৰ্থবাচক শব্দ গঠন কৰা হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

বিশেষ্য	+	কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ	=	সাধিত শব্দ
প' ‘দেউতা’	+	চাও ‘সন্মানসূচক’	=	প' চাও ‘শাহৰ’
কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ	+	বিশেষ্য + কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ	=	সাধিত শব্দ
খেক ‘সন্মানসূচক’+	লুক ‘ল'ৰা’	+ মান ‘সন্মানসূচক’=		খেক লুক মান ‘ভাগিন’

খ) টাইমলীয় ভাষাত মূল ক্ৰিয়া ৰূপৰ লগত ‘ফুঁ’ আৰু ‘তাঙ্গ’ কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ সংযোগ কৰি নতুন অৰ্থবাচক বিশেষ্য শব্দসাধন কৰা হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ	+	মৌলিক শব্দ	=	সাধিত বিশেষ্য শব্দ
ফুঁ	+	তেম ‘লিখা’	=	ফুঁ তেম ‘লিখক’
তাঙ্গ	+	কা ‘নচা কাৰ্য’	=	তাঙ্গ কা ‘ন্ত’

গ) টাইমলীয় ভাষাত কোনো বস্তু বা পদাৰ্থৰ আকৃতি-প্ৰকৃতি, গুণ আদি বুজাবলৈ কিছুমান শ্ৰেণী নিৰ্দেশক ৰূপ পোৱা যায়। মূল ৰূপ হিচাপে ব্যৱহৃত শ্ৰেণী নিৰ্দেশক ৰূপৰ লগত সুকীয়া কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ সংযোগ কৰি শব্দসাধন কৰা হয়। টাই ভাষাত ‘মাক’ মানে ফল। এই মূল ৰূপৰ লগত ফলৰ আকাৰ, আকৃতি অনুসৰি সুকীয়া শব্দ সংযোগ কৰি নতুন অৰ্থবাচক শব্দসাধন কৰা হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

শ্ৰেণী নিৰ্দেশক ৰূপ	+	কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ	=	সাধিত শব্দ
মাক ‘ফল’	+	লান্	=	মাক লান্ ‘কঁঠাল’
মাক ‘ফল’	+	ফাই	=	মাক ফাই ‘গেতেকু’

১.৪ ব্যাকৰণগত শব্দ (Grammatical Word)

টাইমলীয় ভাষাত বিশেষ্যৰ লগত ব্যকৰণগত সৰ্গ সংযোগ হৈ ব্যাকৰণগত শব্দসাধন হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

মৌলিক শব্দ	+	ব্যাকৰণগত সৰ্গ	=	সাধিত শব্দ
ঙীৱ ‘গৰু’	+	খাউ ‘তৃতীয় পুৰুষৰ বহুবচন ৰূপ’	=	ঙীৱ খাউ ‘গৰুৰোৰ’
মা ‘কুকুৰ’	+	মে ‘স্ত্ৰীলিঙ্গবাচক সৰ্গ’	=	মা মে ‘কুকুৰ মাইকী>মাইকী কুকুৰ’

১.৫ বিপৰীতার্থক শব্দ (Antonyms Word)

টাইমলীয় ভাষাত কিছুমান বিপৰীতার্থক বিশেষণ শব্দ পোৱা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

টাই শব্দ	বিপৰীত শব্দ
লি ‘ভাল’	ইঙ্গ লি ‘বেয়া’
লাক ‘গধুৰ’	মৌৱ ‘পাতল’

১.৬ ঝণকৃত শব্দ (Loan Word)

আধুনিক অসমৰ টাইমলীয় ভাষাত বিভিন্ন ভাষিক-সামাজিক কাৰণত অন্য ভাষিক লোকৰ লগত কৰা পাৰস্পৰিক সম্পর্কৰ বাবে নতুন অৰ্থযুক্ত শব্দ আমদানীকৃত হৈছে। তলত ঝণকৃত শব্দৰোৰ উদাহৰণসহ দেখুওৱা হ'ল —

ক) আৰ্য্যমলীয় শব্দঃ টাই ভাষাত সংস্কৃত আৰু পালি ভাষা কোৱা আৰু লিখা বাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। যদিও টাই, থাই, বার্মিজ আৰু দক্ষিণ-পূৰ্ব এছিয়াৰ ভাষিক পৰিয়ালটো সংস্কৃত আৰু পালি ভাষাৰ সৈতে একে নহয়, তথাপিও

বৌদ্ধধর্মী টাই জনগোষ্ঠীয় ভাষাত সংস্কৃত আৰু পালি ভাষাৰ শব্দ পোৱা যায়। ইয়াৰ উপৰিও অসমীয়া ভাষাক সংযোগী ভাষা হিচাপে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা বাবে অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ শব্দ আৰু অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ জৰিয়তে আৰ্যমূলীয় বাংলা আৰু হিন্দী ভাষাৰ শব্দ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত প্ৰয়োগ হোৱা দেখা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

	আৰ্যমূলীয় শব্দ	টাই শব্দ
সংস্কৃত আৰু পালি—	ভাষা	ফা চা
	বসুন্ধৰা	বা চু থা আ
অসমীয়া—	কাৰৈ	কা রৈ
	ফাঁকি	ফা কি
বাংলা—	জেলেপি	ৱেল্‌পি
	বৰফি	ৱ' ফি
হিন্দী—	চাচা	চা চা

খ) আঘভিন্ন শব্দ : অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ জৰিয়তে টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত আঘভিন্ন ভাষাৰ বহু শব্দ প্ৰয়োগ হোৱা দেখা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

	আঘভিন্ন শব্দ	টাই শব্দ
বড়ো—	হাওফাও	হাও ফাও
খাচী—	জেং	য়েঙ্
কোল বা মুণ্ডা—	চিকৰা	চি ক'আ

গ) বিদেশী শব্দ : আধুনিক টাই ভাষাত বিদেশী ভাষাৰ বহু শব্দ ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা দেখা যায়। অৱশ্যে এই শব্দবোৰৰ উচ্চাৰণ টাই ভাষিক লোকে নিজ ভাষাৰ উচ্চাৰণ অনুসৰি গঢ় দিয়া দেখা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

	বিদেশী শব্দ	টাই শব্দ
ইংৰাজী—	English	ইঙ্গ কা লিট
আৰবী—	কলম	ক্ লম
পতুৰীজ—	বুটাম	বু টাম্
ফৰাচী—	কাৰ্তিজ	কা তিচ্
ওলঞ্চুজ—	ইঞ্চাপন	ইচ কা পন

ঘ) বাৰ্মিজ শব্দ : প্ৰৱজনকাৰী জাতি হিচাপে পৰিচিত বৃহৎ টাই জাতিৰ লোকসকলৰ প্ৰধান বসতিস্থল হৈছে চীন, ব্ৰহ্মদেশ, ম্যানমাৰ আৰু থাইলেণ্ড। অসমত বসবাস কৰা টাই ঠালৰ আইতন, খামতি, খাময়াং আৰু ফাকেসকল ব্ৰহ্মদেশৰ পৰা প্ৰৱজন কৰিছিল বুলি টাই জাতিৰ বুৰঞ্জীত উল্লেখ আছে। সেয়েহে ব্ৰহ্মদেশৰ বাৰ্মিজ ভাষাৰ সৈতে থকা সম্পর্কসূত্ৰে টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত বাৰ্মিজ ভাষাৰ যথেষ্ট শাৰ্দিক উপাদান পোৱা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

বাৰ্মিজ শব্দ	টাই শব্দ	অসমীয়া অৰ্থ
প্যা টা ইন পীত	প' টান প্ৰক	খিৰিকি
ক্যঙ	ক্যঙ্	বৌদ্ধ বিহাৰ

১.৭ নৱনিৰ্মিত শব্দ (Coinage Word)

সম্প্ৰতি বিশ্বায়ন আৰু গোলকীকৰণৰ যুগত বিভিন্ন বিষয় বা সামগ্ৰী বুজোৱা বিদেশী শব্দবোৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত নতুনকৈ সৃষ্টি কৰি লোৱা দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। টাই ভাষাত এই শব্দবোৰ প্ৰধানকৈ অৰ্থক উদ্দেশ্য কৰি সৃষ্টি কৰি লোৱা হৈছে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

মূল বিদেশী শব্দ	নৰনিৰ্মিত টাই শব্দ	অসমীয়া অর্থ
ডাক্তৰ	চাঙ্গ ছা হি	চাঙ্গ=জনা, ছা=ভাল অৱস্থা, হি=সংযোগ কৰা
ফেন	বি লুম্	বি=বিচলী, লুম্=বতাহ
টচ লাইট	থাত্ ফাই	থাত্=ধাতু, ফাই=জুই

১.৮ দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দ-গঠন

কোনো এটা ভাষাত অৰ্থযুক্তি বা অথহীন শব্দ বাবে বাবে উচ্চাৰণ কৰাকে দ্বিৰুক্তি বুলি কোৱা হয়। অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ ‘দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক’ শব্দৰ ইংৰাজী প্ৰতিশব্দ হৈছে Reduplication। শব্দৰ পুনৰুক্তি হয় বাবে সংস্কৃত ভাষাত ইয়াক অভ্যাস আৰু ঘোৰ পাতি ব্যৱহাৰ হয় বাবে অসমীয়া ভাষাত ইয়াক যুৰীয়া শব্দ বুলিও কোৱা হয়। গাঁথনিক নিয়মৰ ভিত্তিত দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰক শব্দিক দ্বিৰুক্তি আৰু ৰূপতাত্ত্বিক দ্বিৰুক্তি দুটা প্ৰধান ভাগত বিভক্ত কৰিব পাৰি।

১.৮.১ শব্দিক দ্বিৰুক্তি

শব্দিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰ সাধাৰণতে কোনো ধৰনৰ অনুকৰণত সৃষ্টি হোৱা শব্দ। শব্দিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰক গাঁথনিক বৈশিষ্ট্যলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰি পূৰ্ণ দ্বিৰুক্তি আৰু আংশিক দ্বিৰুক্তি এই দুটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি।

ক) পূৰ্ণ দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দ : পূৰ্ণ দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰৰ কোনো ধৰণৰ ধৰণিগত পৰিৱৰ্তন বা ৰূপগত পৰিৱৰ্তন নোহোৱাকৈ পুনৰুক্তি হয়। অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত পূৰ্ণ দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰ ধৰন্যাত্মক আৰু অধৰন্যাত্মক ৰূপত পোৱা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

ধৰন্যাত্মক শব্দ :	টাই শব্দ	অসমীয়া অর্থ
	কিক্ কিক্	কুকুৰা পোৱালিৰ মাত
	জুঙ্ জুঙ্	পানীৰ হোহোৱানি
অথৰন্যাত্মক শব্দ :	টাই শব্দ	অসমীয়া অর্থ
	চিড় চিড়	খৰ খৰকৈ
	থুক্ থুক্	বাবে বাবে

খ) আংশিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দ : যিবোৰ দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দৰ প্ৰথম অংশৰ লগত দ্বিতীয় অংশটো সম্পূৰ্ণ একে নহয় সেইবোৰই আংশিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দ। আংশিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দত এটা অৰ্থপূৰ্ণ ৰূপৰ অনুৰূপ অন্য এটা আংশিক বিকৃতি ঘটা ৰূপ মূল শব্দৰ আগত বা পিছত প্ৰয়োগ হয়। অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ আংশিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰ দুইধৰণ—

অপক্রান্তি (Ablaut) : অপক্রান্তি জাতীয় দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰত মূল ৰূপটো দ্বিত উচ্চাৰণত স্বৰ বা অক্ষৰ বিকৃতি হয়। অৰ্থাৎ আগম বা বিলোপ ঘটে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে— আ > উ : আও বাং-আও বুঙ ‘যিহকে তিহকে’ ইত্যাদি।

অনুৰূপতি (The Rhyme-Motivated Type) : অনুৰূপতি দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰত মূল ৰূপৰ অনুৰূপত দ্বিতীয় অংশটো লগ লাগে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত অনুৰূপ দুয়োটা অংশৰে স্বতন্ত্ৰ অৰ্থ থাকে। অৱশ্যে গাঁথনিক দিশত এনে শব্দবোৰৰ ব্যঞ্জনবৰ্ণ পৰিৱৰ্তন ঘটে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

- ল > ন : লাক - নাক ‘অন্ত - শন্ত’
- ড > ম : ডগ্ - মগ্ ‘থৰক - বৰকৈ’ ইত্যাদি।

১.৮.২ ৰূপতাত্ত্বিক দ্বিৰুক্তি

অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ ৰূপতাত্ত্বিক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দবোৰ গাঁথনিক প্ৰকৃতি অনুসৰি দুটা ভাগত বিভক্ত কৰিব পাৰি। সেই দুটা হ'ল— বহুবচনাত্মক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দ আৰু শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তনসূচক দ্বিৰুক্তিবাচক শব্দ।

ক) বহুবচনবাচক দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দ

অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাত ৰূপতাত্ত্বিক গঠনত মূল ৰূপৰ দ্বিত প্ৰয়োগে কেতিয়াবা বহুবচনৰ ধাৰণা দিয়ে।
উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

দ্বিক্রিবাচক টাই শব্দ

অসমীয়া অর্থ

ঙা ঙা

তিল তিল ‘বহুত তিল’

নাম্ নাম্

পানী পানী ‘বহুত পানী’

বক্তাই কেতিয়াবা নিজৰ বক্তব্য বিষয়ক অধিক প্ৰামাণ্য দিবলৈ দ্বিত শব্দ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে, সেই শব্দবোৰক জোৰাবাচক শব্দ বুলি কোৱা হয়। টাইমুলীয় ভাষাত ব্যৱহৃত এনে শব্দৰ উদাহৰণ হ'ল—

জোৰাবাচক টাই শব্দ

অসমীয়া অর্থ

ফাউ ফাউ

কোনে কোনে

কুপ্ কুপ্

যোৰ যোৰ

খ) শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তনসূচক দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দ

ৰূপতাত্ত্বিক দ্বিক্রিব ক্ষেত্ৰত কেতিয়াবা একোটা অৰ্থহীন অক্ষৰ বা ধ্বনিসমষ্টিৰ পুনৰুৎপন্নি দ্বাৰা এটা বিশেষ অভিব্যক্তি প্ৰকাশ কৰি অৰ্থপূৰ্ণ দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দলৈ ৰূপান্তৰিত হয়। এই শ্ৰেণী দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দ সমবৰ্গীয় আৰু বিষমবৰ্গীয় ৰূপত পোৱা যায়। যিবিলাক দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দই মূল ৰূপৰ শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তন নকৰি একে অৰ্থ প্ৰকাশ কৰে সেইবোৰক সমবৰ্গীয় শব্দ বোলা হয়। আনহাতে যিবোৰ দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দই মূল ৰূপৰ শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তন কৰে সেইবোৰক বিষমবৰ্গীয় শব্দ বোলা হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

সমবৰ্গীয় দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দ :

মূল টাই শব্দ

দ্বিক্রিবাচক টাই শব্দ

অসমীয়া অর্থ

দি (বিশেষণ)

দি দি (বিশেষণ)

ভাল ভাল

ফুত্ (ক্ৰিয়া)

ফুত্ ফুত্ (ক্ৰিয়া)

আন্ধাৰ হোৱা

বিষমবৰ্গীয় দ্বিক্রিবাচক শব্দ :

মূল টাই শব্দ

দ্বিক্রিবাচক টাই শব্দ

অসমীয়া অর্থ

চিউ (বিশেষণ)

চিউ চিউ (ক্ৰিয়া বিশেষণ)

খৰ ধৰকৈ

তুক্ (ক্ৰিয়া)

তুক্ তুক্ (বিশেষণ)

দেখিবলৈ ধুনীয়া

২.০ অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দৰ শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তন

ভাষা বিশেষত শব্দৰ শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তন সমবৰ্গীয় আৰু বিষমবৰ্গীয় এই দুই ধৰণেৰে হোৱা দেখা যায়। অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাত মূল শব্দৰ শ্ৰেণী পৰিৱৰ্তন নকৰাকৈ এটা মুক্ত ৰূপৰ সৈতে আন এটা মুক্ত ৰূপৰ সংযোগ কৰি সমশ্ৰেণী শব্দ গঠন কৰা হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

সমবৰ্গীয় শব্দসাধন :

বিশেষ্য

+

বিশেষ্য

=

যৌগিক বিশেষ্য শব্দ

তা ‘চুক্’

+

খাই ‘বিষ্ঠা’

=

তা খাই ‘ফেচকুৰি’

ফাক্ ‘শাক’

+

তাম্ ‘খুন্দা’

=

ফাক্ তাম্ ‘চাটনি’

বিষমবৰ্গীয় শব্দ সাধন প্ৰক্ৰিয়াত এক শ্ৰেণী শব্দৰ পৰা অন্য এক শ্ৰেণী শব্দ সাধন হয়। অসমৰ টাইমুলীয়

ভাষাত বিসমশ্রেণী শব্দসাধনৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত ভিন্ন মুক্ত কৃপৰ সংযোগত এটা শ্ৰেণীৰ পৰা আন এটা শ্ৰেণী শব্দ সাধন হয়। যেনে—

বিসমবৰ্গীয় শব্দসাধন :	ক্ৰিয়া	+	ক্ৰিয়া	=	যৌগিক বিশেষ্য শব্দ
	চান् ‘জনা’	+	চাক্ ‘ধোৱা’	=	চান্ চাক্ ‘ধোৱা’
	বিশেষ্য	+	বিশেষণ	=	যৌগিক বিশেষ্য শব্দ
	দয় ‘পৰ্বত’	+	তম্ ‘চাপৰ’	=	দয় তম্ ‘পাহাৰ’

৩.০ অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দৰ প্ৰকাৰতাত্ত্বিক বিশ্লেষণ

প্ৰকৃতার্থত পৃথিৰীত প্ৰচলিত ভাষাসমূহক একেটা নিৰ্দিষ্ট গোটত শ্ৰেণীকৰণৰ এক পথ হৈছে প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব। অৱশ্যে ভাষাৰ গাঁথনিক নীতি আৰু শ্ৰেণীকৰণ নীতিৰ মাজত পাৰ্থক্য আছে। পৃথিৰীৰ ভাষাসমূহৰ ভাষিক গাঁথনিক দিশত থকা সাৰ্বজনীন বৈশিষ্ট্য শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্বই বিচাৰ কৰে। অৰ্থাৎ ৰূপ বা প্ৰাকৃতিৰ সংযোগত কেনেকৈ নতুন শব্দ গঠন হয়, এই শব্দবোৰত কিদৰে ‘সগ’ সংযোগ কৰি বাক্যত ব্যৱহাৰৰ উপযোগী পদ সৃষ্টি কৰা হয়, এই দিশবোৰ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্বৰ প্ৰধান আলোচ্য বিষয়। অৱশ্যে পৃথিৰীত প্ৰচলিত ভাষাসমূহৰ শব্দ-গঠন পদ্ধতি ইমান বেলেগ যে বিশেষ এক নিয়ম বা পদ্ধতিৰে বিশ্লেষণ কৰাত অসুবিধা হয়। ভাষা বিশেষে মূল ৰূপ বা শব্দৰ লগত বন্ধ ৰূপবোৰ কেতিয়াৰা আগত, কেতিয়াৰা মাজত, কেতিয়াৰা পিছত যোগ হয়। অন্যহাতে কিছুমান ভাষাত বন্ধৰূপবোৰ অস্পষ্ট হৈ থকাৰ বিপৰীতে কিছুমান ভাষাৰ বন্ধ ৰূপবোৰ মূলৰূপৰ সৈতে এনেদৰে সংযোগ হৈ থাকে যে তাক সহজে চিনান্ত কৰা কঠিন। প্ৰধানতঃ ভাষাৰ গাঁথনিক দিশৰ ভিত্তিত পৃথিৰীৰ ভাষাসমূহক যোগাত্মক আৰু আয়োগাত্মক এই দুটা শ্ৰেণীত বিভাজন কৰা হয়।

৩.১ যোগাত্মক ভাষা : যোগাত্মক ভাষাৰ শব্দ-গঠন বিভিন্ন প্ৰত্যয় আৰু প্ৰাতিপাদিকৰ সংযোগত হয়। যোগাত্মক ভাষাত বাক্য আৰু শব্দৰ মাজত থকা সম্বন্ধ আৰু প্ৰত্যয় যোগ হোৱা বাবে শব্দৰ বাপো সলনি হয়। যোগাত্মক ভাষাসমূহক আকৌ অশ্লিষ্ট, শ্লিষ্ট আৰু প্ৰশ্লিষ্ট এই তিনিটা ভাগত বিভক্ত কৰা হৈছে। উদাহৰণস্বরূপে—

অশ্লিষ্ট ভাষা : অশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাত মূল ৰূপৰ লগত সৰ্গবোৰ গাঁথি দিয়া (Glued on) হয় যদিও অৱস্থান অনুসৰি প্ৰকৃতি বা ৰূপবোৰৰ সুকীয়া পৰিচয় থাকে। অশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাৰ উদাহৰণ হৈছে— Turkish ভাষা। যেনে—

Turkish : ev - ler - den		
ঘৰ	বোৰ	পৰা
ev -	ler -	em - den
ঘৰ	বোৰ	মোৰ

‘ঘৰবোৰৰপৰা’
‘মোৰ ঘৰবোৰৰপৰা’

শ্লিষ্ট ভাষা : শ্লিষ্ট ভাষাবোৰত প্ৰত্যয় আৰু বিভক্তি যোগ হৈ যৌগিক শব্দ সাধন হয়। ব্যাকৰণৰ নিয়ম অনুসৰি শব্দ বা প্ৰকৃতিৰ লগত বন্ধৰূপ যোগ হৈ মূল শব্দটোৰ ধ্বনি পৰিৱৰ্তন হয়। শ্লিষ্ট ভাষাৰ বিশুদ্ধ ৰূপ সংস্কৃত আৰু লেটিন ভাষাত পোৱা যায়। সংস্কৃত ভাষাৰ উদাহৰণ হ'ল—

পদ	সংস্কৃত	ইংৰাজী
কৰ্তা	বালক + : = বালকাঃ	A boy
কৰ্ম	বালক + ম = বালকম	To a boy
কৰণ	বালক + এন, ন = বালকেন	By a boy

ওপৰৰ উদাহৰণৰ পৰা দেখা গ'ল যে ইংৰাজী ভাষাৰ ‘Boy’ শব্দটো অপৰিৱৰ্তিত, কিন্তু সংস্কৃত ভাষাত পৰস্ব প্ৰয়োগ হোৱাত প্ৰকৃতি বা শব্দমূল পৰিৱৰ্তন হৈছে।

প্ৰশ্লিষ্ট ভাষা : প্ৰশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাত বিভিন্ন শব্দ বা শব্দাংশ একীভূত হৈ বাক্য গঠন হয়। শব্দবোৰ সম্বন্ধ হৈ সমগ্ৰ

বাক্যটো এটা শব্দত পরিণত হওতে প্রতিটো শব্দৰে এক বা একাধিক ৰূপ লোপ হৈ যায়। গ্ৰীনলেণ্ডৰ এক্সিমো ভাষা প্ৰশ্নিষ্ঠ ভাষাৰ উদাহৰণ। যেনে—

aulisareartorsuarpok	‘সি মাছ মাৰিবলৈ যাবলৈ খৰখৰ কৰে’
aulisar	‘মাছ মৰা’
peartor	‘কাম কৰা’
pinnesuarpok	‘সি খৰখৰ কৰে’

উদাহৰণটোত peartor শব্দৰ ‘p’ আৰু ‘pinnesuarpok’ শব্দটোৰ ‘pinne’ শব্দাংশ লোপ পাই এক শব্দীয় বাক্যটো গঠন হৈছে।

অৱশ্যে একেটা ভাষাতে যোগাঅৱক আৰু অযোগাঅৱক দুয়োটা বৈশিষ্ট্য থাকিব পাৰে। অৰূপাঅৱক অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ সাধিত শব্দৰোৰ ভিন্ন অৰ্থবাচক মৌলিক শব্দৰ আগত বা পাছত কিছুমান সুকীয়া অৰ্থসূচক শব্দাংশ বা কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপৰ সংযোগত গঠিত হয়। সেই দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে টাইমুলীয় ভাষাত অশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য বিদ্যমান। অশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাত মূল ৰূপৰ লগত সৰ্গ (Affix) আৰু প্ৰকৃতি (Root) গাঁথি দিয়া হয় যদিও অৱস্থান অনুসৰি প্ৰকৃতি বা ৰূপৰোৰ পৰিচয় একে থাকে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপ	+ বিশেষ	= সাধিত বিশেষ্য শব্দ
লুক ‘সন্তানসূচক’ + অন্ত ‘কোমল’	= লুক অন্ত ‘শিশু’	

৩.২ অযোগাঅৱক ভাষা : যিবোৰ ভাষাত শব্দ আৰু পদৰ মাজত কোনো পাৰ্থক্য নাই অৰ্থাৎ শব্দৰোৰে সদায় স্বতন্ত্ৰতা বক্ষা কৰে আৰু অন্য শব্দৰ প্ৰভাৱত ৰূপ পৰিৱৰ্তন নকৰে সেইবোৰেই অযোগাঅৱক ভাষা। তলত অযোগাঅৱক ভাষাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্যৰ ভিত্তিত অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দ-গঠন প্ৰক্ৰিয়া শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতাত্ত্বিক পদ্ধতিৰে বিশ্লেষণ কৰা হ'ল—

(ক) একাক্ষৰী ৰূপৰ প্ৰাধান্য : টাই ভাষাৰ একাক্ষৰী শব্দৰোৰ এক বা একাধিক ধৰনিৰে গঠিত হ'লেও শব্দৰোৰৰ মৌলিক ৰূপ এটাহে। যেনে— ফাই ‘জুই’, ছ ‘কাণ’ ইত্যাদি। শাব্দিক গঠনৰ ভিত্তিত টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দৰোৰ বিভিন্ন স্বতন্ত্ৰ মৌলিক শব্দ সংযোগ হৈ নতুন অৰ্থবাচক মৌলিক শব্দৰ গঠন হয়। অৰূপাঅৱক টাই ভাষাৰ মৌলিক শব্দৰোৰ ৰূপ ধৰনিগত পৰিৱৰ্তন নহয়। টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ যোগিক বিশেষ্য শব্দৰোৰ বিশেষ্য, বিশেষণ, ক্ৰিয়া শব্দৰ লগত সংযুক্ত হৈ গঠিত হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

বিশেষ্য+ক্ৰিয়া : তি ‘ঠাই’ + তাঙ্গ ‘ৰঞ্চা’= তি তাঙ্গ ‘ৰাঞ্চনিশাল’

বিশেষ্য+ক্ৰিয়া+বিশেষ্য : কুন্ড ‘মানুহ’+চাঙ্গ ‘জনা’+খাম ‘সোণ’ = কুন্ড চাঙ্গ খাম ‘সোণাৰী’

(খ) সুৰৰ প্ৰাধান্য : অযোগাঅৱক ভাষাত সুৰৰ প্ৰাধান্য দেখা যায়। সুৰপ্ৰধান ভাষাত বক্তাৰ সুৰ অনুসৰি অৰ্থ ভিন্ন হয়। অসমৰ টাইমুলীয় ভাষাৰ ‘খাই’ শব্দৰ বিভিন্ন সুৰত পোৱা অৰ্থবোৰ উল্লেখ কৰা হ'ল —

সুৰ	টাই শব্দ	অসমীয়া অৰ্থ
১) উচ্চ-মধ্য সম সুৰ	খাই ১	কণী
২) নিম্নগামী উচ্চ সুৰ	খাই ২	মলি
৩) নিম্নগামী কঢ়াভাসযুক্ত মধ্য সুৰ	খাই ৩	মৌ
৪) নিম্নগামী মধ্যসম সুৰ	খাই ৪	বিক্ৰী কৰা
৫) নিম্ন সম সুৰ	খাই ৫	জৰ
৬) উৰ্ধ্বগামী নিম্ন সুৰ	খাই ৬	মুখৰ পৰা উলিয়াই দিয়া

(গ) কাৰ্য্যকৰী শব্দ (Functional Word)ৰ প্ৰাধান্য : অযোগাঅৱক ভাষাত সৰ্গ, বিভক্তি, প্ৰত্যয় আদি

শব্দসাধনৰ উপাদান নথকাৰ বাবে কিছুমান কাৰ্য্যকৰী শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ দেখা যায়। অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাসমূহ অযোগাত্মক যদিও কিছুমান কাৰ্য্যকৰী শব্দৰ সংযোগত নতুন শব্দ গঠন কৰা হয়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

$$\text{কাৰ্য্যকৰীৰূপ} + \text{ মূল ৰূপ} = \text{ সাধিত বিশেষ্য শব্দ}$$

$$\text{ফুঁ} + \text{ তেম 'লিখা'} = \text{ ফুঁ তেম 'লিখক'}$$

আনহাতে অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাসমূহত কোনো বস্তু বা প্ৰাণীৰ আকৃতি, প্ৰকৃতি বা স্বৰূপ নিৰ্দিষ্টকৈ বুজাৰলৈ কিছুমান পৃথক ব্যাকৰণগত সৰ্গ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত ব্যৱহাৰ এনে ব্যাকৰণগত সৰ্গ বা উপশব্দসমূহ হৈছে— পাঞ্চ ‘হাল’, পান् ‘খন’, নান् ‘জন বা জনী’, বা ‘টো’, তাৰি ‘ডাল’। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে—

$$\text{মূল ৰূপ} + \text{ ব্যাকৰণগত ৰূপ} = \text{ শব্দসাধন}$$

$$\text{ঙীৰ 'গৰ' } + \text{ খাউ 'তৃতীয় পুৰুষৰ বহুবচন ৰূপ'} = \text{ ঙীৰ খাউ 'গৰুৰোৰ'}$$

(ঘ) ব্যাকৰণৰ কঠোৰ নীতি-নিৰ্দেশনাৰ সীমাবদ্ধতা : অযোগাত্মক ভাষাসমূহ যোগাত্মক ভাষাৰ দৰে ব্যাকৰণগত কঠোৰ নিয়মৰ মাজত আৱদ্ধ নহয়। বাক্যত শব্দবোৰৰ স্থান একোটা শব্দ অনুসৰি— বিশেষ্য, বিশেষণ, ক্ৰিয়া বিশেষণৰ কাম কৰে। প্ৰত্যয় সংযোগৰ কোনো ভূমিকা নাই। যেনে—

ক্ৰিয়াযুক্ত বাক্য : ক) সদৰ্থক : মৌন্ কিন্ খাউ ছু ‘তেওঁ ভাত খাই আছে।’

(মৌন্ = তেওঁ, কিন্ = খোৱা, খাউ = ভাত, ছু = স্বৰূপ বৰ্তমান কালসূচক শব্দ।)

খ) নএওৰ্থক : মৌন্ খাউ উঙ্গ পি কিন্ ছু ‘তেওঁ ভাত খাই থকা নাই।’

(মৌন্ = তেওঁ, খাউ = ভাত, উঙ্গ = নএওৰ্থক, পি = নএওৰ্থক, কিন্ = খোৱা, ছু = স্বৰূপ বৰ্তমান কালসূচক শব্দ।)

(ঙ) সুনিৰ্দিষ্ট শব্দ বা পদৰ ক্ৰমৰ ব্যৱহাৰ : অযোগাত্মক ভাষাৰ বাক্যত সুনিৰ্দিষ্ট স্থানত কৰ্তা, কৰ্ম আৰু ক্ৰিয়া বহে। একোটা বাক্যত শব্দৰ স্থান সাল-সলনি হ'লৈ অৰ্থ সলনি হয়। যেনে—

টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ বাক্যৰ গঠন প্ৰক্ৰিয়া হ'ল — কৰ্তা + ক্ৰিয়া + কৰ্ম

কৰ্তা + ক্ৰিয়া + কৰ্ম

ছাউ (বাঘ) + তাই (মৰা) + হ (গৰ) = ছাউ তাই হ (বাঘে গৰ মাৰে)

৬.০ উপসংহাৰ

অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দতাত্ত্বিক প্ৰকাৰতত্ত্ব এই গৱেষণা কৰ্মৰ সিদ্ধান্তসমূহ হ'ল —

➤ প্ৰকাৰতাত্ত্বিক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাসমূহ অযোগাত্মক, অৰূপাত্মক আৰু একাক্ষৰী। টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দসমূহ গাঁথনিক দিশৰ পৰা মৌলিক, যৌগিক আৰু সাধিত এই তিনিটা ৰূপত পোৱা যায়।

➤ অযোগাত্মক অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাৰ সাধিত শব্দবোৰ ভিন্ন অৰ্থবাচক বিবিধ শব্দৰ আগত বা পাছত কিছুমান সুকীয়া অৰ্থসূচক শব্দাংশ বা কাৰ্য্যকৰী ৰূপৰ সংযোগত গঠিত হয়। সেই দৃষ্টিকোণেৰে যোগাত্মক ভাষাৰ এটা ভাগ অলিষ্ট ভাষাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্যও দেখা যায়।

➤ আধুনিক অসমৰ টাইমূলীয় ভাষাত বিভিন্ন ভাষিক-সামাজিক কাৰণত দেশী-বিদেশী ভাষাৰ নতুন অৰ্থযুক্ত শব্দ আমদানীকৃত হৈছে। এই শব্দবোৰ টাই ভাষিক লোকে নিজ ভাষাৰ ধৰণেৰে উচ্চাৰণ কৰা দেখা যায়।

প্ৰসংগ সূত্র :

১ গৱেষণা কৰ্মত গাঁথনিক শব্দটোৱে বিভিন্ন ধৰণি সংযোগত টাই ভাষাৰ শব্দবোৰ গাঁথনি বা বন্ধা অৰ্থত ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছে।

২ G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol-II, p.59

৩ Sir Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, p.235

৪ ভাই খাময়াং বুৰঞ্জী পঞ্জীয়ন সম্পাদনা সমিতি, ভাই খাময়াং বুৰঞ্জী, পৃ. ২

৫ যোগেন্দ্ৰনাথ ফুকন, চৈন-ছিয়ামীজৰ পৰা টাই-কাডাইলৈ আৰু আগলৈ, কৃষ্ণ মহন (সম্পা.), পাটসাকোঁ, পৃ. ৩৪

- ^ৰ Brummitt, R., & Chater, A. (1974), *A Reconsideration of Autonyms in the International Code. Taxon*, 23(5/6), 852-858. doi:10.2307/1218451
- [ঁ] Endangered Language: An endangered language is a language that is at a risk of falling out of use, generally because it has few surviving speakers. If it losses all its native speakers, it becomes an extinct language, UNESCO distinguishes four levels of endangerment in languages, based on intergenerational transfer.
- <https://www.ethnologue.com>
- ^ৰ vulnerable: most children speak the language but it may restricted to certain domains.
- <https://www.ethnologue.com>
- [৳] Viveka Velupillai, *An Introduction to linguistic typology*, p.15

সহায়ক গ্রন্থপঞ্জীঃ

বৰুৱা, ভীমকান্ত, অসমৰ ভাষা, ডিৰগড়, বনলতা, ২০০৩

ঠাকুৰ, নগেন, পৃথিবীৰ বিভিন্ন ভাষা, গুৱাহাটী, জ্যোতি প্ৰকাশন, ২০০৭

হাকাচাম, উপেন বাভা, অসমীয়া আৰু অসমৰ ভাষা-উপভাষা, পানবজাৰ, গুৱাহাটী, জ্যোতি প্ৰকাশন, ২০০৭

গণ্গা, পুষ্প, তাই অসমীয়া ইংৰাজী অভিধান, তাই সাহিত্য আৰু সংস্কৃতি পৰিয়দ, ধেমাজী, ২০০৮

Grierson, G. A., *Linguistics Survey of India. Vol : III, Part : II*, New Delhi, Motilal Banarsi Dass, 1967, Print.

Benedict, P.K., *Sino Tibetan, a conceptus*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1972, Print.(digital printed version- 2009)

Bloomfield, L., *Language*, Great Britain, Compton Printing Ltd, London and Aylesbury, 1967, Print.



জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ কবিতাত বিপ্লবী চেতনা : এটি বিশ্লেষণাত্মক অধ্যয়ন

ড° দীপামগ্নি বৰুৱা দাস

সংক্ষিপ্তসার

অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতখনক ৰূপান্তরেৰে অভিনৱত্ব প্ৰদান কৰা অনন্য সৃজনশীল প্ৰতিভাৰ গৰাকী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালা। বহুমুখী প্ৰতিভাৰ গৰাকী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ মূলতঃ বিপ্লবী শিঙ্গী। তেখেতোৰ কবিতাৰ সংখ্যা সৰহ নহয় যদিও সাহিত্যিক মানদণ্ড যথেষ্ট উচ্চ খাপৰ। আগৰৱালাই কবিতাত মানৱাঞ্চাক জাগৃত কৰি সমস্ত অশুভ শক্তিক প্ৰতিহত কৰাৰ এক বৈপ্লাৰিক সোঁত বোওৱাৰ অদ্য প্ৰয়াস চলাইছিল। বিপ্লবেই এটা জাতিৰ উন্নতিৰ সিংহদ্বাৰ বুলি বিশ্বাস কৰা জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালাক মানৱীয় চেতনাবোধে এগৰাকী সাংস্কৃতিক বিপ্লবীলৈ ৰূপান্তৰ কৰিছে। তেওঁৰ এই ৰূপান্তৰৰ অন্তৰালত আছিল জাতীয়তাবাদী সত্ত্বাৰে উত্তুন্দ হৈ পৰা এক বিপ্লবী মনোভাৱ। জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সমস্ত সাহিত্যকৰ্মতে বিপ্লবী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটিছে যদিও কবিতাত কিন্তু অধিক ধৰণে প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে। সৰ্বাঙ্গক বিপ্লবী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ অসমীয়া জাতীয় জীৱন; সাহিত্য, সংস্কৃতি, কৃষ্ণি - সমন্বয় আৰদিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰে অৱদান চিৰপুজ্য।

আমাৰ অধ্যয়নত জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ কবিতাত বিপ্লবী চেতনা কেনেদেৰে প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে সেই সম্পর্কে বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ সহায়ত এক সামগ্ৰিক আলোচনা কৰিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হ'ব।

সুচক শব্দ : আধুনিক কবিতা, বিপ্লবী চেতনা, ৰূপান্তৰ, জাতীয় জীৱন, বৈপ্লাৰিক, সৃষ্টিশীল

1.00 অৱতৰণিকা :

কলা-সংস্কৃতিৰ সাধক জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালা (1903 - 1951) অসমীয়া সমাজৰ বাবে এগৰাকী চিৰ নমস্য ব্যক্তি।

তেখেতোৰ মোহনীয় ব্যক্তিত্ব, অসাধাৰণ সৃজনী প্ৰতিভা আৰু সৃষ্টিকৰ্মই আধুনিক অসমীয়া জাতীয় জীৱনৰ দিক্দৰ্শন কৰি আহিছে। তেখেতোৰ চিন্তা আৰু দৰ্শন বিকশিত হৈছিল কবিতা, নাটক, উপন্যাস, সুৰ - কণ্ঠৰে সজোৱা গীতসমূহ, চলচ্চিত্ৰ আৰু চিন্তাশীল প্ৰবন্ধবোৰৰ মাজেৰে। জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ সাহিত্য শিঙ্গপ্ৰতিভাই অসমৰ সাহিত্যজগতখনক এফালে যেনেকৈ সংজীৱিত কৰি ৰাখিছে, তেনেকৈ ইয়াৰ পাঠক - শ্ৰোতা তথা অসমৰ জাতীয় জীৱনক সমোহিত কৰি ৰাখিছে। তেওঁও আছিল এগৰাকী সুন্দৰৰ সাধক - আজীৱন শিঙ্গী। অসমৰ জাতীয় জীৱনৰ সৰ্বত্রতে সত্য - শিৰ - সুন্দৰৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰি সবাকে এক অনাবিল আনন্দৰ অংশীদাৰ কৰোৱাই আছিল জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ জীৱনৰ একান্ত সাধনা। সেয়েহে সামন্ত্যুগীয় ধ্যান - ধাৰণা তথা পৰম্পৰাৰ বিৰুদ্ধে জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বিপ্লবী সত্তা যেনেকৈ জাগৰিত হৈছিল, তেনেকৈ সাম্রাজ্যবাদী শোষক শ্ৰেণীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে আৰু সিংহতৰ ছৰছায়াত লালিত - পালিত দেশীয় শাসক, দুষ্কৃতিকাৰীৰ বিৰুদ্ধেও তেওঁৰ স্থিতি কঠোৰ হৈ পৰিছিল। সামন্ত্যুগীয় ধ্যান - ধাৰণাই কোঙা কৰি ৰখা সমাজখনক সুস্থ কৰিবলৈ আৰু শোষণৰ অক্টোপাছৰ পৰা জনজীৱনক মুক্ত কৰিবলৈ জ্যোতিপ্রসাদে বিচাৰিছিল এক বৈপ্লাৰিক ৰূপান্তৰ। জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সাহিত্য শিঙ্গৰ প্ৰতিটো সৃষ্টি কৰ্মত এনে বৰ্ণ পান্তৰমুখী বৈপ্লাৰিক মানসিকতাৰ পৰিচয় পোৱা যায়। বিশেষকৈ আগৰৱালাৰ সৃষ্টিশীল প্ৰতিভাৰ অনন্য ৰূপ কবিতাৰাজিত প্ৰকাশ বাবুকৈয়ে দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়।

1.01 অধ্যয়নৰ গুৰুত্ব আৰু উদ্দেশ্য :

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ কবিতা সংখ্যাৰ ফালৰ পৰা সৰহীয়া নহয় যদিও সাহিত্যিক মান যথেষ্ট উচ্চ খাপৰ। তেখেতোৰ মৃত্যুৰ

পাছত 1971 চনত প্রকাশিত কবিতাপুঁথির নাম ‘লুইতৰ পাৰৰ অগ্ৰিমুৰ’। তেখেতৰ সৃষ্টিশীল সাহিত্যৰ ভালেমান অংশ বৈপ্লবিক চেতনাবোধেৰে উজ্জীৱিত হৈ আছে। গতিকে জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ কবিতাত বৈপ্লবিক চেতনাবোধৰ দিশটোক অলোকপাত কৰি সেই চেতনাবোধৰ দ্বাৰা পাঠকৰ মানৱীয় পৰিবেশ গঢ়ি তোলাই হৈছে আমাৰ অধ্যয়নৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্য।

1.02 অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰঃ

সাহিত্যিকসকলে তেওঁলোকৰ সৃষ্টিৰাজিত সমাজৰ বিভিন্ন দিশ তুলি ধৰা দেখা যায়। বিপ্লবী শিল্পী আগৰৱালাৰ ‘লুইতৰ পাৰৰ অগ্ৰিমুৰ’ কবিতাপুঁথিৰ মাজত পৰিব্যাপ্ত হৈ থকা বৈপ্লবিক চেতনাবোধৰ দিশটোৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰা হৈছে। প্ৰয়োজনবোধে দুই এটা কবিতাৰ পৰা নিৰ্দৰ্শন দাঙি ধৰি আমাৰ বন্ধুব্য স্পষ্ট কৰিবলৈ যত্ন কৰা হৈছে।

1.03 অধ্যয়নৰ পদ্ধতিঃ

‘জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ কবিতাত বিপ্লবী চেতনাঃ এটি অধ্যয়ন’ শীৰ্ষক গবেষণীয় বিষয়টো আলোচনা কৰোতে বৰ্ণনাত্মক আৰু বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি অনুসৰণ কৰা হৈছে আৰু পত্ৰখন প্ৰস্তুতকৰণৰ সময়ত এনেদৰে আগবঢ়া হৈছে —

ক) সমল সংগ্ৰহঃ আলোচনাৰ কাৰণে মুখ্য সমল হিচাপে ড° হীৰেন গোহাই সম্পাদিত ‘জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাৱলী’ প্ৰস্তুখন লোৱা হৈছে।

খ) পৰ্যবেক্ষণ আৰু বিশ্লেষণঃ ইয়াৰ প্রাপ্ত সমলসমূহ সূক্ষ্মভাৱে নিৰীক্ষণ কৰি বিশ্লেষণৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত ভালেমান প্ৰাসংগিক গ্ৰহণ অধ্যয়ন কৰি সমগ্ৰ বিষয়টোক এক নিজস্ব দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে উপস্থাপন কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা হৈছে।

গ) সিদ্ধান্ত গ্ৰহণঃ শ্ৰেণত প্ৰাপ্তফলৰ ভিত্তিত এক নিৰ্দিষ্ট সিদ্ধান্তলৈ আহিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে।

2.00 আলোচনাঃ

2.01 জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ কবিতাত বিপ্লবী চেতনাঃ

ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰাক্কণ্ঠণত জাতি-ধৰ্ম-বৰ্ণ নিৰ্বিশেষে বহুতো লোকে দেশ বক্ষাৰ বাবে অহোপুৰুষার্থ কৰিছিল। কোনোৱে যদি তৰোৱালেৰে আৰু কোনোৱে কলমেৰে যুদ্ধ কৰিও ইংৰাজৰ অধীনত কাৰাবাস খাটিবলগীয়া হৈছিল। ইংৰাজৰ শোষণ অত্যাচাৰ সহিব নোৱাৰি দেশ মাত্ৰ সন্তানসকলৰ মন প্ৰাণ বিদ্ৰোহী হৈ পৰিছিল। দেশৰক্ষাৰ বাবে; দেশৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰদ্ধাভক্তি থকাৰ বাবে সমাজখন সংস্কাৰৰ বাবে

তৰোৱালেৰে, কলমেৰে দেশৰ সন্তান সাজু হৈ উঠিছিল। শিল্পী, লিখকসকলৰ কঠত প্ৰতিবাদ আৰু বিদ্ৰোহীভাৱে ভুমুকি মাৰিছিল। তেনে লিখক তথা কবিসকলৰ ভিতৰত অসমৰ জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ আগৰৱালা অন্যতম। তেওঁৰ জীৱন দৰ্শন সমাজ সংস্কাৰৰ মনোভঙ্গী তথা দেশৰ স্বাধীনতাৰ বাবে সাহিত্যৰ জৰিয়তে প্ৰকটিত হৈছে বিপ্লবী চেতনা। তেওঁৰ কবিতাত দেশপ্ৰেম, জীৱনৰ অৰ্থ, সমাজ - সংস্কাৰ, জাতীয় প্ৰেম, সমাজৰ ইনতা - নীচতা, দৰিদ্ৰতা, নিষেষণ ইত্যাদি নাশিবলৈ দেশ প্ৰেমৰ বৈভাৱী সুৰ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে।

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ হাতত সাহিত্যৰ প্ৰায়বোৰ দিশেই এক নতুন ৰূপ লাভ কৰিছে। বিশেষকৈ কবিতাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত তেওঁ জনগণৰ মংগলৰ দিশটোলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিয়ে যে হাতত কলম তুলি লৈছিল সেয়া বাকুকৈয়ে ফুটি উঠিছে। মানৱ জীৱনৰ দুখ-ক্ৰেশ, ভাষা-শংকা আৰু অনিশ্চয়তাই তেওঁৰ অন্তৰত দুখ দিছিল। তেওঁ অনুভৱৰ কৰিব পাৰিছিল যে মানৱ জীৱন একমুখী নহয় আৰু সেয়ে তেওঁ মানৱাত্মক সমস্ত বাধা বিঘিনি অতিক্ৰম কৰি চলমান হোৱাৰ মন্ত্ৰেৰে দীক্ষিত কৰাৰ চেষ্টা কৰিছিল। তেওঁৰ কবিতাত মানৱাত্মক জাগৃত কৰি সমস্ত অশুভ শক্তিক প্ৰতিহত কৰাৰ এক বৈপ্লবিক সোঁত বোওৱাৰ অদম্য প্ৰয়াস চলাইছিল আৰু সফলো হৈছিল। জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সমস্ত সাহিত্যকৰ্মতে বিপ্লবী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটিছে যদিও তেওঁৰ বিপ্লবী চেতনা আৰু ভাৰধাৰা কবিতাত অধিক ধৰণে প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে। তেওঁৰ বিপ্লবী চেতনা জাতীয়তাবাদী তথা মানবতাবাদী ভাৰধাৰাবে সমৃদ্ধ হ'লেও সেয়া সৰ্বস্ব নহয়। তেওঁ শিল্পীৰ দৃষ্টিবে পৰ্যবেক্ষণৰ জৰিয়তে সাহিত্যৰূপ দিছে। তেনেক্ষেত্ৰত তেনে জাতীয়তাবাদী চেতনাত ঐতিহ্য চেতনা তথা আবেগিক চেতনা উভয়ে বৰ্তমান।

সুন্দৰ আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ সাধনা জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বিপ্লবৰ সাধনাৰেই নামান্তৰ। তেওঁৰ মতে সংস্কৃতিৰ ধাৰণা মানৱ জীৱনৰ সকলো দিশ সামৰি লোৱাৰ দৰে বিপ্লবৰ ধাৰণাও গৱৰ্তীৰ আৰু ব্যাপক। তেওঁৰ চিন্তাত সংস্কৃতি আৰু বিপ্লবৰ ধাৰণা অংগাংগীভাৱে জড়িত। ‘দুষ্কৃতিক বিনাশ আৰু সংস্কৃতিক প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰাৰ উপায় হৈছে বিপ্লবৰ আৰু ‘বিপ্লবৰ মানে যি সামাজিক; নৈতিক; অৰ্থনৈতিক, ৰাষ্ট্ৰিক মুঠতে সাংস্কৃতিক এক অভিনৰ উচ্চতৰ পৰিবৰ্তিত সমাজ পাৰলৈ ভূমিকম্প কৰে, সিয়েই বিপ্লব। (জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাৱলী, পৃ . 516)।

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত কৈশোৰত উন্মিলিত সমাজ -
সচেতনতাই পৰৱৰ্তী কালৰ পূৰ্ণ প্ৰস্ফুটিত বিপ্লবী মানসিকতা
লৈ ৰূপান্তৰিত হৈছে। জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ ধাৰণাত বিপ্লবে কেৱল
নাভাঙে, ইয়াত অপূৰ্ব সুন্দৰৰ আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ সৃষ্টিও হয়।
ৰূপান্তৰৰ মাজেৰে সুন্দৰ আৰু সংস্কৃতি গঢ়াৰ সপোনকেই
দেখিছিল কবি জ্যোতিপ্রসাদে :

দুষ্কৃতি নাশি
সংস্কৃতিৰে পঞ্চীৰী মুক্তি কৰি
শিল্পীৰপৰে ওলাল জনতা
সুন্দৰবেই বিৰাট স্বৰূপ ধৰি।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী, পৃ. 549)

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ কবিতা সমকালীন চেতনা সমৃদ্ধ।
সংস্কাৰকামী তথা মুক্তি প্ৰয়াসী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ মনত তৎকালীন
পৰাধীনতাৰ বেদনা, অৰ্থনৈতিক শ্ৰেণী বৈষম্য, আৰু গোষ্ঠীগত
বিচ্ছিন্নতাবাদী চেতনা আদি সামাজিক সমস্যাৰাজিয়ে
আলোড়নৰ সৃষ্টি কৰাৰ লগতে সেইবোৰৰ বিৰুদ্ধে তেওঁৰ মন
বিদ্ৰোহী হৈ উঠিছিল। তেওঁৰ কবিতাত পৰাধীনতাৰ বেদনা -
উদ্ভৃত স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ উপবাণী পোৱা যায়। সমকালীন
গোষ্ঠীগত বিচ্ছিন্নতাবাদী চেতনাই তেওঁৰ মনত গভীৰ
প্ৰতিক্ৰিয়াৰ সৃষ্টি কৰাৰ পৰি প্ৰেক্ষিততে তেওঁ বিচ্ছিন্নতাবাদী
চেতনাৰ বিপৰীতে জাতি-ধৰ্ম-বৰ্ণ নিৰ্বিশেষে এক্য আৰু শান্তিৰ
বাণী বিলাইছিল। তেওঁ কবিতাত জাতীয় মংগলময় ঐতিহ্যৰ
স্মৰণেৰে অমংগলৰ বিনাশ আৰু জাতীয় বীৰ বীৰাংগণাসকলৰ
বীৰত্ব আৰু মহানতাৰ ইতিহাস দাঙি ধৰি দেশবাসীৰ মনত বীৰত্বৰ
সংগ্ৰহ কৰাৰ চেষ্টা কৰিছিল আৰু ইয়াৰ জৰিয়তে বিদ্ৰোহৰ বীজ
ৰোপণৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছিল। তেওঁ কলিকতাত ‘অঙ্গাতবাস’ত
থকাকালতো একাংশ উদ্দীপনামূলক কবিতা বচনা কৰি
দেশবাসীৰ বিশেষকৈ অসমবাসীৰ মনত জাতীয় চেতনা সংগ্ৰহ
কৰাৰ অদ্যম প্ৰয়াস চলাইছিল। ‘অসমীয়া ডেকাৰ উক্তি’
কবিতাত শুনা যায় তেওঁৰ ভূংকাৰ ধৰনি :

ময়ে অসমৰ

ময়ে ভাৰতৰ

ময়ে ডেকা ল'ৰা অগ্ৰিময়
ময়ে ভাৰতৰ নবীন সূৰ্য
পূৰ্বাচলত বজাও তুৰ্য। (জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ
বচনাবলী, পৃ. 657)

কবিয়ে সংকীৰ্ণতাৰ গণ্ডীৰ পৰা মুক্তি কৰি অসমৰ গণ্ডীৰ
পৰা ওলাই ভাৰতীয় স্বৰলৈ আগবঢ়াই নিছিল। অসমৰ লগে
লগে সৰ্বভাৰতীয় জাতীয় চেতনাৰ জনগণক লৈয়ে তেওঁও
গৌৰোৱাইত। ভাৰতক বাদ দি যে জাতীয় চেতনা নহয় সেয়া
তেওঁৰ কবিতাত পোৱা যায় আৰু লগতে অসমৰ ঐতিহ্যৰ
লগতে ভাৰতীয় ঐতিহ্যৰ গুণগান তেওঁৰ কবিতাৰ বিষয়বস্তু।
'লাচিতৰ আহ্বান', 'জয়মতীৰ আআৰ উক্তি', আৰু 'কনকলতা'
কবিতাত অসমীয়া মহত্বপূৰ্ণ বীৰত্বৰ লগতে সশ্রদ্ধ আদৰ্শ
সম্বলিত মহান দিশ সমুহকো আঙুলিয়াই তেওঁও ক্ষয়িয়ে অসমীয়া
জাতিৰ প্ৰাণত ত্যাগ আৰু বীৰত্বৰ ভাৰ সংগ্ৰহ কৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস
কৰিছে।

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ কবিতাৰ মাজত নিহিত হৈ আছে
শোষকৰ প্ৰতি থকা ক্ষেত্ৰৰ ভাৰ। সেয়েহে, মানৰ দৰদী কৰি
জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ ভোগ বিলাসী শ্ৰেণীটোৰ প্ৰতিয়েতিয়া বিপ্লবী
সংস্কাৰক বিদ্ৰোহী হৈ পৰিষে তেতিয়াই সৰ্বসাধাৰণ শ্ৰেণীটোৰ প্ৰতি
তেওঁৰ দৰদী হৃদয় গভীৰ মানৱতাবোধেৰে উথলি উঠিছে —

‘ৰোধ কৰিবলৈ’ যত

আন্ধাৰৰ দৈত্য - দানৰ

জ্যোতি মন্ত্ৰে

বিপ্লবৰ শংখ বজাওঁ ।

ব্যক্তি - স্বার্থ জীৱনৰ লোহাৰ দুৱাৰ ভাঙি

সমুহীয়া স্বার্থৰ মহান জীৱনলে’ মই ব্যাপি যাওঁ
তেতিয়াহে ব্যক্তিত্বৰ সত্যমূল্য স্বাধীনতা পাওঁ ।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী, পৃ. 610 - 612)।

স্বাধীনতাৰ পূৰ্ববৰ্তী কালত ঔপনিবেশিক শাসন আৰু
শোষণে কৰিৰ মন - বেদনাক্লিষ্ট কৰে। জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সংগ্ৰামী
চেতনা আৰু চিন্তাধাৰাৰ প্ৰকাশ ঘটিছে তেওঁৰ বিয়ালিশৰ
বিদ্ৰোহৰ সময়ত ৰচিত ‘অসমত নবীন জোৱানৰ সংকল্প’
কবিতাত। এই কবিতাত দেশমাত্ৰক বিদেশীৰ অত্যাচাৰৰ পৰা
উদ্বাৰ কৰিবলৈ নবীনসকলৰ প্ৰতি আহ্বান জনাইছেঃ

জাগোঁ মই

অসমৰ নবীন জোৱান

বুকুত জলিছে মোৰ অগ্ৰিময়ী অভিমান

জাগোঁ মই অসমৰ অজ্ঞেয় জোৱানী

কোন তই গচকি খচকি দিছ,

মোৰ চোতালতে আহি

কৌটিকলীয়া অধিকার।

সাবধান সাবধান।

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সাহিত্য-শিল্প-সংস্কৃতিৰ

মাজত মানৱিক চেতনা উদ্ভাসিত হৈ আছে। মানৱীয় চেতনাবোধে জ্যোতিপ্রসাদক বৃপ্তান্তৰ কৰিছে এগৰাকী সাংস্কৃতিক বিপ্লবীলৈ। এনে বিপ্লবৰ প্ৰকাশ পাইছে বহুধা বিভঙ্গ হৈ। সান্নাজ্যবাদী শক্তি, সামন্ত শ্ৰেণী, ভাৰতীয় গণতান্ত্ৰিক দেশৰ শাসক স্বার্থাবেষী বিভ্ববান শ্ৰেণীৰ প্ৰতি আৰু প্ৰগতিৰ প্ৰতিবন্ধক সমাজৰ পথাগত কু- সংস্কাৰৰ প্ৰতি জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বিপ্লবীকষ্ট আছিল সৰৱ। এনেবোৰ অশুভ শক্তিৰ বিৰুদ্ধে কৰা জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সাংস্কৃতিক বিপ্লবৰ একমাত্ৰ উদ্দেশ্য আৰু লক্ষ্য আছিল মানুহক সংস্কৃতিৰ জোনাকী বাটেৰে আগুৱাই নি এক সুন্দৰ গতিশীল জীৱনৰ অধিকাৰী কৰি তোলা।

স্বাধীনতাৰ প্ৰাক্কালত চলা পুজিপাঁতিৰ বিভেদমূলক কাৰ্যকলাপো জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ দৃষ্টগোচৰ হৈছে। তেওঁ এই বিভেদমূলক কাৰ্যকলাপৰ বিৰুদ্ধাচৰণ কৰি সকলোকে জাতি - বৰ্ণ - ধৰ্ম - নিৰ্বিশেষে দেশমাত্ৰৰ সন্তান মন্ত্ৰেৰে দীক্ষিত কৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছে। ‘অসমীয়া ডেকাৰ উক্তি’ ক বিতাত তেওঁ কৈছে

—
ময়েই খাছিয়া,
ময়েই জয়ন্তীয়া,
ডফলা - আবৰ - আকা,
ময়ে চিংফৌ
ভৈয়ামৰ মিৰি
সোৱণশৰীয়া ডেকা।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী : পৃ. 658)

একেই সুৰ শুনা যায় ‘অসমীয়া নবীন জোৱানৰ
সংকল্প’ কবিতাত —

যি কি ধৰ্ম নহওক তোৰ
বামুণ - শুদিৰ যিয়েই নহয়
হিন্দু বা মুছলমান
বৌদ্ধ হয়, খীষ্টান হয়
মাথোঁ মনত বাখিবি তই অসমৰ ন - জোৱান।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী : পৃ. 681)

জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বিপ্লবী চেতনাত মানৱতাবাদ অতি
স্পষ্টৰূপত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। মানৱতাবাদী কৰি গৰাকীৰ

মানৱাত্মাৰ ব্যথাই মৰ্মে মৰ্মে স্পৰ্শ কৰিছে। মানৱতাবাদী বিপ্লবী চেতনাবে তেওঁও সমকালীন দুই অশুভ শক্তি, সান্নাজ্যবাদী বিদেশী

শক্তি আৰু দেশীয় সুবিধাবাদী শোষকশ্ৰেণীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ ঘোষণা কৰিছে। ‘ভলটিয়াৰ দুখ’, জ্যোতি শংখ’, ‘পোহৰৰ গান’ কবিতাৰ জৰিয়তে তেওঁও সান্নাজ্যবাদী বিদেশী শক্তিৰ বিৰুদ্ধে প্ৰচণ্ড বিদ্রোহ ঘোষণা কৰিছে। আনফালে ‘এটা মাতাল বনুৱা’, ‘এটা পগলা খেতিয়ক’, ‘জনতাৰ আহান’, ‘সাবধান সাবধান’ আদি কবিতাৰ জৰিয়তে তেওঁও স্বদেশী সুবিধাবাদী শ্ৰেণীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ ঘোষণা কৰিছে। শোষিত পীড়িত কৃষক শ্ৰমিকৰ জীৱন - যন্ত্ৰণাৰ প্ৰতিবন্ধনি শুনা যায় কবিতাবোৰত। কবিতাবোৰত সমকালীন সমাজৰ শোষিত পীড়িতসকল প্ৰতি থকা সহানুভূতি বহু পৰিমাণে মাঙ্গীয় ধাৰণাবে সমৃদ্ধ। কবিয়ে সুবিধাবাদী স্বার্থাবেষী শ্ৰেণীৰ স্বৰূপ বুজি উঠিছে আৰু সেয়া তেওঁৰ কবিতাত প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। তেওঁও শোষক শ্ৰেণীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে উগ্ৰ সতৰ্কবাণী প্ৰদান কৰিছে। ‘সাবধান সাবধান’ কবিতাত শোষক শ্ৰেণীৰ স্বৰূপকে এইদৰে উন্মোচন কৰিছে —

সুবিধাবাদীৰ দল
তোৰ মিছা হ'ব কৌশল ,
ৰাইজৰ তই সেৱা চুৰ কৰি
বঢ়াব খুজিছ বল।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী : পৃ. 673)

সুবিধাবাদীৰ দলকে আকো সাৱধানবাণী শুনাইছে

ৰাইজৰ তই
তই জনা নাই
তই যাক ভাৱ
মুৰ্খ জনতা
মূঢ় জনতা বুলি
যাৰ হ'ব খোজ স্বয়ংসিদ্ধ নেতা
সেই জনতা আজি প্ৰবুদ্ধ হ'ল।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী : পৃ. 673)

কবিয়ে সমগ্ৰ শোষক শ্ৰেণীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে অশুভ শক্তিৰ বিৰুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ ঘোষণা কৰিছে। তেওঁও অশুভ শক্তি বিনাশৰ নিমিত্তে বৰুদ্ধৰ আহান কৰি ধৰংসৰ কামনা কৰিছে। সেই ধৰংস

যেন সৃষ্টিরেই আগস্তক বার্তা । আশাবাদী কবি গৰাকী অশুভ
শক্তি বিনাশী শুভ শক্তির আগমনত অপেক্ষারত । ‘কাথন
জংঘার বুৰঞ্জী’ত অশুভৰ ধৰ্মস তথা

প্লয়লীলার লগে লগে নৰসৃষ্টিৰ বার্তাও শুনা যায় :
ডৰ্মৰুত বাজি উঠে প্লয়ৰ সংগীত

নয়নৰ দৃষ্টিত আলোক বৃষ্টি
মানৱৰ কল্পনাত

সেই জ্যোতি প্ৰপাতত
গঢ়ি উঠে যুগে যুগে
অনুভৰ সৃষ্টি ।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী : পৃ. 626)

একেটি কবিতাতে শুনা যায় —

ডৰ্মৰুত বাজে
সৃষ্টি সৃষ্টি বুলি মহাকালে নাচে
সৃষ্টিয়ে আদি সৃষ্টিয়ে অনাদি
সৃষ্টিৰ চক্ৰ
মহিত কবি ঘূৰে প্লয়ৰ তন্ত্ৰ
সৃষ্টিহে সৃষ্টি

চলে অহোৰাত্ৰি,
প্লয়ৰেই সৃষ্টিৰ যুগে যুগে মাত্ ।

(জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বচনাবলী : পৃ. 626)

কবিৰ চেতনাত প্লয়, ধৰ্মস, ৰুদ্ৰৰ তাণু, মহাকালৰ
নাচৰ আশে - পাশেও অভিনৰ সৃষ্টিৰ আশাও বিৰাজমান । তেনে
পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিততে কোৱা হয় জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ প্ৰকৃতাৰ্থত এগৰাকী
বিশ্বৰী কবি শিল্পী । কলিকতাত আঘাগোপন কালত তেঁও
যথাৰ্থতে বিশ্বৰী কবিৰ ভূ মিকাত অৱতীৰ্ণ হৈছিল ।
আঘাগোপনকাৰী জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ সম্পর্কত আৰঞ্গা আছফ
আলীৰ মন্তব্য —

He is fine gentleman. He is revolutionary poet,
not a revolutionary politician. (লহকৰনবীনচন্দ্ৰ, নাথ মহেন্দ্ৰ
কুমাৰ নাথ(সম্পা.) : জ্যোতি প্ৰপাত, পৃ. 67) ।

3.00 উপসংহাৰ :

আলোচনাৰ অন্তত তলত দিয়া সিদ্ধান্তসমূহত
উপনীত হ'ব পৰা যায় —

ক) লেখকৰ গভীৰ জীৱনবোধ, মানৱীয় দৃষ্টিভঙ্গী,
প্ৰতিবাদী মনৰ পৰিচয় পোৱা গৈছে ।

খ) কবিতাবোৰত প্ৰকাশ পোৱা মানৱীয় চেতনাবোধে
তেঁওক এগৰাকী প্ৰকৃত বিশ্বৰী শিল্পী আৰু মানৱদৰদী কবি
হিচাপে প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰাইছে ।

গ) বৰ্তমান সময়তো জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ বৈশ্বারিক চেতনাৰ
প্ৰাসংগিকতা আছে ।

মুঠৰ ওপৰত আগৰৱালাৰ কবিতাৰ বঞ্চে - বঞ্চে বিদ্ৰোহ
প্ৰকাশ পাইছে , প্লয়ৰ আকাঙ্ক্ষা কৰিছে উৎপীড়িত আৰু
অত্যাচাৰৰ সন্মুখীন হোৱা মানুহৰ প্ৰতি কৰা অন্যায়ৰ প্ৰতিকাৰৰ
ব্যৱস্থা হিচাপে । বিশ্বৰী চেতনাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো আগৰৱালাৰ
মৰ্যাদাপূৰ্ণ অৱস্থিতি পোৱা যায় ।

সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী :

মুখ্য উৎস ঃগোঁহাই, হীৰেন (সম্পা.) : জ্যোতিপ্রসাদৰ
বচনাবলী / গুৱাহাটী : অসম প্ৰকাশ পৰিষদ, সপ্তম সংস্কৰণ
2007, মুদ্ৰিত ।

গৌণ উৎস : দন্ত, বীৰেন্দ্ৰনাথ (সম্পা.) : কৰকোৱৰ
জ্যোতিপ্রসাদ, গুৱাহাটী : 2012, মুদ্ৰিত ।

বৰুৱা, প্ৰস্তাুদ কুমাৰ : জ্যোতি মনীষা ডিৱগড় :
বনলতা, 2009 মুদ্ৰিত ।

লহকৰ নবীনচন্দ্ৰ, মহেন্দ্ৰ কুমাৰ নাথ (সম্পা.) :
জ্যোতিপ্ৰপাত। তেজপুৰ : সাহিত্যসভা, 2003, মুদ্ৰিত ।

শইকীয়া, অজিৎ (সম্পা.) ছশ্বচৰৰ অসমীয়া নাটক
ঃ পৰম্পৰা আৰু পৰিৱৰ্তন, দুলীয়াজান : পথাৰ প্ৰকাশন, 2008
মুদ্ৰিত ।

□ □

দৰঙ্গী লোককৃষ্টি - নাঞ্জেলী গীত

ড° অজিতা চৰৌয়া

বিষয় শিক্ষক

ৰঙ্গিয়া ছেৱালী উচ্চতৰ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়

সাৰাংশ :-

নাঞ্জেলী গীত হৈছে দৰঙ্গী কলাকৃষ্টিৰ এক আপুৰগীয়া সম্পদ। দৰঙ্গী গৰখীয়া সমাজৰ আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষা, কামনা-বাসনা আদি প্ৰকট হৈ উঠে নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহৰ জৰিয়তে। নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহ দুটা ভাগত ভগাব পাৰি - যৌন ক্ষুধা কেন্দ্ৰিক আৰু কাজিয়া মূলক। নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহ দুটা দলৰ মাজত অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। নাঞ্জেলী গীতত স্থানীয় ভাষা, গালি-গালাজ, বয়-বস্তৰ নাম, স্থানীয় পৰিবেশ, বিভিন্ন ঠাইৰ নাম, সামাজিক বীতি-নীতি আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ চিত্ৰ প্ৰস্ফুটিত হয়। নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ লগত বিহুগীত আৰু দৰঙ্গী লোকগীত চেৰাচেকৰ সাদৃশ্য পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। বৰ্তমান নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহক পৰিমার্জিত ৰূপ দি মধ্যস্থ কৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা হৈছে। অসম সৰশিক্ষা অভিযানৰ অধীনত গাঁৱলীয়া বাইজৰ মাজত শিক্ষাৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাৰ বোধ দিবলৈ পৰিবেশন কৰা বাটৰ নাটত নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ সুৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা' দেখা গৈছে। দৰঙ্গী লোকগীতৰ ভড়াল চহকী কৰা এই নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ সংৰক্ষণ আৰু সংৰক্ষণ কৰাতো অতি প্ৰয়োজনীয়।

(সংকেত শব্দ :- গৰখীয়া, প্ৰেম, আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষা, দল)

প্ৰস্তাৱনা :-

অতীতৰে পৰা জনসাধাৰণৰ মুখে মুখে পৰম্পৰাগত ভাৱে বাগৰি অহা সাহিত্যই হৈছে লোক সাহিত্য। লিখিত পৰম্পৰাৰ আৰম্ভণিৰ পূৰ্বে মৌখিক পৰম্পৰাত প্ৰচলিত কোনো পৰম্পৰাগত কলা বা সাহিত্যিক লোক সাহিত্য আখ্যা দিব পাৰি।^১ এই সাহিত্যই অনাখৰী চহা লোকসকলৰ সৃষ্টিশীল প্ৰতিভাৰ পৰিচয় দিয়ে। এই সাহিত্যত মূৰ্ত হৈ থাকে সমজুৱাসকলৰ সুখ-দুখ, হাঁহি-কান্দোন, আশা-নিৰাশা, ধৰ্ম-

কৰ্মৰ লগতে প্ৰকৃতি জগতৰ চিত্ৰ।

লোকসাহিত্যৰ বিভিন্ন বিভাগ সমূহৰ দৰে লোক গীতসমূহো লোকসমাজৰেই সৃষ্টি। লোকজীৱনৰ আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষা, অভাৱ-অভিযোগ, কামনা-বাসনা আদি প্ৰকট হৈ উঠিছে এই লোকগীত সমূহৰ জৰিয়তে। জনসাধাৰণে নাওঁ চলাওঁতে, হাল বাওঁতে গৰু চৰাওঁতে, ঢেকী দিওঁতে, সূতা কাটোঁতে গোৱা গীত সমূহৰ জৰিয়তে এই মানসিক প্ৰক্ৰিয়াসমূহ প্ৰকট হৈ পৰিছে।^২ এই বাংময় প্ৰকাশৰ ফলত অসমীয়া ভাষাতো অলেখ অলিখিত লোকগীত, বিহুগীত, বনগীত, গৰখীয়া গীত আৰু বিয়াগীতৰ সৃষ্টি হৈছে। একেধৰণৰ পৰিস্থিতিতেই দৰঙ্গতো বিয়াগীত, চেৰাচেক, আইনাম আৰু নাঞ্জেলী গীত আদি অনেক লোকগীতৰ সৃষ্টি হৈছে। দৰঙ্গে লোকসংস্কৃতিৰ অস্তৰ্গত কৰ্মমূলক গীত সমূহৰ প্ৰধান হ'ল নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহ।

উদ্দেশ্য আৰু লক্ষ্য :-

এই অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য হৈছে দৰঙ্গৰ চহা জীৱনৰ ভাৱ প্ৰকাশৰ মাধ্যমকলৈ নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহে কি ভূমিকা পালন কৰিছে আৰু লগতে গীত সমূহৰ মাজেৰে দৰঙ্গী সামাজিক বীতি-নীতি, আচাৰ-ব্যৱহাৰ কেনেদৰে প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে তাৰ ঘৰি দাঙি ধৰা। লগতে এই গীত সমূহে লোক সাহিত্যৰ ভৱাল কেনেদৰে চহকী কৰিছে সেই বিষয়ৰ ওপৰত আলোকপাত কৰা।

অধ্যয়ন প্ৰণালী :-

গবেষণা পত্ৰখন প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ পুঁথি অধ্যয়ন আৰু ক্ষেত্ৰ অধ্যয়নৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে। লোক-সংস্কৃতি, লোক-সাহিত্য বিষয়ক গ্ৰন্থ অধ্যয়ন কৰি বহুথিনি সমল গোটোৱা

হৈছে। ক্ষেত্র অধ্যয়নৰ বাবে দৰং জিলাৰ কেইগৰাকীমান ব্যক্তিৰ
লগত আলাপ-আলোচনা কৰা হৈছে।

দৰঙ্গী লোক কৃষ্টি - নাঞ্জেলী গীত :-

অসমৰ জনসাহিত্যত চহা জীৱনৰ বার্তাবাহী স্বৰূপে
নাঞ্জেলী গীত হৈছে এক আমোদজনক মৌলিক সৃষ্টি।

অতীতত কান্ধত নাঞ্জল লৈ হাল বাবলৈ যোৱা নিবন্ধৰ
হজুৱা চেঙেৰা আৰু গৰু, ম'হ চৰাবলৈ যোৱা লোকসকলৰ
মুখে মুখে দৰঙ্গত যি গীতৰ প্ৰচলন হৈছিল সেয়াই হৈছে
'নাঞ্জেলী গীত'।^৩ নাঞ্জেলী গীত তেওঁলোকৰ আবেগ
অনুভূতিৰ বৈচিত্ৰ, কল্পনাৰ প্ৰাবল্য, অলংকাৰ সৌন্দৰ্য আৰু
গীতিসন্তাৰ আধিক্যৰে পৰিপূৰ্ণ। ইয়াত প্ৰকাশ পায় বিৰহ
বেদনা আৰু মিলন বাসনা। এই প্ৰেম আৰু যৌন বিষয়ক
গীতবোৰ মুকলি-মূৰীয়া গালি-গালাজ আৰু অশ্লীলতাৰে
পৰিপূৰ্ণ।^৪

দৰঙ্গত অশিক্ষিত হালবোৱা লোকসকলক 'নাঞ্জল মাৰা'
মানুহ বুলি কোৱা হয়। গতিকে নাঞ্জল মাৰা মানুহৰ সৃষ্টি বুলি
এই গীতসমূহক (নাঞ্জল + ঈ) 'নাঞ্জেলী' বা 'নাঞ্জেলী' গীত
বুলি কোৱাৰ যুক্তিযুক্ততা আছে।^৫ এই গীতবোৰ ডেকা বয়সৰ
যৌন উন্মাদনাপূৰ্ণ স্বতঃস্ফূর্তভাৱে প্ৰকাশ পোৱা গীত।^৬

'নাঞ্জেলী' শব্দটোৱে অশ্লীল বা কুৰুচি বাক্যক সূচিত
কৰা দেখা যায়। গাঁৱত প্ৰচলিত অশ্লীল আৰু শ্ৰবণ অযোগ্য
কথাক 'নাঞ্জেলী' ৰাপে বিবেচনা কৰা হয়। 'নাঞ্জল' শব্দটো
অপভ্ৰংশ হৈ নাঞ্জল, নাঘচীয়া, নাঞ্জেলী আৰু শেষত নাঞ্জেলী
হৈছে বুলি ঠাৰৰ কৰিব পাৰি।^৭

কৃষি সঁজুলি নাঞ্জলৰ লগত ইয়াৰ সম্পর্ক থকাতো
অস্বীকাৰ কৰিব নোৱাৰিব। নাঞ্জলে যেনেদেৱে বসুমতীক এফালৰ
পৰা চিৰাচিৰ কৰি যায়, নাঞ্জেলীয়েও সমাজত সংঘটিত
অসামাজিক গুণ্ঠ কথাবোৰ এফালৰ পৰা প্ৰকাশ কৰি যায়।
নাঞ্জলৰ ফালৰ আগত তলৰ মাটি ও পৰ হোৱাৰ দৰে
নাঞ্জেলীয়েও তলপৰি লুকাই থকা কথাবিলাক লোকচকুৰ
পোহৰলৈ আনে। নাঞ্জলে মাটি চিৰাচিৰ কৰা কাৰ্য্যটো যেনেদেৱে
অসুৰিক তেনেদেৱে নাঞ্জেলীমাৰা বা গোৱা পদ্ধতিটোও
আসুৰিক বা অশ্লীল।^৮

গৰখীয়া ডেকাৰ মনৰ চিতনি-ভাৱনি তথা যৌৱনৰ

উৎকট বেদনা নাঞ্জেলী গীত বোৰৰ মাজেৰে মুকলিকৈ প্ৰকাশ
কৰা হয়। কিছুমান নাঞ্জেলী গীতত অশ্লীল শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগ আছে
যদিও এই অশ্লীলতা জীৱনৰ বাবে অসত্য নহয়।^৯

দৰঙ্গী শব্দকোষত নাঞ্জেলী বা লাইলাঙ্গৰ অৰ্থ গৰখীয়া
ল'ৰাই গৰু চৰাওঁতে গোৱা আদি বসৰ গীত বুলি উল্লেখ কৰা
হৈছে।

নাঞ্জেলী গীত সাধাৰণতে দুই প্ৰকাৰৰ যেনে - যৌন
ক্ষুধা কেন্দ্ৰিক আৰু কাজিয়া মূলক। গো-চৰণীয়া পথাৰৰ
ওচৰতে জলাশয়বোৰত মাছ মাৰিবলৈ অহা জিয়ৰী, বোৱাৰী
সকলক উদ্দেশ্য কৰি যৌন ক্ষুধা কেন্দ্ৰিক গীত সমূহৰ সৃষ্টি
হৈছিল। গৰখীয়াসকলৰ ভিতৰত এজন মূৰৰী থাকে তেওঁক
বৰগৰখীয়া বা বৰগুবিয়াল বোলে। কেতিয়াবা অন্য গৰখীয়া
দলৰ লগত মুখ-মুখি হ'লে দুয়ো দলৰ মাজত নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ
যোগেদি কাজিয়া আৰম্ভ হয়। সেই কাজিয়া অতি গভীৰ হ'লে
বৰগৰখীয়াই আহি দুয়ো দলৰ গৰখীয়াৰ মাজত মিলা-প্ৰীতি
কৰাই দিয়ে।

এই নাঞ্জেলী গীত সমূহৰ প্ৰকাশৰ মাধ্যম হৈছে দৰঙ্গী
কথিত ভাষা। কৃত্ৰিমতাহীন অশিক্ষিত গৰখীয়াসকলৰ সৃষ্টি
বুলি প্ৰায়বোৰ গীততে তেওঁলোকৰ সহজাত প্ৰবৃত্তিৰে কৰা
শব্দৰ যথায়ত ব্যৱহাৰৰ প্ৰয়োগ বিকৃত উচ্চাৰণেৰে হ'লেও
ঝংকাৰিত হৈ আছে। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে :

নাঞ্জেলী গীতত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা দৰঙ্গী কথিক লিখিত শব্দ :-

কথিক শব্দ	লিখিত শব্দ
পেঞ্জা	পেলালে
লিকিৰা	ল'ৰা
ব'ইভে	বহিব
কিৰা	শপত
ভোথেৰি	জাৰি
গুৰখীয়া	গৰখীয়া
কুইজাৰ	কুঁহিয়াৰ
লাগবা	লাগিব
গেল	গ'ল

খাগেই	খোরাগৈ	“বগুৰি ওলোঙ্গা	বগুৰি জোলোঙ্গা
কৰছি	কৰিছে	বগুৰি নলবি কোঁচত	
গেইছিল	গৈছিলোঁ	গুৰখীয়া পৈয়েৰেক	জোকাই তই নলবি
ইয়াৰ উপৰিও বিভিন্ন গালি-গালাজ, বয়-বস্তৰ নাম, স্থানীয় উৎসৱ, বিভিন্ন স্থান আদিও এই গীতবোৰত কৰায়িত হয়।	মঙ্গলদৈ অঞ্চলত মুঠ ওঠৰ কুৰি নাঞ্জেলী গীত থকাৰ কথা জনা যায়। গোৱা হৈছে -	প্ৰেমাস্পদৰ বিচেছদ অথবা অপমানৰ নিৰ্মম প্ৰহাৰ কোনেও সহ্য কৰিব নোৱাৰে। জীৱনত কেতিয়াবা তেনে বিচেছদ আহিলে গুৰখীয়াইও বেদনাসিঙ্ক হাদয়েৰে ব্যক্ত কৰে-	বগুৰি মাৰি দিম বুকত।” ^{১২}
নাঞ্জেলী একুৰি	নাঞ্জেলী দুকুৰি	আকাশেদি উৰি গেল	বগাঁকে বগলী
নাঞ্জেলী ওঠৰ কুৰি,		তলেন্দি উৰি গেল কাক	
অমুকীৰ বাপেকে	হাতযোৰ কৰছি	গৰুৰ গুৰখীয়াক	কোনে ভাল পাব
নাঞ্জেলী নামাৰ্বা বুলি।		হায় মোৰ বিধিৰ বিপাক।” ^{১৩}	
জাগতিক প্ৰেম-প্ৰীতি অথবা প্ৰণয়েই নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ সৃষ্টিৰ অন্যতম সুৰ বুলিব পাৰি। গোটেই দিনটো বোকা পানী খচি উন্মুক্ত প্ৰকৃতিৰ বুকুত গৰ-ম'হ চাৰি ফুৰা মৰম আকলুৱা গুৰখীয়াৰ প্ৰাণেও কাৰোবাৰ অকণমান মৰম স্নেহআৰু সুখস্বাদ বিচাৰে। সেয়েহে ওচৰৰে যোৱা গাভৰৰ ওচৰত প্ৰেম নিবেদন কৰি, নহ'লে জোকাই-মেলি অসীম ত্ৰিপ্তি লাভ কৰে।	প্ৰেমৰ আতিশ্যাত সৃষ্টি হোৱা নাঞ্জেলী গীত অলেখ। আনকি অশ্লীল ঘটনা সমূহো ইয়াৰ পৰা বাদ নিদিয়ে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে - ৰাতি সুখত লিপ্ত থকাৰ সময়ত কুকুৰাই ডাক দি ৰাতিপুৱাৰ সংকেত দিয়াত	“ৰাতি নুপুৱাওঁতেই	কৰিয় ডাক দিলি
গুৰখীয়াই গাই -		গুৰখীয়াই এৰিলে মোক।”	
“আমালৈ আম্ৰা	নুনলৈ থেকেৰা	বুলি আশাভঙ্গৰ পোৱণিত গাভৰৰে আক্ষেপ কৰে।	
ফুটিয়া গাখীৰৰ দৈ,		উন্মুক্ত প্ৰকৃতিৰ চিৰশাস্ত্ৰিয় কোলাত বহি নীলাকাশৰ বুকুৱেদি যোৱাপাতি উৰি যোৱা বা প্ৰকৃতিৰ কাম্য-কানন খলক লগাই নিজৰ-জীৱন সহচৰী দেখি নিজৰ প্ৰেয়সীলৈ মনত পেলাই কেতিয়াবা গুৰখীয়াই বেদনাত ছাটি ফুটি কৰে -	
মাইকীৰ ঘৰতে	জীয়াৰী ৰাবে ত্ৰি	আমৰ গছতে	কুলিয়ে চিৰওবে
ক'ত পাম চেঙেৰা পৈ।” ^{১০}		লগৰ লগৰী বিচাৰি	
কিষ্ট অশিক্ষিত গাৱলীয়া মুখৰা গাভৰৰে তাৰ যথোচিত উন্নৰ দিব জানে। সেয়ে লাজ-মান কাটি কৰি হৈ সিহঁতেও কয় -	ম'হ চাৰি থাকোতে	ম'হ চাৰি থাকোতে	তোলৈ মনত পৰে
“আহু তলী তলী	আমি বিয়া চলি	মৰো মই ছাটি-ফুটি কৰি।” ^{১৪}	
আমাকো নালাগে পৈ।” ^{১১}		একোখন পথাৰত থকা দুটি গুৰখীয়া দলৰ মাজত নাঞ্জেলী গীতেৰে পৰম্পৰে পৰম্পৰক ঠাট্টা মক্ষৰা কৰে। এদল গুৰখীয়াক জোকাই লোৱাৰ প্ৰয়াসেৰে আন এদল গুৰখীয়াই গায় -	
কিষ্ট গুৰখীয়া সহজতে এৰি দিয়া বিধিৰ লোক নহয়। তেওঁলোকে মিছা খং দেখুৱাই তীৰ অশ্লীল গীতেৰে আক্ৰমণ কৰে -	লালিলেং একুৰি	লালিলেং দুকুৰি	
		লালিলেং ওঠৰকুৰি	

সিপাবৰ গুৰুখীয়াই

হাতযোৰ কৰ্ছি

লালিলেং নামৰ্বা বুলি। ১৫

এইদৰে এটা দলে জোকাই লোৱাৰ পাচতেই দুয়ো দলে
'কিৰা' অৰ্থাৎ শপত গীত গায়।

উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে : সিপাবৰ গুৰুখীয়াই গায় -

আমগছে বান্ধিলো

আমডেলী পিপিৰা

জামগছে বান্ধিলো পীৰা

লাগ যদি লাগিম

ভালকে লাগিম

বাপেৰ-ভায়েৰেৰ কিৰা।

ইয়াৰ পাচতেই দুয়োদলৰ মাজত ঠাট্টা সূচকভাৱে গীতৰ
কটা-কটি আৰন্ত হয়। যেনে-

ইপাবৰ গুৰুখীয়া

এনুৱা-তেনুৱা

চ'বিয়াই ছিঙিলা টেকী,

সিপাবৰ গুৰুখীয়া

এনুৱা তেনুৱা।

নদীদি উটি গে'ল হোকা (এ অমুকা)

নদীদি উটি গে'ল হোকা

তোৰে মায়েৰাই চিঠি দি খেদাইছি

ভালকে থাক্বি ঢোকা।

তাৰপাচত দুয়োদলৰ মাজত সংঘৰ্ষ গভীৰতৰ হৈ পৰে।
অৱশ্যেত অঞ্চলীল গীতেৰেই পৰম্পৰে পৰম্পৰক তীব্ৰভাৱে
গালি-গালাজ দিয়ে। কেতিয়াবা এই সংঘৰ্ষ এদিনতে শেষ নহয়,
দুই চাৰিদিনলৈ গীতৰ প্ৰতিযোগিতা চলে। যিটো দলে অগত্যা
হাৰ মানিবলগা হয়, জিকা দলটিয়ে তেওঁলোকৰ পৰা গামোচা,
গৰু চৰোৱা লৰু (এচাৰি) আদি কাঢ়ি নিয়া কাৰ্যও নচলা নহয়।
কেতিয়াবা আকৌ অমাৰ্জিত গীতেৰেই হাৰা দলটিক ধিক্কাৰ
দিয়া হয়। যেনে :-

এইডাল আহঁতৰ মূৰা, ভায়েৰ মৰা

এইডাল আহঁতৰ মূৰা।

মোৰ লগতে লাগ'বে নৰা

খাঁগে ভায়েৰৰ মূৰা।

নাঞ্জেলী গীতসমূহত যিহেতুকে মুক্ত ভাৱারেগ প্ৰকাশত
কোনো প্ৰতিবন্ধকতাৰ হেঙ্গৰ নাথাকে, গতিকে ইদলে সিদলৰ
মাক, ভনীয়েক আদি সম্পর্কীয় মানুহবিলাকৰ লগত যোৰাই
গীত গাই আনন্দত মতলীয়া হৈ পৰে। মঙ্গলদৈৰ নাঞ্জেলী
গীতসমূহত স্থানীয় পৰিবেশ, বিভিন্ন স্থানৰ নাম, মঙ্গলদৈৰ
উৎসৱ, সদাসৰ্বদা সংঘটিত ঘটনাৰ টুকুৰা ছবি আৰু
তাহানিবেপৰা চলি অহা অনেক সামাজিক ৰীতি-নীতি
প্ৰস্ফুটিত হৈ আছে। যেনে :-

বল্দৌ পুখুৰীৰ পুঠি এ অমুকা

বল্দৌ পুখুৰীৰ পুঠি,

তোৰে মায়েৰেক আনিব গইছিলো

ৰঙিয়াল ঘোঁৰাতে উঠি।

লুইতে লুহুৰি

গুদামে জহাৰি

মঙ্গলদৈৰ কায়ৰে বালি,

কলকাতাৰ পুতেকে আমুকীক বাখিলে

মুৰেৰে হাচুতি পাৰি।

ওৱে গছতে

মৌৰে বাহা ললে

দাদা মোক পাৰি দে খাওঁ

ওঠৰ হেতীয়া

বিহা কিনি দিয়া

যোপাৰ দল চাবলৈ যাওঁ।

কিছুমান নাঞ্জেলী গীত প্ৰবচনৰ দৰে হয়। যেনে :-

লাউৰ তলতে

লাই শাক বঢ়ালো

তেলত বঢ়ালো চুলি। ইত্যাদি।

তুঁহত জুই ৰখা মঙ্গলদৈৰ গাঁৱলীয়া ঘৰসমূহৰ এটা সদা
প্ৰচলিত নিয়ম। নাঞ্জেলী গীতত তাকো সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰকাশ হৈছে

বাঁহত কান্দে

বাঁহ মৈৰাই

খোলোওত কান্দে গুই

এ আপি

তোৰ ঘৰত যাম

তুঁহতে ৰাখ্বি জুই।

প্রতিটো নাঞ্জেলী গীতেই একোটি স্বরকর মাজত সম্পূর্ণ হৈছে। ভাৰৰ সামঞ্জস্য থাকিলেও প্রতিটো স্বরকৰে স্বতন্ত্রতা লক্ষ্য কৰিব পাৰি। আবৃত্তিৰ সুবিধাৰ কাৰণে শব্দসমূহ ঠায়ে ঠায়ে পুণৰুক্ত হোৱা দেখা যায়। এই গীতত অনুপ্রাসৰ ব্যৱহাৰ পৰিলক্ষিত হৈছে, যেনে-

বগৰি ওলোঞ্চা

বগৰি জোলোঞ্চা

বগৰি নলবি কোচত। ১৬

ইয়াত ‘বগৰি’ শব্দটো বাবে বাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি অনুপ্রাসৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছে। ছন্দৰ মিলৰ বাবে প্ৰথম চৰণত উপৰুৱা কমা দি দিতীয় চৰণত মূল ভাবটি প্ৰকাশ কৰা হয়। এইদৰে গীতৰ অন্ত্যমিল দেখা যায়। ১৭ যেনে-

‘পৰ্বতৰ দুৰৱি

কেকোৰা কেকুৰি

ভৈয়ামৰ দুৰৱি পোন।

পথাৰৰ মাজতে

নাঞ্জেলী মাৰিছে

আমাক বেয়া বোলা কোন।

ওপৰৰ পৰ্বত আৰু ভৈয়ামৰ দুৰৱিৰ কথা উপৰুৱা কথা। দিতীয় চৰণৰ কথাখিনিহে আচল। ইয়াত পথাৰৰ মাজত নাঞ্জেলী মাৰাটো অপৰাধ নহয় বুলি কোৱা হৈছে।

নাঞ্জেলী গীতত সামাজিক প্ৰতিচ্ছবি -

নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ মাধ্যমত গৰথীয়া ল'বাই সমসাময়িক সমাজৰ চিত্ৰণ অংকিত কৰিছে। গীতত উল্লেখিত ‘পাখেৰী ঘোঁৰাত উঠি’ পদ ফাঁকিয়ে সেই সময়ত ঘোঁৰাবে যাতায়ত কৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থাকে সূচায়। ‘দহা’ শব্দই মৃতকৰ দহ দিনত কৰা কৰ্মক, ‘ভোজ’ শব্দই মৃতকৰ শ্রান্তৰ পাছত সমুহীয়া ভোজন ব্যৱস্থাৰ কথাকে বুজায়। ছোৱালীৰ ঘৰত ল'বা বখা ব্যৱস্থাটোক ‘ডোকা’ বখা বোলে। ‘ভাল চাই ৰাখিবি ডোকা’ পদ ফাঁকিয়ে সমাজত ডেকা বখাৰ প্ৰচলনৰ ইঙ্গিত দিয়ে। তোৰ বৈনাৰে চহৰখন ঘূৰিছে বুলি, ছোৱালীৰ বেয়া চৰিত্ৰৰ কথাকে উনুকিয়াইছে। অতীতত ‘হোকা’ত ধপাত খোৱাৰ ব্যৱস্থা আছিল। ভাত বন্ধা, গৃহ কৰ্মত অপৈগত বুজাবলৈ - ‘ভাত ৰাঙ্গিৰ নাজানে, দুহাতে আজোৰে চুলি’ বুলিছে। কোনো কৰ্মত অক্ষমতাৰ হেতু ‘হাত জোৰ’ কৰি ক্ষমা খোজাৰ ব্যৱস্থাও সমাজত অতীতৰ পৰাই আছিল।

নাঞ্জেলী গীতত প্ৰকৃতিৰ উপস্থাপন -

নাঞ্জেলী গীতত প্ৰকৃতিৰ বিভিন্ন উপমা, চৰাই আদিৰ প্ৰতীক, চিৰ প্ৰধান শব্দ আৰু বাক্যাংশৰ ব্যৱহাৰ হৈ আহিছে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে - বাঁহ মৈৰা, ৰাইমন শালিকা, বহাগৰ কুলি, ঝাৰুৱা কুপেতি, পথাৰৰ ডাঙেৰী, জেঠৰ নুমলীয়া ধান, ডোমৰ বঙাজাল, নদীৰ পাৰৰ লঠঙা শিমেলি, কঠিয়াতলীৰ লঠিয়া টিঙ্গিৰা আদিৰ মধুৰ প্ৰয়োগে নাঞ্জেলী গীতসমূহৰ সৌন্দৰ্য বৰ্দ্ধন কৰি আছে। ১৮

প্ৰকৃতিৰ চিৰ ৰূপায়ণত নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ লগত বিহুগীত আৰু দৰঙ্গী লোকগীত চেৰাতেকৰ মিল দেখা যায়। বিহুগীতত গোৱা হৈছে - পৰ্বতে বগাৰ পাৰো মই। নাঞ্জেলী গীতত গাইছে - পৰ্বতৰ দুৰৱি কেকোৰা কেকুৰি।

বিহুগীতত গছৰ উল্লেখ আছে - আহো বৰৰ তলে যাওঁ বৰৰ তলে। নাঞ্জেলী গীতত গাইছে - আমলৈ মাৰিলো আমৰে ফৰ্শুতি।

ঠিক সেইদৰে চেৰাতেকৰ চৰাইৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰি গাইছে - খৈৰা গছৰ মৈৰা চৰাই। নাঞ্জেলী গীতত গাইছে - ওপৰেদি উৰি যায় ৰাইমণি শালিকা। ১৯

সামৰণি -

সময়ৰ পৰিবৰ্তনৰ লগে লগে মানুহৰ জীৱন ধাৰণ প্ৰণালী, ৰচিবোধ আদিৰো পৰিবৰ্তন হৈ আহিছে। গৰথীয়া সমাজৰ লুপ্তপ্রায় অৱস্থা হোৱাত নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰো চৰ্চা নোহোৱা হৈ গৈছে। তদুপৰি নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ ভাষা, কথা, বিষয়বস্তু সমূহ সভ্য সমাজত প্ৰহণযোগ্য নহয়। সেয়েহে নাঞ্জেলী গীতসমূহ পৰিমার্জিত ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ কৰাৰ মানসেৰে নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ ওজা শিল্পী দীনবন্ধু শৰ্মাদেৱে অতীতৰ নাঞ্জেলী গীতৰ অশ্বীলতাখিনি ধুই নিকা কৰি সুন্দৰ সাহিত্যৰ প্ৰয়োভৰেৰে আধুনিক সমাজৰ ৰচিবোধেৰে গাব পৰাকৈ সজাই পৰাই লিখিছে।

দৰঙ্গী কলাকৃষ্টি উল্লয়ন সংঘৰ তত্ত্বাবধানত দৰঙ্গৰ অন্যান্য লোকসংস্কৃতি সমূহৰ লগতে নাঞ্জেলী গীতো বিভিন্ন অনুষ্ঠানত পৰিবেশনৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা হৈছে। স্থানীয় ব্যক্তিবিশেষে স্কুলীয়া ল'বাৰে দল গঠন কৰি প্ৰশিক্ষণ দি নাঞ্জেলী গীত মথওস্থ কৰিছে।

অসম সৰ্বশিক্ষা অভিযানৰ অধীনত গাঁৱলীয়া ৰাইজৰ

মাজত শিক্ষার প্রয়োজনীয়তার বোধ দিবলৈ পরিবেশন করা
বাটৰ নাটক নাড়েলী গীতৰ সুব ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা দেখা গৈছে।

গতিকে দেখা গ'ল যে গৰথীয়া সমাজৰ মৌলিক সৃষ্টি
নাড়েলী গীতৰ জন্মৰ সময় আৰু ৰচকৰ বিষয়ে জনা নাযায়।
এই গীতসমূহে গৰথীয়াহাঁতৰ ঘোৱনৰ উভাল তৰঙ্গত উগুল-
থুগুল মনত প্ৰকৃতিৰ পৰিশত স্পন্দিত হোৱা অনুভূতিৰ
বহিঃপ্ৰকাশ ঘটাই আহিছে। এই গীতসমূহে দৰঙ্গী লোকগীতৰ
ভঁৰাল চহকী কৰাত বিশেষ বৰঙণি যোগাই আহিছে। গতিকে
এই আপুৰ্ণগীয়া লোকসংস্কৃতিৰ সংৰক্ষণ আৰু সংবৰ্ধন
নিতান্তই প্ৰয়োজনীয়।

প্ৰসঙ্গসূত্ৰ

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| ১। | শৰ্মা, নবীন চন্দ্ৰ। “লোক সাহিত্যতত্ত্ব আৰু শ্ৰেণী
বিভাজন।” দৰঙ্গী লোক-সাহিত্য সমীক্ষা, ২০১১,
১। | ৫। | নাথ, ৰেবন চন্দ্ৰ। “দৰঙ্গৰ যুগমীয়া কলা-কৃষ্টি।” শ্ৰী
বকুলী চহৰীয়া নাথ, ২০০৫, ১৫। |
| ২। | চক্ৰবৰ্তী, গীতা দেৱী। ‘বাং আৰু নাড়েলীঃ এটি
তুলনামূলক আলোচনা।’ সাৰঙ্গ সৌৰভ,
২০০৫, ১৭২। | ৬। | নাথ, অজয় কুমাৰ। “দৰঙ্গৰ পৰম্পৰাগত কৃষ্টি।”
দৰঙ্গৰ সাহিত্য সংস্কৃতিৰ ৰূপৰেখা, ১৯৯৭, ৬৪। |
| ৩। | ইছলাম, নজৰল। “নাড়েলী গীত।” দৰঙ্গী কৃষ্টিৰ
পৰিবেশন শৈলী, ২০০৯, ৭২। | ৭। | বৰুৱা, বজনী কান্ত। “দৰঙ্গী কলা কৃষ্টিৰ চমু কথা।”
বজনী কান্ত বৰুৱা, ১৯৮৩, ১৪৫। |
| ৪। | চহৰীয়া, অম্বেশ্বৰ। “দৰঙ্গৰ নাড়েলী গীত।” দৰঙ্গী
কলা কৃষ্টি, ২০০১, ৪৬। | ৮। | চহৰীয়া, কনক চন্দ্ৰ। “দৰঙ্গী লোকগীত সংগ্ৰহ।”
অসম সাহিত্য সভা ২০০৫, ৪১০। |
| | | ৯। | চক্ৰবৰ্তী, গীতা দেৱী। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ১৭২। |
| | | ১০। | নাথ, ৰেবন চন্দ্ৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ১৬। |
| | | ১১। | নাথ, ৰেবন চন্দ্ৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ১৬। |
| | | ১২। | নাথ, ৰেবন চন্দ্ৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ১৭। |
| | | ১৩। | চহৰীয়া, কনক চন্দ্ৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ৪২৫। |
| | | ১৪। | চহৰীয়া, কনক চন্দ্ৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ৪২৫। |
| | | ১৫। | চহৰীয়া, কনক চন্দ্ৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ৪২৪। |
| | | ১৬। | চহৰীয়া, অম্বেশ্বৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ৫০। |
| | | ১৭। | চহৰীয়া, অম্বেশ্বৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ৫০। |
| | | ১৮। | নাথ, ৰেবন চন্দ্ৰ। “দৰঙ্গী লোকগীত।” দৰঙ্গ স্থানি,
১৯৭৪, ১৫৪। |
| | | ১৯। | চহৰীয়া, অম্বেশ্বৰ। প্ৰাঃ উঃ গ্ৰঃ। ৪৭। |

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