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Sunita Agarwal

**Telling Lives across Culture and Religion: Dalrymple's *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India***

People, cultures and objects migrate. People tour cultures; and that cultures and objects themselves travel. Since the dawn of human history, in ceaseless urge for exploration, human beings have always traveled across the boundaries. These travels, journeys and explorations have brought the people of different cultures together. Mary Louise Pratt (1992) uses the term “contact Zone”, in her book *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writings and Transculturation*, “in which people geographically and historically separated come into contact to each other and establish ongoing relations. (6)”. Writers, especially travel writers, through their writings can tell us about these contacts-how they happen, what takes place in contact zones. We can also learn how cultures construct and invent their images of other cultures, how images change or remain constant throughout time. The development of the word culture, Raymond Williams (1963) in his work *Culture and Society* says, may be seen as a special kind of map by means of which the nature of the changes in a society can be explored.”(16) He further says “culture is not only a body of intellectual and imaginative work; it is also essentially a whole way of life. (311)” Greenblatt (1995) also writes - that Culture acts as a “network of negotiations’ for the exchange of goods, ideas, attitudes, and even

people.(480-81) During travels and tours diverse cultures exchange and negotiate with each other and through these negotiations, the direction and destiny of a society - its conflicts, its constrictions , its conventions, and its different configurations emerges.

South Asian culture and religion has always been intrigued by Western writers and they find these an exotic and mysterious subject for their writings. But with the passage of time a substantial change in the perspective can be visualized and these writers have now started looking at these cultures with understanding. Western writers no longer portray non-western people, their culture and religion with unchallenged authority; the process of cultural representation is now inescapably contingent, historical, and contestable.

William Dalrymple is a Scottish travelogue writer who came to India in 1980's and chronicled India's past and present for more than two decades: he wrote the highly acclaimed the best seller *In Xanadu* when he was twenty two, which won him the 1990 *Yorkshire Post Best First Work Award* and many other books such as *City of Djinns*, *The Age of Kali*, *The Mughal Empire* etc are also written by him. In 2002 he was awarded with the Mungo Park Medal Award by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society 'for his outstanding contribution to travel literature.' Now he stays in a farm house outside Delhi. He says that he has never been bored here (in India). But he does fear he has never understood this country.

Since the Vedic ages, religion has been an integral part of Indian culture and society. With the changed economy, transformed social structures, and multiple political configurations and especially with the globalised world, the impact on religion is clearly visible- both in its perception and cognition. At one level ardent religious

followers sustain their faith in religion in this modern era and on at other level they raise questions about certain religious rites and practices. William Dalrymple in his latest travelogue *Nine Lives: In Search of the Scared in Modern India* has tried to explore these transitions and transformations in religion and religious perspectives by narrating and studying the life and life patterns of nine Indian monks, saints, preachers and religious followers from different sects and cults. By analyzing the religiosity and religious drive of these diverse representations he attempts to reconstruct and revisualize these religions in modern society and context. The stories are linked by Mr. Dalrymple's driving question: "How is each specific religious path surviving the changes India is currently undergoing?" The book captures not just one aspect of culture or religion but it captures many divisions within society that contributes to its cultural exchange.

The writer visits various parts of the country to interview and interrogate the nine religious personalities from diverse religion about their religious and spiritual life style and make them narrate their own story of enlightenment and salvation. Like a journalist he takes notes while they narrate their life. Despite their diverse attestation, faiths and beliefs, the common thread of religion and aim bind them. The narrative structure and style of the book is very simple. Dalrymple hears of a character and then hunts him down, telling us of the first meeting. Then, having arranged to meet them again, he takes down their story, much like the anthropologists who used to travel the subcontinent recording the epics told by illiterates. He lets the stories do the work.

The present paper within the construct of a religio-cultural frame analyzes how these lives are narrated and constructed in this book: How by traveling through almost all the parts of India and exploring the various religious adherences intertwined through historical

references the writer has made his narrators reveal their innermost intents and depict their pilgrimage; and which social, political, psychological or economic forces have made them choose this path; or is it a search for religious and spiritual enlightenment? By juxtaposing these narratives against religious and cultural background Dalrymple foregrounds the religious transitions and transformations in the modern era.

The map of India given at the beginning of the book shows locations and religious sites of these diverse religious representations but many of them are dislocated and displaced due to their conviction and faith in a particular religion. The map clearly shows that these sites are situated at the four corners of India and the manifestation of their faith also differs but an invisible unity connects them all: religion, whatever the form and image, it always answers human needs for reassurance in times of trouble, healing, averting misfortunes and providing rituals that address the major passages and transition in human life. Almost all of these characters have traveled themselves, whether because of war or instinct, until they discovered some sort of tolerable existence propped up by faith. Dalrymple describes the lives of these religious pilgrims with cool detachment, treating their details as independent bits of information.

*Nine Lives* is a travel book, but it is also a series of biographies which unpick the rich religious heritage of the subcontinent. The book opens a window on to Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist traditions and practices that are little known in the West and increasingly marginalized in the new modern India. In one of his interviews when asked about why he chose to write about religion, he says that religion is a very telling way into the human soul, and the human condition. He adds that sex or love, religion is at least equally revealing and defining. He

further adds that in India, moreover, religions come with a fantastic civilisational baggage of philosophy, art, literature and poetry.

The book opens with the story of a Jain nun Prasannamati Mataji, born in 1972 into a wealthy family of merchants in Raipur. A beautiful geographical description of Karnataka state is given at the onset of the story. To make the story authentic the writer provides the detailed historical background of Jainism: how was it originated; why did the state Karnataka acquire a special significance for Jains etc. He writes, "Jainism is one of the most ancient religions of the world, similar to Buddhism in many respects, and emerging from the same heterodox classical Indian world of the Ganges basin in the early centuries BC." (Dalrymple, 7) The comparative analysis of Jain religion with Buddhism and then with Egyptian Coptic monks renders the work more authentic and gives deep insight into the philosophical aspect of religion. To make the whole narrative as 'true' as a representation of 'unaltered reality' and to avert the allegation of authorial perspective and subjectivity, throughout the book Dalrymple refers to ancient history. In all the nine lives depicted by him he gives a detailed ancient historical background of the particular religion and then the representation of modern religion in the voice of these characters themselves explicitly brings out the cultural and religious conflicts and contradictions, transitions and transformations.

When we are introduced with Prasannamati mataji, we perceive a sense of loss on her face and later on we come to know that she has lost her sadhu friend Prygomati, a companion, an associate of 25 years it is this wave of sadness that has submerged her. The whole story of Prasannamati revolves round her story of becoming a Jain mataji and then to her friend Prygomati. Her narration clearly reveals her love and attachment to her friend. When the narrator visits

her again to say good bye to her, she immediately reverts to the subject of Prayogamati, like a pigeon returning to its coop. She says, “She’s no longer here. I have to accept that reality. All things decay and disappear in time.” After a pause she says “now my friend has gone, for it is easier for me to go too. But why? I asked. You are not like she was. Isn’t it an absurd waste of life? You are only thirty eight.” (Dalrymple, 27) The close association and attachment between two mataji raises certain questions about the basic tenant of Jainism. How sincerely and strictly do these modern religious people follow and adhere to their religion and religious boundaries? Do they have complete faith in their religion or is it only a matter of convenience? Do people look at culture and religion also in same materialistic way? To what and which end is religion directed to? Does the outsider’s perspective indicate towards an imperative to meditate or modify its constraints to accommodate the diversity of people needed for its work and a need to adjust with fast changing time and situation? The reader is perturbed at the value and significance of ancient faith and religion.

Detachment from all materialistic things and relationships is one of the principle tenets of Jainism, but Prasanmati’s love for her fellow nun is a kind of aberration of this principle. Her loss of interest in life after the self imposed death of her friend works at two levels – firstly it reveals the change of attitude in present times; secondly it points towards the dialectics of culture which allows modification and adaptation according to situation, place and time. As Greenblatt (1995) in his essay “On Culture” writes “Culture may be thus a web of constraints, but at the same time it ‘functions as a regulator and guarantor of movement’ (Green blatt, 480); culture is elastic enough to allow certain movements, modifications, alterations and adaptations.



Travel writing provides a space to talk about cultural confusion, to negotiate differences in cultures outside the world. During conversation with Prasanmati mataji about *sallekhna*- a great jain ritual to attain salvation they fast to the death' a culmination of muni's life as an ascetic. Prasanmati mataji says "it is what we all aim for, and work towards as the best route to Nirvana. Not just nuns-even my grandmother, a lay person, took *sallekhna*. As a western he is intrigued and skeptic about all these rituals, but at the same time he is impressed and amazed at the firm conviction and faith of mataji in her religion, though unconvinced. These writers could never believe that the two different worlds can coexist together. But in the case of Dalrymple the flexibility is perhaps due to two reasons; firstly, his long stays in India have developed a kind of cultural understanding in him, secondly it indicates to a kind of change in the Orientalist attitude.

It provides an insider and outsider perspective. In one of the interviews he says, that he is not personally religious at all. He is increasingly a rational skeptic about miracles and the supernatural, but intrigued that people believe in them. He is interested in finding the familiar in the unfamiliar.

In the narrative "The Dancer of Kunnur" Hari Das is one of the most celebrated and articulate Theyyam performer :it is believed that once a year these theyyam performers are possessed by the spirit of God ' Gods come down to earth, and dance'. The word '*theyyam*' is derived from '*daivam*', the Sanskrit word for God. The '*theyyam*' performances, on the one hand are a cultural and religious expression, on the other hand they address the hollow social caste and class based discriminations where these God incarnate who are worshipped for three or four months a year are treated as outcaste and are prevented to use water of the wells which are dug up by them. The lives of these

outcastes are constructed in social constraints and constrictions; their boundaries are fixed and they are supposed to stay in them. These religious performances are a tool to subvert social hierarchy and a way to resist against discrimination, displacement and disparagement which these dalits have suffered through centuries. Hari Das believes that “this obsession with caste infringements and abuse of upper caste or courtly authority, with divinity, protest and the reordering of relations of power, is something that lies at the heart of this ritual form, and he sees *theyyam* as a tool and a weapon to resist and fight back against an unjust social system as a religious revelation (Dalrymple, 37)”. These cultural formations have boosted the morale of this community who now find in theyyamm performance an outlet and vent for their suppressed emotions.

These cultural constructs which have become irrelevant earlier have now acquired significance for political reasons. Political parties deploy them as a powerful manipulative weapon. Various Political parties often capitalize on such religious rites and performances and empower themselves and their structure of domination and exploitation within society. Different political parties have started supporting different deities for the appropriation and furthering of their political and vested interests. Through these cultural formation and expression politics intervene into the life of common man and divides the society into class and caste.

The Story “The Daughters of Yellamma” exposes degraded and pathetic lives of *devadasis*, a profession or we may call it ‘a cultural residual’ which was earlier revered and looked at as divine has now turned into a sex trade. Dalrymple by giving detailed and well researched historical, social and mythological references relates the degeneration of this ritual. Rani Bai, a devdasi, voices trauma of her

life when she says that she has lost her two daughters due to HIV infection at an early age. This profession has proved a death knell for her as she herself also suffers from the same disease. The irony of the whole situation is that she as a young girl resisted this tradition of devadasi herself pushes her daughters into it saying that there's no alternative. These rites and rituals which were ways to express devotional and divine love in ancient times are now social evil and disease. In ancient times they were 'symbol of fertility' and considered to be auspicious. "In the middle ages, the devadasi were drawn from the grandest families in the realm, among them the princesses of Chola family- as well as from slaves captured in war (Dalrymple, 70)" with These 'temple woman' who enjoyed certain privileges and had honored position in the society are now 'straightforward sex workers' and exclusively drawn from the Dalit Madar caste. The mythological references are used to emphasize the divine values attached to these sub-cultures. For the similarity of fate, these devdasis are considered to be daughters of Goddess Yellamma; both of them are rejected by all, cursed for crimes of love outside the bond of marriage and are leading a life without the protection of husband.' The contemporary relevance and validity of these rites and ritual are interrogated and recently, the 1982 Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act is passed to declare this practice as illegal and any priest found assisting such ceremonies will be severely punished. However, in modern times these religious expressions are now reduced to a source of livelihood and income. The poor who do not have any other means of income depend on it and give away their daughters as *devadasis* under the pretext of showing their allegiance to their religion and religious rites.

*Nine lives* deviates from the travelogue form in its narrative structure in the sense that the author does not present his own

experiences, events, incidents, impressions and interactions in his own voice but presents the whole narration in the voice of the characters. He does not reduce these characters into objects imposing his own perspective on them, but they are treated as human beings having their own personality and voice. Though we feel the omnipresence of the author throughout the work. We find his doubts, his questions, his amazement and his gaze in each and every story.

Telling and retelling not only involves variations but also reincarnations of the same character and in the case of these lives due to the diversity of languages the writer has to seek help of people of literary background from different languages to help him in talking to his subjects as these interviews were taken place in eight different languages. Dalrymple himself acknowledges them and expresses his gratitude to them in accompanying him to these places. The use of diverse languages and social domains, diversity of individual voices, use of regional language gives a heteroglossic dimensions to the book and it also serve the sociopolitical purpose. Besides, it renders a kind of authenticity to the narrations. Throughout the book Dalrymple's deep knowledge of the culture is displayed and he develops a kind of intimacy with each interviewee.

William Dalrymple through this diverse re-presentation of diverse cultures, sub-cultures, residual cultures depicts the revisions and reformations, transitions and transformations in various religious paths. The three representations analyzed here reveal the modifications and modified attitude towards culture and religion in this vortex of India's metamorphosis during this rapid period of transition. Despite these changes in outlook and perspective people do find solace and comfort in religion and though these two worlds –materialistic and spiritualistic – have commingled with each other, yet the faith and

conviction still persist and as Dalrymple writes, 'The water moves on, a little faster than before, yet still the great river flows. It is as fluid and unpredictable in its mood as it has ever been, but it meanders within familiar banks.'(xv)

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Sunita Jakhar

**Chetan Bhagat's *The Three Mistakes of My Life*:  
A Post Colonial Reading**

In placing the novel in the post colonial context, it is essential to keep in mind Frantz Fanon's "three stages" which the literature of the colonized passes through :

First is a stage of assimilation, when the colonised, bewitched by the colonizers claim to cultural superiority, imitate their literature and grovel for acceptance as cultural equals. Second is the stage when, disenchanted with integration into culture of their contemptuous colonizers, they return to their old cultural roots. In the third stage they fashion a new and genuinely national culture, shaped loyalty to their rediscovered national identity. (*The Wretched of the Earth*)

In this context, Bhagat has written *The Three Mistakes of My Life* from nationalistic motives. He has raised certain national issues like communal riots, religion bias, misguiding the youth by politicians and patriotism. Ali is made symbolic of Nationalism. Ali's patriotism comes to light in his preference for India even at the temptation of comforts and luxuries in Australia. During conversation with Mr. Cutler Ali asks, "If I make it to the team, who will I play for?" (Bhagat, 177).

The little boy is free from the grip of attraction to the country of the whites and is not in awe of the white men. He is surprised to hear 'Australia' and gives his logic, "but I'm an Indian. I want to play for India. Not for anyone else" (Bhagat, 178). The spirit of India lives in the boy. He is patriotic to the core as he ends his encounter by saying, "I don't want to be Australian in my next life. Even if I have a hundred next lives, I want to be Indian in all of them" (Bhagat, 179).

Postcolonialism can also be understood through power relations between the native people and the whites. The term is used, "to cover all the culture affected by imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by imperial aggression" (*The Empire Writes Back*, 1-2). It is true in the context of Bhagat's novel too. The whites i.e. the Australian team steal the limelight wherever they go. They not only dominate the cricket scene but also have an aura around them as shown in the novel, at several places they are treated as superior by Indians. The three friends sneak into the stadium and, "the security guard relaxed as he saw us with someone white. We must be important enough after all" (Bhagat, 139). The three friends have more faith in the Australian team. They trust the Australian team more for testing the talent of Ali. Ish says, "if Indian selectors were up to the job, we wouldn't lose so many matches to a country with one – fiftieth the people" (Bhagat, 140). Ish confesses to Fred "I had to make sure Ali gets tested by the best" (Bhagat, 143).

Even after the collapse of the British empire the hegemony of the whites continues, most prominently the American call centres dominate India. As seen in *One Night @ the Call Centre*, the Indians at call centres work all night for their white masters on the other side of the globe. Bill Gate's Microsoft has given a new avatar to the third

countries, especially India. Now these computers have colonised the Indian people. The prologue of *The Three Mistakes of My Life* begins with Bhagat's opening of e-mail account. Govind alias the businessman sends a suicide note to Bhagat via email. All this reveals that computers have become an inevitable part of the young generation and it is in tight grip of its stern masters i.e. the computers.

Cricket was introduced in India by the British. Aamir Khan directed and starred movie *Lagaan* shows it in an interesting way. In all British colonies cricket offered and continues to offer a new variety of colonialism. Chapter one of the novel begins with a cricket match. There is a short view of the contemporary cricket players of the country as watched in one day international match of India vs. South Africa. The three friends spend the day in a lazy way watching cricket on T.V. Cricket fever is so contagious that even the shopkeepers in the market place could be seen celebrating victory of India. Realising the dearth of sports shop in the area the three unemployed friends plan to open a cricket shop, "since cricket is the most popular game in Belrampur" (Bhagat, 15).

Ambition is the quality of the colonizer. It was the ambition to rule which was instrumental in ruling India for more than a four hundred years by the East India Company. Govind too harbours intense ambitiousness. Having the qualities of a businessman he wishes to own a shop in a mall, "our shop has been doing good business but we can't grow unless we move to a new city location" (Bhagat, 25). He diversifies the business and runs a stationery shop as well as maths tuitions and cricket coaching simultaneously.

The three friends belong to the native intellectual class whom Macaulay wanted to create among the Indians, "Indian in blood and



colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect” (*The Post Colonial Studies Reader*, 430). Preference for branded wear is evident as Govind wears, “fake Reebok slippers” (Bhagat, 31). The three friends celebrate parties in the Western way by opening a bottle of beer. They address each other trendily as ‘dude’. They have no inhibitions in using words like ‘fuck’ which are a taboo in the native Indian context. Like the call centre employees in *One Night @ the Call Center*, Bhagat has created youth who belong to the new generation preferring the Anglicised culture of the West in the form of dress, mobiles, pizzas, beer, watching T.V. and girls.

Though the Britons receded back to its shores but seeds of the British policy of divide and rule had sunk so deep that it continues to sprout. The novel presents the contemporary political situation of India where the BJP and congress are the two dominating political parties always at loggerheads. The three friends visit Parekhji’s residence at Bittoo mama’s invitation. The BJP gathering, “looked like a Marriage party where only priests were invited. Most of them carried some form of accessory like a trishul or a rudraksha or a holy book” (Bhagat, 41). Parekhji, a hard core politician tries to lure the three friends in the BJP fold by narrating incidents of atrocities faced by poor Hindus. But the Macaulay brigade did not have an influential mind on seeing, Ali’s father in the party conspicuous for his Muslim beard some party-men called him Ali baba and shouted, “get lost, your traitor” (Bhagat, 154).

Mamaji lost his only son Dhiraj in the mass murder at Godhra and blamed the Muslim fundamentalists. Mamaji gathered support and delineated a plan of action in order to avenge Dhiraj’s murder. According to Fanon, “. . . the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms . . . when the settler seeks to describe

the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to bestiary” (*The Wretched of the Earth*, 42). Here the settler can be a metaphor for the superior. Mamaji has become superior only by means of large size of readily available party workers. The inferior is used for Muslims as in the novel they are shown in minority and at this particular juncture they are not prepared to fight back the Hindu fundamentalists not only in number but also power. Chapter nineteen onwards in the Fanonian sense there is a hint towards ‘animalizing’ the inferior and the subordinate. Mamaji and his mob are not only intoxicated but also turn blind to humanity. Using abusive language he wants the three friends to handover the Muslim boy Ali. Powerful politicians like Parekhji turn thick skinned and simply get away by saying, “so what can I do?” (Bhagat, 227).

Mamaji and his mob brutalized and animalised the inferiors i.e. the three friends as they were protecting Ali and were without weapons. The foursome hid on the second floor, “the crowd hurled fire torches” (Bhagat, 231). Ali was scared, terrorized and broke into tears. Mamaji said, “I want blood. Give me the boy, or it will be yours” (Bhagat, 239). As soon as Mama’s minions reached the adobe of the three friends, they began a frantic search for the keys to the bank vault where Ali was in hiding. Govind mentions, “the man searching me ripped open my shirt pocket. He slapped me once and asked me to turn around. His nails poked me as he frisked me from top to bottom...” (Bhagat, 240). On seeing Omi slain with a trishul by mamji, Ish screamed, “look you animal, what did you do” (Bhagat, 243). Mamaji and his mob behaved in a bestial way and for years the image of blood stained trishul haunted Govind.

Fanon points out, “there is a fact: white men consider themselves superior to Black men. There is another fact : Black men

want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect ...” (*Black Skin. White Masks*, 10). In this context Fred is the white man and the three friends with Ali are the black men. Fred coolly uses Australian slangs like – burl, piece of piss, packed a wallop, mozzies, coldies, to siphon the python and the three friends not only try to learn these slangs but also use them after coming back to India. Govind calls mosquitoes as mozzies at Vidya’s house. There is a sense of superiority in Fred’s behaviour as revealed from his conduct. He does not let Ali bowl on the first day in order to break his pride. He is proud of Australian players and says, “we love to dominate opponents but also love a fight. When there’s a challenge it brings out the best” (Bhagat, 161). When he tells Govind that he is doing boring coach talk with Ish, “Ish’s chest swelled with pride as Fred had called him equal in role” (Bhagat 161). Again there is a sense of superiority when Fred says, “you want to know why Australia always wins” (Bhagat 161). Fred’s eyes lighted up as he said that the AIS gave generous scholarships and best facilities to the players. Ish tries to equate with the circumstances and says, “imagine what would happen if we could have this kind of training in India” (Bhagat, 163). Fanon describes the “assimilationist phase” as “the native intellectual gives proof that he has assimilated the culture of the occupying power” (*The Post Colonial Studies Reader*, 158). At the restraint with the Australians the three friends enjoy NCR (number of cans required) jokes on girls. Michael asks Omi to eat more proteins to which Omi replies that he guzzles two litres of milk everyday.

A Fanonian reading can be applied to women characters i.e. Govind’s mother and Vidya. Fanon writes, “face to face with this man who is ‘different from himself’, he needs to defend himself. In other words, to personify the other. The other will become the mainstay of his preoccupations and his desires” (*Black Skin. White Masks*, 170).

The native has no existence whatsoever unless s/he defends her/his presence by making the dominating other the “mainstay” of her/his “preoccupations” and “desires”. Here the native is Govind’s mother and the ‘other’ her husband who left her to marry another woman. Since the husband was the ‘mainstay of her preoccupations and desires’ she spent months of crying with the neighbours and another year she consulted the astrologers perhaps with a hope to make the ‘other’ come back to her since she found it difficult to exist alone, “string of grand aunts came to live with her” (Bhagat, 9) by the time Govind was fifteen she had sold all her jewellery to make both ends meet. Here Govind’s mother is victimized by two others i.e. the husband and the society as a woman in the Indian context has to play a role of subordination. Though the women have been domesticated and bound to servitude but lately there have been paradigm shifts. The new generation women have been seen taking bold steps. The role of women has become modern from traditional. Since Vidya transgressed the acceptable boundaries of friendship with Govind. She was kept, “under house arrest. Her dad slammed her mobile phone to pieces” (Bhagat, 251). Vidya suffers because she is a woman but this kind of suffering is not faced by Govind. Spivak says, “. . . the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female in even more deeply in shadow” (*Postcolonialism*, 1446).

Vidya was sent to Bombay to do a PR course with the instructions not to speak to Govind again. The aim was to keep Vidya away from Govind for Fanon a negro cannot afford to be bold because boldness is the virtue of a master Fanon says, “a feeling of inferiority? No, a feeling of nonexistence. Sin is Negro as virtue is White” (*Black skin. White Masks*, 1390). The boldness on the part of the negro/ Vidya threatens the presence of the dominant/parents/family/society.

Through dominance and power the superior inflicts violence on the inferior. Vidya was confined to her room & later sent out of Ahmedabad. Govind's not responding to her SMSs must have left her heartbroken. Vidya invites this kind of treatment for her display of boldness by committing something forbidden by unmarried girl in India. Though India is no longer a colony but centuries of colonization have left some imprints of colonialism evident even in the absence of the Imperial power. Reading Bhagat's *The Three Mistakes of My Life* against a postcolonial perspective is a fruitful exercise.

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**U.D.Padamwar**

**Tharoor's Gandhi:**  
**A Study of His Novel *The Great Indian Novel***

The Indian English novel owes far more to Gandhi than is generally recognized. The themes developed by Gandhian novelists are but theoretical applications of what the Mahatma preached. In Indian English writings Gandhi has figured as a powerful force. Before Gandhi's emergence in the Indian freedom struggle Indian English novelists had lost touch with the contemporary social reality. Novelists like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in *Raj Mohan's Wife*, Sirdar Jogendra Singh in *Nur Jehan*, S. M. Mitra in *Hindupore*, Dwijendranath Neogi in *Sacred Tales of India* and A. S. P. Ayyar in *A History Romance of Ancient India* etc. wrote under the influence of Anglo-Indian women novelists like G. H. Bell, Charlotte Cameron, Maud Diver, Ursula Becket and Flora Anne Steel etc.

It is only when Gandhi appeared on Indian political scene, that Indian English fiction took a different and distinct turn with Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan and Bhamani Bhattacharya in the 30's and 40's of the last century. With his love for the lowliest and the lost, Gandhi played a catalytic role. He proved a new literary possibility. He inspired creativity on a scale surpassed by none. Gandhi

appears as a character in Anand's *The Sword and The Sickle* and *Untouchable*, R. K. Narayan's *Waiting for The Mahatma*, K. A. Abbas's *Inquilab*. He appears as a pervasive influence in Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* and *The Crown and The Lion Cloth* and K. S. Venkat Ramani's *Kundan, The Patriot*.

Gandhian ideas and ideals continued to dominate the Indian English novelists even beyond the 40's of the century. In Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954) and *A Handful of Rice* (1960) we see the Gandhian concern for the lowly and the lost. In Nayantara Sahgal, Gandhian values are more pervasive and less explicit. *A Time to be Happy* (1957) embodies India's starry eyed optimism after independence. Manohar Malgaonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) paradoxically exhibits Gandhi, an upholder of the Hindu-Muslim unity, a apostle of non-violence, an inspiration behind the partition of India. Chaman Nahal in *Azadi* (1975) explores the meaning of India's independence accompanied by the tragedy of partition. He shows Gandhi as the architect of freedom and as a martyr of communal harmony. In *The Crown and the Lion Cloth* (1981), Nahal fictionalizes the life of Gandhi from 1915 to 1922, from Gandhi's arrival in India from South Africa to his launching of the first non-cooperation movement. The novels in an epic delineation of the first phase of the Indian freedom movement under the charismatic leadership of the lion-clothed Gandhi, which shook the century-old pillars of British rule in India.

One may ask what was it in Gandhian ideas that left so abiding an impression on Indian English novelists? Gandhian ideology lent these novels a frame of reference. It linked them to the soil. It took them to the roots of Indian culture. It created in them a social awareness and helped them to creatively interpret the social reality. It made them to

look at man as a social animal, an individual with his responses and reactions. It sent them searching for a national identity. It enabled them to share their intellectual journey through modern western ideas back to the re-interpretation and renewal of life of Indian traditions. Thus, Gandhi helped not only to recharge the political life of India but also to reorient Indian literary values.

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* exhibits a parody of both the *Mahabharata* and contemporary Indian history. The principle characters of the *Mahabharata* are conceived as the characters in the contemporary Indian history. In Tharoor's novel Gandhi has conceived as the great character of Bhishma in *Mahabharata*. Tharoor's version of the historical account begins roughly from the time when Gandhi entered into Indian politics till the time Mrs. Indira Gandhi returned to power after the fall of Janata Government. Gandhi is represented through Bhishma, also called Ganga Datta to bring him nearer our times. Since like Bhishma he gave up claim to power and governance of the country.

Tharoor's alternative version of history critically reassesses the role of the leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, Mohamad Ali Jinnah, Indira Gandhi, Jayaprakash Narayan and Morarji Desai. Tharoor gives greater importance to the role of Gandhiji. The novel presents a compact but rounded portrait of the father of Nation whom contemporary Indian have failed to relate to their lives and hence consigned to the "mists and myths of historical legend" (Tharoor, 47). The narrative depicts the unique manner in which Gandhiji mobilized the Indian masses to fight against colonialism by perfecting the weapons of non-violence, civil disobedience and truth. It records how he used fasting not only as a means of bringing his principles to life but also as a potent weapon to resist injustice. "In



fasting, in directing the strength of his convictions against himself, Gangaji taught us to resist injustice with arms that no one could take away from us. Gangaji's use of the fast made our very weakness a weapon. It captured the imagination of India in way that no speech, no prayer, no bomb had ever done."(Tharoor, 05) Gandhiji widened the mass base of the congress party by bringing ordinary men and women into the mainstream of the freedom struggle and thus gave a new orientation to Indian nationalism. Tharoor also takes cognizance of his innumerable fads like taking enema, toilet cleaning, celibacy and love for the cows. The narrative holds Gandhi unequivocally responsible for Jinah's dissatisfaction with the congress. "Karna was not much of a Muslim but he found Gangaji too much of a hindu".(Tharoor, 142) It is interesting to note that Tharoor deviates from the widely known account of Gandhiji's death and presents the scene of the murder as a dream sequence in which Shikhandi (Nathuram Godse) his assassin exposes his personal and political weakness and declares him to be a failure. The dying words of father of Nation in Tharoor's narrative are thus not 'Hey Ram' but "I ... have ... failed".(Tharoor, 234)

Tharoor's version of India's struggle for freedom is unequivocally critical of Gandhi for loosening his control over the congress party at a time when it was needed more. Gandhi, in his version, was mistaken in allowing the issues of partition to be decided by the leaders like Nehru, Jinah and Mountbatten. The partition carnage, which led to the longest exodus in the history of mankind, was stunning in its magnitude and sheer mindlessness. Gangaji, who moved from one riot torn area to another and prayed for peace and sanity, viewed the violence as a repudiation of his teaching and looked suddenly old. In utter despair he started a strange and highly controversial experiment in self restraint and self perfection with his follower Sarah Moore. "She will lie with me, unclad and cradle me in

her arms, and I shall not be aroused. In the non-arousal I hope to satisfy myself that I have remained pure and disciplined.”(Tharoor, 228)

In the midst of Independence day celebration, Gangaji the most dejected man at the end of a prolonged struggle fell victim to the assassin’s bullet, confronted the celibate father of the Nation and denounced him for dereliction of duty. “You make me sick, Bhishma. Your life has been a waste, unproductive, barren. You are nothing but an impotent old walrus sucking other reptile’s eggs, an infertile old fool . . . a man who is less than a woman. The tragedy of this country springs from you”(Tharoor, 232). The invective sum sup Gandhi’s life as a waste, a total failure.

Gandhi is not a spent force even today; no one can ignore him. The personality of Gandhi shall continue to interest the creative imagination either by the way of acceptance or by the way of rejection of the ideals for which Gandhi stood. There is change in Gandhian perspective as per the change in situation and writer’s attitude to Gandhi in the course of time.

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Hemalatha K

**Social and Cultural Ostracism of Dalits:  
A Study of Modern Marathi Dalit Poetry**

Dalit literature which developed in early 1970's depicts the radical rethinking and sensitization of subordinated and subjugated social groups with relation to power and history. Dalit Literature is experience-based and they questioned the mainstream literary theories and upper caste ideologies. Shame, anger, sorrow and indomitable hope are the stuff of Dalit literature and their primary motive is the liberation of Dalits. Unfortunately, even though our scriptures neither sanctioned nor subscribed to any inhuman attitudes and division of labour was according to the aptitude of people, and welfare of society results only when there is total co-operation and interaction between all classes, distorted notions led to unethical discrimination of Dalits. The paper shall be a study of English translations of poems written in their mother tongues in which the poets had made an attempt to delineate the feeling of protest and anger at the humiliation and discrimination suffered by Dalit poets. Baburao Bagul has pointed out rightly in the following poem entitled, "You who have Made the Mistake," the stigma attached to "Untouchability":-

Those who leave foreign lands,  
Embrace other tongues, dress in alien garb  
And forget this country

-Them I salute  
 And those who don't forget,  
 And don't change even after being beaten up for centuries  
 -Such hypocrites I ask:  
 What will you say if someone asked you-  
 What is untouchability?  
 Is it eternal like God?  
 What's an untouchable like? What does he look like?  
 Does he look like the very image of leprosy?  
 Or the prophet's enemy?  
 Does he look like a heretic sinner, a profligate or an atheist?  
 Tell me,  
 What will your answer be?  
 Will you reply with our hesitation?  
 'Untouchable-that's me?'  
 That's what I say-  
 You have made the mistake of being born in this country  
 Must now rectify it: either leave the country ,  
 Or make war!

(Poisoned Bread, 70)

The primary motive of Dalit literature is the liberation of Dalits. Dalit writers express their experiences in the most realistic way by using their native speech. Their language as well as images come from their own experiences instead of their observation of Nature. The language of mainstream literature presents the romantic view of life, while Dalit poetry represents realistic view of life. Dr.C.B.Bharti in his Hindi article, "The Aesthetics of Dalit literature" talks about Dalit Aesthetics. He writes: "The aim of Dalit literature is to protest against the established system which is based on injustice and to expose the evil and hypocrisy of higher castes. There is an urgent need to create

a separate aesthetics for Dalit literature, an aesthetics based on the real experiences of life.”

Dalit literature is a protest against all forms of exploitation based on class, race, caste or occupation. The dalit poets of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra have drawn freely on regional forms, rural dialects and tribal languages, thus giving their poetry an intensely native idiom. Since dalit literature is closely associated with the hopes for freedom of a group of people, it is marked by revolt and negativism of untouchables who are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality. They rejected all role models, traditional literature, Eastern and Western critical theories and decided to create a literature of their own, an identity of their own.

The political in such readings is seen as legacy of European modernity. Hence the emphasis in dalit political and intellectual writing on scientific outlook, rationality and other values of post- Enlightenment thought. Poems, short stories and autobiographies of dalit literature are experience based and they express the shame, anger, and sorrow against the age old oppression. So the language used is the language of outcastes and underprivileged of society and is replete with sarcasm and irony. It expresses the silent anguish and indignation of the oppressed and it brings to focus the neglected, suppressed or marginalised aspects of experience, vision, language and reality. The diction is subversive as it challenges middle class notions of linguistic decency.

The new phase of Dalit writing seems to be more mature, sober, larger in its concerns ,more conscious of form ,less angry and complaining. In the world of Dalits, women are casually stripped and molested, men brutally murdered, and this has been going on for

centuries, generation after generation. They are particularly concerned about their daughters who must be married according to strictly imposed custom and lead respectable and pious lives. The pathos of the struggle for survival has been elucidated effectively in the following poem in which a foetus in the womb is wondering whether to be born or not be born in a world in which there was no chance for a decent living, where even two square meals a day or even water for subsistence and survival was not guaranteed. The poems by different Dalit writers from *Poisoned Bread* edited by Arjun Dangle depict the pathetic condition of Dalits. Let us quote the text of a poem "To Be or not To Be Born" of L.S.Rokhade trans.By Shanta Gokhale:

Mother you used to tell me  
 When I was born  
 Your labour was very long.  
 The reason, mother,  
 The reason for your long labour:  
 I still in your womb, was wondering  
 Do I want to be born-  
 Do I want to be born at all  
 In this land?  
 Where all the paths raised horizonwards  
 but to me were barred

Your body covered  
 With generations of dire poverty  
 Your head pillowed  
 On constant need  
 You slept at night  
 And in the day you writhed  
 With empty fists tied to land

Flowing with water  
Rivers break their banks  
Lakes brim over  
And you one of the human race  
Must shed blood  
Struggle and strike  
For a painful of water.

Is this land yours, mother  
Because you were born here?  
Is it mine  
Because I was born to you?  
Must I call this great land mine  
Love it  
Sing its glory?

Sorry , mother but truth to tell  
I must confess I wondered  
Should I be born  
Should I be born into this land?

This pathetic condition of Indian woman who struggle hard to keep the family alive is delineated in the following poem “Labour Pains” by Baban Chahande and translated by Kumar Kitkar & Priya Adarkar . There is no season of rest-not even post-partum as the Indian woman conceives, gives birth and sets off to work again.

...The mother in throes,  
her woes all over the sky,  
dimly remembers the time before she conceived.  
Through lanes and alleys she tramples

the bulge in her belly,  
 to calm her intense hunger  
 with a mere handful.  
 When labour begins, her head holds a load,  
 and her eyes, a shadow of anxiety for food.  
 Under burning skies and hot, breathless wind  
 rise the infant's cries,  
 Saying: world, now I see you for myself.  
 Thus she delivers , and her hands  
 set fiercely to work again.  
 Like the clouds, whose pangs  
 take just a moment to subside.

But Dalit poetry is not merely protest. There is also the eternal  
 emotions of love and sacrifice reverberating in it, as in this poem,  
 'Mother', by Warman Nimbalkar:

Dark, dark, slender body—this was my mother.  
 Drudged in the woods foe sticks from morning on.  
 All we brothers, sitting, waiting, watching for her.  
 And if she didn't sell the wood, all of us slept hungry.

And one day she died of hard work and left them wailing,  
 though not without leaving a sweetness behind her:

My eyes seek my mother,  
 I still grieve,  
 I see a thin vendor of wood.  
 I buy her sticks.



Well, if the women struggled hard to keep family hearth burning and hard to start working immediately after delivering a child, the condition of men was none the better. The poor peasants were humoured to sing songs and entertain the so called influential elite of society but the irony is that they had to do it all on an empty stomach because they could not beg for bread! The following poem "Song" by Bhimsen Dethe translated by Vilas Sarang depicts this deplorable situation.

As father carried stones upon his hand,  
the headman. Twirling his moustaches, used to say, "Hey, Kisnya  
let's have a first-rate lavni!"  
and my father would sing with his tattooed throat:  
in his song  
there was the moon, and the sun,  
and flowers blossoming, sea-waves,  
an impassioned girl drunk with love...  
Sweat- stained hands clapped;  
There was applause all round.  
My father was touched, was filled with gratitude.  
Walking home he groped towards the song of bread  
that he never could sing.

Arjun Dangle gives a harrowing picture of their wretchedness in a poem entitled 'Chhavni Hilti Ha', ("The cantonment begun to shake").

We fought with crows,  
Never even giving them the snot from our noses.  
As we dragged out the upper lane's dead cattle,

Skinned it nearly  
 And shared the meat among ourselves,  
 They use to love us then.  
 We warred with jackals—dogs—vultures—kites  
 Because we ate their share.

Not only food, even water is not easily available. Consider this beautiful poem, ‘The City’, by Daya Pawar . It begins like this:

One day someone dug up a twentieth century city  
 And ends on its observation.  
 Here’s an interesting inscription:  
 ‘This water tap is open to all castes and religions’ .  
 What could it have meant:  
 That this society was divided?  
 That some were high and others were low?  
 Well, all right, then this city deserved burying—  
 Why did they call it the machine age?  
 Seems like the Stone Age in the twentieth century.

They are Untouchables who invite death if they dare to quench their thirst from a common pond. Even the Brahmin’s god is not their god.( children of a lesser god)! He doesn’t accept their supplication. He is not even capable of feeling their misery. Keshav Meshram challenges this god in ‘One Day I Cursed That...God’, in these words:

Would you wipe the sweat from your bony body  
 With your mother’s ragged sari?  
 Would you work as a pimp  
 To keep her in booze?  
 O, father, oh God the father!

You could never do such things.  
First you did need a mother——  
One no one honours,  
One who toils in the dirt,  
One who gives and gives of her love.

The only relief from poverty is by sending their offspring to school so that education might increase their chances of gaining a decent living. The poor peasant is ready to do anything for the master so as to ensure that the boy be sent to school, as is revealed in the poem “Send my boy to school” by Waman Kardak and translated by Priya Adarkar.

Send my boy to school  
Lord and master  
I tell you  
Send my boy to school

We may be terribly poor  
Famine may knock at our school  
I'll see that he gets to school  
Send my boy to school

If the leg of your garment is rent  
I promise to patch and mend  
For my garment, my needle's the tool  
Send my boy to school

If my clothes are torn, what do I care?  
My boy must never go bare  
What use do I have for a jewel?

Send my boy to school.

There is confusion is the school going child as to what language he should use. There is an anti-brahminical expression in the poem “Which language should I speak” by Arun Kamble and translated by Priya Adarkar.

Chewing totters in the badlands  
 My grandpa.  
 The permanent resident of my body,  
 The household of tradition heaped on his back,  
 Hollers at me,  
 “You whore-son, talk like we do,  
 Talk, I tell you!”  
 Picking through the Vedas  
 His top-knot well- oiled with ghee,  
 My Brahmin teacher tells me,  
 “You idiot, use the language correctly.”  
 Now I ask you which language should I speak?

The pathos of being ostracized as an illegitimate child is enunciated in the following poem “An Ultimatum” by Yashwant Manohar and Trans. By Charudatta Bhagwat where the oppressed sufferer is fed up of being burdened with a life filled with hopelessness and disgust.

See this row of sunsets in the cracks of my eyes  
 Tell me how to live if each moment one dies,  
 In this decisive darkness I seek for words , brother  
 ...  
 The sky here owns not a spot

that would afford a shade  
to my beheaded breaths  
The roads, look strange, brother,  
and so is in the air  
The rains do not let me  
Break into a moonlight clear  
What kinships should I dwell on for a moment  
as I draw a covering of ocean over me  
I feel a foreigner among the people  
Bearing the burden of such a bastard life  
...  
..Tell me how to live as I die at each moment's turn

The following is a poem with an element of Marxism, a pathetic reflection on the glaring disparity between the haves and have-nots in the following poem by Uttam Kolgaonkar, translated by Vilas Sarang

He was born here  
But didn't belong to here;  
Didn't strut about  
dressed in flashy clothes,  
wearing his hair long.  
When the people here  
Were busy building  
Taller and taller houses,  
He sat alone in the woods  
Beneath a tree  
Speaking softly  
To the sea in his heart  
When he entered the town

Taking notice of none;  
The people eyed him,  
Whispered amongst themselves  
And laughed like glass cracking.  
His house, made of earth,  
Looked so puny  
Amongst the town building!  
He went inside  
And shut himself up.  
Then he saw  
That the rear wall of his house  
Had vanished  
And the whole sky  
With its thousand eyes  
Had invaded the house.

A homegrown movement of the Untouchables. Dalit is opposed to all notions of caste and class, but it also suspects the intellectuals of the left as well as Marxist ideologies who treat Marxism itself as a dogma rather than a science. Such people assume the role of Marxist pundits, and Untouchables cannot afford to trust pundits. The theoretical variety of revolutionaries cannot even imagine the predicament these wretched people live in. Namdeo Dhasal cries out:

This world's socialism,  
This world's communism  
And all those things of theirs,  
We have put them to the test  
And the implication of this—  
Only our shadow can cover our own feet.

Their suffering is not just the suffering of the individual, and there is nothing romantic about it. Their problem is neither ideological nor philosophical. They do not seek poetic beauty. Similes, metaphors and symbols are not important. The reality of their life is too hideously shocking, beyond the capacity of fantasy or imagination. Their tragedy is universal, trampling them down and disfiguring their humanity. Narayan Surve makes an ironical comment on the champions of revolution and their rhetoric in his poem, 'Karl Marx':

In my first strike Marx met me thus:  
I was holding his banner high on my shoulder.  
The other day he stood listening to my speech at the gate, in  
the meeting,—now  
We alone are the heroes of history, of all the biographies too,  
henceforth...  
He was the first to applaud, then  
Laughing boisterously  
He put his hand on my shoulder and said:  
“Are you a poet or what...  
Nice... very nice...  
I too liked poetry  
Goethe was my favourite.

In the poem “Exhalation” by Narendra Patil translated by Shanta Gokhale there is an expression of experiencing a claustrophobic existence.

But how long can this bird  
Remain in this dungeon  
Whose very walls tremble  
With his every exhalation?

Such a life of oppression and suffering creates a feeling of revenge and is instrumental in the making of Rebels and Activists.

In Dalit poetry there is a voice of protest and a demanding of human rights. The Dalits are burning with a desire for revenge. Their anger is reflected in “You Wrote From Los Angeles”, by Daya Pawar:

How did we ever get to this place  
 This land which was never mother to us?  
 Which never gave us even the life of cats and dogs?  
 I hold their unpardonable sins as witness  
 And turn here and now.  
 A rebel

I'm the sea: I sour, I surge.  
 I move out to build your tombs.  
 The winds, storms, sky, earth.

These people see the class war that is going on at the global level as irrelevant to their cause. Class war is a long-term struggle. People like themselves have neither the time nor the patience to wait for the tide to turn.

Don't be in a hurry for revolution.  
 You are still very small.  
 Your ability to resist  
 The atrocities, boycotts and rapes  
 That go on every moment  
 Has become nil  
 Comrade  
 Tomorrow's sun is yet to rise



Sleep undisturbed until then...

Many of those belonging to the socially ostracised and deprived classes had converted to Buddhism and embraced its tenets as is revealed in the poem "Thathagata": "Ask no questions, questions are alien to me, / I do not know myself / Out there, there was nothing but darkness and rocky muteness."

There is a poet who sympathizes with Yashodhara's plight – her loneliness and feels that she should also be revered like a Sita or Savitri:

You who lost husband and son  
Must have felt uprooted  
Like the tender banana plant...  
You should have become famous in purana and palm- leaf  
Like Sita and Savitri

The pathetic condition in which they find themselves makes them long for migrating to a place where they would be treated with respect and love where they could find as a roof above their head and a decent burial after death.

Let us go to some country, brother,  
Where, while you live, you will have  
A roof above your head,  
And where, when you die, there will at least be  
A cemetery to receive you.

An analysis of the poems shows that right from birth, questions arise as to the legitimacy of birth, then there is struggle for food and survival, and the desire to gain knowledge against all odds and we find that at every stage there is social and cultural ostracism. All their plea for equality of rights falls on deaf ears and even Marxism despite its tall claims of equality for all does not seem to be of much help to them. So ultimately in utter despondency of not having gained anything in life a poet makes a pathetic request that he be given a decent burial atleast after death. It is unfortunate that in a land where our religion has always granted equal status to all human beings, a considerable number of people feel culturally and socially ostracized. To add fuel to fire, they have a strong feeling that it is religion which is causing this sort of caste divide and the resultant suffering. It is unfortunate because our religion teaches us that we are children of the same father *Prajapati* and that we should always perform good deeds and learn and spread the Vedic principles.

We as Indians should pledge to remain a single unit and not become fragmented under the influence of divisive forces. There has been politicization of religion and this has proved to be detrimental. We should not further divide but should follow a policy of inclusiveness and coalesce to become a strong, single unit. It is not with a policy of rejection and revenge as is revealed in the following poem: "I reject your culture/I reject your Parameshwar centred tradition/I reject your religion based literature." (Marathi Dalit poem). But with a policy of acceptance that we can bring about a change for the better. Parameshwar or Shiva is also called Mahadeva which means 'The Lord of Lords' and is himself the Nishada, (untouchable- one cannot perceive him through any of the senses). In the famous Rudram it is chanted, "nishadebhyascha vo namo", meaning "I bow down to the Nishada". Lord Shiva, who is one of the most widely worshipped

Gods in India , is also the Lord of the outcastes and tribals- *kirata*. Those who practise untouchability need to ponder :while they worship Shiva at home, they treat humans in an inhuman manner. The Upanishads categorically declare that every human being is divine irrespective of caste, creed or family descent. There is nothing wrong in what the *Gita* said or what Manu said, there is something wrong in our understanding and implementation of the same. It is unfortunate that caste system is wrongly understood to be based on birth and not on aptitude. Social ostracism has sprung from this misconception, and so called lower castes have been exploited and treated as outcastes, down-trodden, polluted, marginals.

The most misunderstood, misused and misrepresented institution in India is the caste system. The misinterpretation and interpolation of some of the smritis have also contributed to this. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj and Aurobindo Ghosh have contributed a lot to sorting out the misrepresentation. However, only the atrocities committed in the name of the caste system have been highlighted in the press and media. The reforms as well as unity among the people of various castes and backgrounds that has happened in the past and is happening through the efforts of many saints have gone largely unreported and it is to be noted that as far as solution is concerned, revenge is not the solution because revenge shall continue endlessly. so solution is neither in revenge nor in revolt. Solution can only be achieved by a thorough understanding that we are all atoms of the same God or Paramatma as he is called and that service to humanity is service to God or Narayan who is manifest in all of us.

The often misinterpreted *Rigveda* version of *Purusha Sukta* begins thus:

A thousand heads Purusha, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. (The Supreme embodiment exists through every mind, every eye and is working through every limb). On every side pervading earth he fills a space ten fingers wide. (He exists pervading the whole universe). All these are verily Himself - whether they existed in the past, existing in the present or yet to come into existence. He confers immortality to all these. This is His splendor. He, the Supreme, manifests like this. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purusha\_Sukta )

The ancient Vedic scriptures have beautifully depicted how the four different castes form one body of society and related them to the various parts of the human body. Let *brahmana* represent head - power of thought and discrimination, the head represents the intellectuals, let *kshatriya* represent His arms - power of protection and preservation, let *vaishya* represent the thighs - power of acquisition and distribution, let *shudra* represent feet - power of support and movement of the Supreme person. Moon emerged from His mind, sun from His eyes, Fire and King of Gods from His mouth, and Wind God from His breath. From His navel emerged Space, Heaven from His head, earth from His feet and directions from His ears. This way the world came into being. The Vedas have given equal status and honour to all the communities, as different parts of the same body can not be labelled as being good or bad. Among the bodily parts, it is the feet of God that is usually worshipped in the temples and rituals rather than any other part of his body.

The rishis and the vedas say '*vasudeiva kutumbakam*' - it means the entire world is world is your family. So how can one justify treating the Dalits as outcaste and not as a part of oneself? To exclude people from the social structure is going against the vedas, which brings

disgrace to the tradition. Some more quotations from the Ved, The *Mahabharat* . *Bhagavad Gita* and *Bhagavat Puran* are as follows:

From the Supreme Being arise the Holy Sages,  
From the Supreme Being arise these Kshatriyas,  
From the very same Supreme Being are born the Brahmins,  
From the Supreme Being arise the food producing third caste  
(vaishyas).  
The Supreme Being is also the Shudras serving the Kshatriyas,

...The Supreme Being is the fishermen,  
The Supreme Being is the servant,  
The Supreme Being indeed is these gamblers.  
Man as well as woman originate from the Supreme Being.  
Women are God and so are men”

*Atharvaveda* (Paippalada Samhita)8.9,8.10

“If one’s birth were to decide one’s caste, then all should be Brahmins because all human beings have one Father- Prajapati(God, the protector and master of all creation).”

*Shukraniti*: chapter 1

As against the absolutization of birth within the caste order, the Varna Vyavastha that the Vedas envisage, base itself on action, talent and aptitude (*guna, karma, swabhava*). This is clearly expounded in the Purush Sukta of *Rigveda*. It was further supported by Lord Krishna in the *Gita* where he maintains: *chatur varnyam maya srishtam guna, karma, vibhagashah*. Vedic faith envisages a dynamic social order in which every individual is free to exercise herself/himself fully, and attain maximum growth and fulfillment. It is a society

characterized by equality of opportunity which is incompatible with birth based privileges. *Srimad Bhagawad Gita* says,

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टम् गुणकर्मविभागशः ।  
 तस्य कर्तारमपि माम् विदुष्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥  
 --श्लोक १३: ज्ञानयोगः श्रीमद्भगवद्गीत.

( The four castes have emanated from Me, by the different distribution of qualities and actions. Know Me to be the author of them, yet actionless and inexhaustible.)

*Bhagavad Gita Ch.4-13.*

The most important choice that every human being must have is the right to choose his temporal and eternal destiny. Once *gunas* and *karmas* (actions) rather than birth becomes the basis for evaluation, an individual becomes free to be a *brahmin* or a *shudra*. Turning brahmanism into a label of birth has emptied it of all its significance. The caste system has robbed the Indian society of its dynamism and has been mainly responsible for our successive subjugation by external forces.

The *Mahabharata* defines the varna qualities thus: “He in whom you find truthfulness, generosity, absence of hatred, modesty, goodness and self-restraint, is a *brahmana*. He who fulfills the duties of a knight, studies the scriptures, concentrates on acquisition and distribution of riches, is a *kshatriya*. He who loves cattle-breeding, agriculture and money, is honest and well-versed in scripture, is a *vaishya*. He who eats anything, practises any profession, ignores purity rules, and takes no interest in scriptures and rules of life, is a *shudra*.”  
*Mahabharata III, 180.20*

The higher the *varna*, the more rules of self-discipline are to be observed. Hence, a *jati* could collectively improve its status by adopting more demanding rules of conduct, e.g. vegetarianism. Manu says: "The State should make it compulsory for all to send their children of both sexes to school at the said\* period and keep them there for the said\*\* period till they are thoroughly well-educated. It should be made a penal offence to break this law. In other words, let no child - whether a girl or a boy - be allowed to stay in the house after the 8th year; let him remain in the seminary till his Samavartana time, [i.e. the period of Return home and let no one be allowed to marry before that." Manu 7:152. Again says Manu:- "Of all gifts (that one can bestow on another) - water, food, animals ( as cows, and buffaloes), sesamum seeds, land, clothes, gold, and butter, etc. - that of the knowledge of the Veda is the best and the noblest." Manu 4:233

Hinduism is the most accommodative of all religions. We have always accepted knowledge and wisdom from whichever quarter it arose, without questioning as to who was the preacher. For example, if we examine the names of our rishis we find that Maharshi Valmiki, was a hunter and robber, who later created the epic *Ramayana* and Maharshi Ved Vyasa, was a fisherwoman's son, who gave us the Vedas, Puranas, *Mahabharata* and *Shrimad Bhagvatam*. Kabirdas, who was born a Hindu and brought up by a Muslim weaver Niru and Nima. He said- "Never ask a saint his caste or creed." Saint Raidas, a great saint belonged to the cobbler caste, which was considered untouchable as per the prevailing social order of the day. Sant Namdev who was one of the pioneers of the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra, was actually born in a tailor's household, in the town of Pandharpur- a place of pilgrimage in Maharashtra.

Swami Dayanand had quoted a verse from the Yajur Veda that authorizes all men to study the Veda and hear it read:-God says:- “As I have given this Word (i.e., the four Vedas) which is the word of salvation\* for all - *brahmans, kshatryas, vaishyaas, shudras*, women, servants, aye, even the lowest of the low, so should you all do, i.e., teach and preach the Veda and thereby acquire true knowledge, practise virtue, shun vice, and consequently being freed from all sorrow and pain, enjoy true happiness.” Yajur Veda 26:2.

*Caste untouchability never existed in the Vedas.* Any type of discrimination, whether based on caste, religious beliefs, gender or economic status, is inhuman and needs to be censured. On the one hand, it has to be condemned and on the other, it is not healthy to unnecessarily nurture ill-feeling and hatred between communities. In the *Ishovadino Upanisad* it is stated, “*anoraniyan mahatomahiyam aatmasya janato.*” (God is manifest as smallest of smallest atoms and largest of large atoms.) Only such a realization can save the human race from atrocities committed towards one another. It is unfortunate that in all these debates it is religion and religious sentiment which gets hurt and we need to preserve the sanctity of the religion and the sanity of the people by undoing the damage done by misinterpretation of religious scriptures by vested interests to fragment society for their hidden agenda-of divide and rule.

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S. K. Agrawal

**The Concept of Shakti:  
Man-Woman Relationship in Hinduism**

The paper traces the concept of Shakti as found in the various schools of thought of Hinduism, and explores how this concept has contributed in forming the traditional Hindu view of the nature of the feminine and the subsequent role of woman. The paper also argues that the Hindu gender relationship must be viewed and theorized differently from that of the West.

There is no denying the fact that feminism in India is to be theorized differently from that of the West, for historical circumstances and values in India make women's issues different from the western feminist rhetoric. In India the idea of woman as 'powerful' is accommodated into patriarchal culture through religion. Besides, unlike the West where the notion of "self" rests in competitive individualism, in India the individual is usually considered to be just one part of the larger social collective, dependent for its survival upon cooperation and self-denial for the collective good. The tradition in the West to equate power with the masculine is not at all a universally held outlook. The Devi concept of Hinduism offers a fresh and radically different approach to the issue of power and feminine. Shakti, synonymous with the great Devi or the Great Hindu Goddess is exclusively a feminine principle. As such she is omnipresent in Hindu society through her

many forms. Shakti has always been a living force throughout the long history of Hinduism. This is evident from the presence of goddesses throughout the long literary traditions of India. In the *Rigveda*, for example are mentioned 40 goddesses. These include Saraswati, goddess of wisdom; Ushas; the dawn; Aditi, who is depicted as birthless. (*Rigveda*, 10.7.2) The very word Shakti itself appears in in the *Rigveda* some 12 times. Two of the Shakti word's derivatives 'Shaktivat' and 'Shakman' appear twice and five times respectively). Part of the *Rigveda* is named as Devi Sukta and is certainly a recognition of Shakti as a cosmic principle. In *Ramayana*, Shakti is called Devi. In *Mahabharata* there are two hymns dedicated to her. The various manifestations of the goddess are ubiquitous throughout the Puranas; the *Devi Bhagvad Purana* is entirely dedicated to her. It is indeed very difficult to find a piece of Hindu literature where there is no mention of feminine power.

The Shad- Darshanas of Hindu philosophy have also recognized the existence of woman as Devi, a form of Shakti. Indian philosophy consists of three models of man-woman relationship: (i) The Brahma- Maya Model (ii) The Purusha- Shakti Model and (iii) The Shiva- Shakti Model. These are not mechanical models but organic ones. The Shiva- Shakti Model of Shakta philosophy refers to a form of life where woman's position is stronger and more pronounced. The Purusha- Prakriti Model gives more importance to the differences between man and woman. As Maya is non-different from Brahman, the Brahma- Maya model does not give any separate status to woman. Central to Shiva- Shakti Model Of Shakta Philosophy is the thesis that the world is produced by the female element. Shiva is also considered as the form of Shakti. Here woman is considered to be the mother of everything. She is neither inert nor like an animal but living and intelligent. She is not the object of enjoyment but like a man

she is an enjoyer, an agent. She is not an obstruction to liberation but is an aid in liberating the self. The realization of self is also the result of the awakening of a power which is called Kundalini.

The idea of Shiva/ Shakti is seen mirrored in the concept of Divine Consort. According to Hindu teachings Shakti, i.e. Devi or Goddess cannot exist in vacuum. Almost every Hindu God has a feminine companion, a consort, a goddess. Vishnu, for example, has the goddess Shri(Lakshmi) as his eternal companion. Shiva is accompanied by Parvati, Brahma by Saraswati, Krishna by Radha. These goddesses-consorts are said to personify nothing less than the essential energy of the god. So integral is the relationship between a particular god and his Shakti that one is thought incapable of existing without the other. Frank Morales writes” Shakti is embodied in the “i” of his name. According to the grammatical rules of classical Sanskrit, if a consonant is not followed by a vowel, it is automatically assumed that this consonant is followed by the vowel “a”. Consequently, without this “i” in his name, Shiva becomes Shava, or a lifeless corpse. Thus it is the feminine principle that is the animating force of life itself.

The Hindu Divine constitutes both the feminine and the masculine; this is also illustrated in the image of Ardhnarishvara, the representation of God as being half man and half woman. Veneration of God necessarily entails veneration of the Goddess. Hindu Gods and Goddesses are mutually dependent upon each other. The story involving the creation of Devi, found in *Devi Bhagvataa Purana* illustrates the intimacy and mutual dependence of Hindu God and Goddess (IX, 2,12-23). According to this account Krishna was at one time the only being in existence. Desiring to create the universe, He divided Himself into two parts, the left being female and the right male. That female was none other than Radha, the eternal consort and

Shakti of Krishna, who is described as being the Mule Prakriti or the root source of all existence. From the conjugal sport of Radha and Krishna a golden egg was born that was the repository of the material from which our universe was created. Creation is thus depicted in the *Devi Bhagvata Purana* as proceeding from Krishna through Radha. The feminine, Shakti is crucial and indispensable in the creation of the universe.

The relationship between the Hindu God and Goddess is that of the wielder of Power and Power itself (i.e. Skaktiman and Shakti). One is meaningless without the existence of the other. While the possessor of the power is the guiding force as to the power's direction and purpose, it is the power itself, which provides the ability to perform any task. Srivatsa Goswami (1985) explains this concept thus: "On the transcendental plane this functional duality implies the split of the Absolute into power or potency (Shakti), the subjective component, and the possessor of power (the Shaktimaan), the objective one. On the phenomenal plane too there exists such a duality." Thus, the Deva and the Devi are the able and the ability.

There are several traditions in India that teach that liberation can be achieved by the proper utilization of the feminine principle within; Kundalini Yoga is one such tradition. According to Kundalini Yoga Philosophy, Shakti resides at the base of the spine in the form of the Kundalini energy. The goal of this path is to raise these energy centers (*chakras*) of the subtle, or astral body. As each energy portal is open, the *sadhak* achieves higher levels of spiritual realization and power. When this Shakti reaches the top Chakra located at the crown of the head, full liberation and full realization are achieved. This process is known as the union of Shiva and Shakti.

Shaktism, dedicated to the great goddess Kali (most influential in Assam and West Bengal and found throughout India) is another phenomenon recognizing the superiority of the feminine over the masculine. In Shaktism it is believed that Shakti evolves her own being into 36 tattavas, or constituents of reality, in order to create the universe. The present diversified universe is nothing less than the creative manifestation of the uncreated goddess Shakti. Shakti, both in the form of this world and the human body is in fact the vehicle for salvation.

Hindu literature, unlike the majority of the Western literature, is full of accounts of heroic, strong and brave women. For example in *Mahabharata* we find Draupadi, a brave and iron-willed woman; and Kunti, who perseveres with her honour and her faith intact despite a life riddled with tragedies. In the *Ramayana*, we meet Sita, the wife and Shakti of Rama, an incarnation of God. Though arranged marriages form the norm of Hindu society, we find that Sita chooses her own husband in a Svayamvara ceremony. She, of her own free will, chooses to accompany Rama to the forest when he is sent into exile. It shows her strength and commitment to loyalty. She continues to display her independent nature even in the forest; she convinces Rama to chase the gold-spotted deer and not to kill the Vanacharas. Hindu literature, as a matter of fact, is replete with such examples of heroic women. The Hindu women have risen to heights within various monastic and religious structures, parallels of which would have been unheard of in Western literature and society until only recently. One text of the *Rigveda*(V,28) reveals that there was a female Rishi, or revealer of sacred truth, known as Vishvara. There were also women philosophers such as Vachaknavi, who debated Yajnavalkya, of Upanishadic fame. The famous Sanskrit grammarian makes a distinction between Acharyani (the wife of a teacher) Acharyaa (a lady teacher) and thereby indicating that women were accepted as spiritual leaders. Women

saints such as Andal and Mirabai initiated Bhakti movement. Women have continued this long tradition of spiritual leaders to this day; they include Gurumayi, Amritanandamayi, Merra Maa, etc. Such respect to the feminine, unfortunately, is not visible in the western world. To this day, for example, women are barred from the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church. It is only in the latter third of the twentieth century that a reemergence of the feminine has begun to take place in European and American societies.

The Shakti Concept of Hinduism recognizes women as personifications of the feminine aspects of divinity. Accordingly, the Earth is also the living personality of our collective Mother. The present times of violence and sufferings call for the reemergence of the concept of the sacred feminine power of God, of Shakti so that all the evils may be eradicated. In brief, the concept of Shakti makes it evident that the idea of woman as powerful is being accommodated into patriarchal Hindu culture through religion.

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Devinder Bindra

*Savitri:*  
**The Myth Dreamt Onward**

Sri Aurobindo was a yogi and a poet-seer par excellence. Almost all his writings are therefore infused with the findings of his vast yogic experiences. *Savitri* is an excellent example of the poet's metaphysical pursuits. The seer-poet builds his epic-poem on the legend of Savitri-Satyavan as it is recorded in the great Indian epic *Mahabharata*. This paper attempts to highlight the changes that Sri Aurobindo has made in the above legend and which have enhanced the effect and purpose of the story.

Sri Aurobindo has sub-titled *Savitri* – A Legend and a Symbol, clearly indicating thereby that this epic simply does not narrate a tale but at the same time is a symbol as well. Evidence to this fact is strewn through most of the 24,000 odd lines of this epic and an in-depth study convincingly brings it within the purview of a symbolic poem. It is interesting to note the finesse with which the seer-poet has transformed the legend of Savitri, as contained in the Aranyak Parva (ch. 248) of the *Mahabharata* into a magnificent symbolic poem. The legend thus transformed gains cosmic universality and oneness and each character becomes a symbol.



Accordingly therefore, Aswapathy is not just a virtuous king or Savitri his daughter merely an accomplished princess and Satyavan simply the son of the exiled blind king Dyumatsen. Aswapathy symbolizes the soul of aspiring humanity and, who by virtue of his yogic *sadhana* (intense meditation) is able to invoke the grace of the Divine Mother and bring about the descent of the avatar (divine incarnation). In this case the avatar is Savitri who in turn will effect a transformation upon earth and make man's life a life divine. This feat is possible only if she becomes a co-sharer of mankind in its ordeals and hardships since it is not possible to judge the failings, difficulties and weaknesses of mankind without actually undergoing the rigors of the numerous stages of earthly existence. "She knew that first she must discover her soul./Only who save themselves can others save."<sup>1</sup>

It becomes quite evident, therefore, that Savitri has set for herself the task of liberating man and to create conditions here for the embodiment of the light Supreme. Such is the profound change which Sri Aurobindo has made in this epic, and it is this significant change which differentiates *Savitri* from other epics like *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Even though it contains the original legend of Savitri – Satyavan, the *Mahabharata* is essentially an epic dealing with the travails of a section of humanity. It is more on the physical level of thought where we are able to feel the changing colours of life; the miseries and joys, the difficulties and sorrows of a particular group of people. Our attention is focused on kings and other members of royal dynasties, their high personal ideals and the consequent fate. It is only at few intervals that we get glimpses of the spiritual significance of events or feel the hand of hidden divine forces working behind the veil of outer reality. Here man suffers and struggles, at times succeeds or fails – hence man's relationship with God is more or less indirect.

When we take up *Savitri*, we find that there is a near direct relationship with divine forces. This is quite in order since Savitri is none other than the incarnation of the Divine Mother and she is the mighty current flowing through much of this epic poem. Savitri dominates the beginning, middle as well as the end of the poem. The only other important personalities which figure in this epic are Aswapathy and the sage Narad. Even Satyavan does not attract as much attention as do the two former characters. Via Aswapathy's spiritual meditations, Sri Aurobindo has taken the reader along a journey that is unique in its mystic and spiritual content. During his *wander jhare* in the vital planes of earthly existence, the king encounters numerous personalities of the lower levels of existence, even gnomes, djinns, spirits and anti forces of Hell – when the poet outlines Aswapathy's journey into the underworld or Descent into Night.

So far as these encounters are concerned, there could be found some parallel in the other epic *Mahabharata*, especially where the author discusses the travails of the Pandava brothers during their sojourn in the forests of the lower foothills of the Himalayas. The similarity, however, ceases after that, since, with his gradually aroused spiritual powers, Aswapathy moves up a graded existential ladder of spiritual progress till he comes to a point of no return. That is, the annihilation of his self. He must become a zero so far as his earthly life is concerned. A complete negation of his previous existence means terrific spiritual gain – which when achieved brings him in close proximity to the Divine Mother. And from her, he is ultimately granted the boon of the divine descent of her incarnation. There is scarcely any divine spiritual experience or incident in the *Mahabharata* which might achieve that rare grandeur or which may get such undivided attention from the author poet, sage Vyasa – as does Savitri in Sri Aurobindo's epic.

The same argument holds good for the other important personality in the epic, sage Narad. He is a seer having wisdom of the past, present and future. Here, his function is to present a note of caution in the minds of the Queen Mother and King Aswapathy. The latter already has spiritual insight as a result of his yogic meditations and so he is not unduly perturbed at the happenings connected with his daughter Savitri. But such is not the case with the Queen Mother – who is an ordinary mortal human.

To some extent we may say that the presence of the sage Narad, a divine seer, is a spiritual event and obliquely we might parallel it with the presence of Lord Krishna in the *Mahabharata*, especially during the mighty war between the two factions therein - the Kauravas and the Pandavas. But we must remember that Krishna, though very often referred to as a God and also as one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu, the preserver, was at that stage of the epic simply any other human person but with one main difference. Krishna was an individual with an exceptionally heightened spiritual realization and having outstanding mental and physical prowess. Thus he proved to be more clever and wise and so unique among his contemporaries. It is only later that he comes to be considered as a God, historically speaking, that is. Consequently we should not place Lord Krishna and the divine seer, sage Narad, in the same category.

Another major point of difference between *Mahabharata* and *Savitri* is the canvas on which the events have been recorded. Where the events in *Mahabharata* take place on the physical plane, the canvas of *Savitri* is cosmic. Moreover the time span is very important. The Pandavas in the *Mahabharata* were compelled to pass many years in forests, as they had been banished from their kingdom. This seclusion was not out of choice but compulsion; on the

other hand, if Aswapathy spent eighteen years in spirituo – yogi meditation, it was more out of personal choice than anything else.. Though it was predestined that Satyavan would die and that Savitri seek out ways and means to vanquish Death, she could have adopted the easier way out. Perhaps the most important and interesting factor in the entire dramatic interlude is her ‘battle’ with Yama that lasts only a few hours, during which both she and Yama cover a near – impossible variety and range of philosophic and pragmatic topics. Perhaps nowhere in the *Mahabharata* do we find such depth and meaning as we do in Savitri’s encounter with Death in Sri Aurobindo’s *Savitri*.

To come back to the above point of discussion, the canvas of *Savitri* is cosmic, taking into its purview worlds of being or existence that are connected to humanity but which are not perceived by it. This is mainly due to the limitations in human understanding. In *Savitri* the basic issue in the mind of the poet is earth, love and doom. Our attention is gripped at the very outset by the all important issue which bothers mankind – death. All characters herein are significant in so far as they become conscious agents in working out the problem of man’s destiny. *Savitri* thus lifts us out of mundane human life and takes us to a new and heightened spiritual level from where we can scan the entire cosmos and perceive the divine purpose of the Supreme trying to work Himself out through the life of man and his environment.

In the *Mahabharata* the relationship between man and God is indirect; in *Savitri*, the struggling and suffering man is given a much higher status and his whole life plays an important part in the working out of the divine purpose of a Supreme will. The relation here between man and God becomes absolutely direct. In this case no individual is isolated, whether weak or strong, rich or poor. Every person plays an important role so as to transform life on earth as also his own individual

existence. One can feel a distinct divergence from the original legend in the *Mahabharata*, and as adapted by Sri Aurobindo in *Savitri* – hence the Myth Dreamt Onwards.

In this epic-poem, Aswapathy the childless king of Madra performed many religious austerities and sacrifices over a period of eighteen years to the Goddess Savitri. Propitiated, the goddess conferred her special grace upon the king and bestowed upon him a daughter by his queen Malvi. The child was named Savitri after the goddess. Being exceptional in grace, beauty, intellect and personality, no prince came forward to ask her hand and so Aswapathy wished her to seek out her life partner. An old minister accompanied her in her journey. After traveling for over two years she ultimately came to a lonely hermitage in a deep forest where the blind King Dyumatsen, lived with his wife and son Satyavan. Savitri saw him and her final choice was made. She returned to her father's palace with a light and happy heart.

At this juncture, the great seer Narad was also present and on hearing Savitri's choice, he promptly disapproved of her choice since he knew that Satyavan was fated to die after one year, Savitri was advised to make another choice but she persisted in her original selection and so her parents had to give their consent. Accordingly, Savitri married Satyavan, and soon adapted herself to the hard life of the hermitage. All the time she was fully aware of the dire prophecy made by the sage Narad and she prepared herself mentally for that critical moment. Standing on one leg, she fasted for the last three day's of Satyavan's life. On the fateful morning, Savitri took permission from her in-laws and accompanied Satyavan to the forest, where after cutting some firewood, he lay down in Savitri's lap complaining of headache. Very soon he fell asleep and Savitri saw the god of

death, Yama, standing before the body of her husband. Yama took the life (soul) of Satyavan and Savitri followed him - all the while conversing with Yama on the subject of *dharma*, righteousness in life. The god of death was so pleased at the wit and intelligence of Savitri, that he granted her a number of boons - the last of which was that Savitri should bear a hundred sons from Satyavan. This necessitated the restoration of Satyavan's life. In this way Savitri triumphed over death and fate and returned victorious to the hermitage.

According to the story in the *Mahabharata*, Satyavan soon after recovered the kingdom of his father and ruled happily over it.

When we come to grips with *Savitri*, we find a substantial remoulding in the scheme of thematic development. Though the story content is almost the same, appreciable changes have been so wrought into the texture of the poem that this epic becomes a living symbol. Whereas in the *Mahabharata* this episode has been dealt with in the manner of telling a story, Sri Aurobindo's poem *Savitri* contains an explication of his personal experiences which he has gained as result of his intense yogic *sadhana* (meditation).

*Savitri* charts the path of man's quest for his spirit, (the psychic being) which is the sole representative of God in every man. Thus he hopes to unite with the godhead, with Brahman – the *Purusha*. It is poetry of a mystic Seer who has projected his experience through the protagonist, Aswapathy. He is the sole representative of the aspiring humanity who embarks on a journey within; a psychic journey which brings him in contact with new worlds within himself. His mystical experiences at these various levels of being, occupy a major part of the epic.

In the *Mahabharata*, King Aswapathy is shown as a just and righteous king who was equally loved - both as a man and as a ruler. He spent most of his time in religious activities, penances and undertook vows and fasts in order to propitiate the goddess Savitri by whom he was blessed with a boon – his daughter Savitri, an incarnation of the Divine Shakti (dynamic feminine principle).

In Sri Aurobindo's epic, King Aswapathy does not perform any such religious sacrifices. Here he is a *Dhyani*. He therefore probes deep within his psyche. He is aware that what he essentially seeks is within him and so, he performs yoga – an integral yoga, which enables him to transcend the planes of life, matter and mind and move into the stage which is referred to as higher mind by the poet. It is here that the seeker soul of Aswapathy begins to comprehend divinity which leads him on to the ascending levels of the Illumined and the Intuitive mind. It is now that he experiences the intensity and the intimacy of the divine flux and is finally able to establish a direct link with the divine. Thus, from a realization of the self through spiritual meditation, Aswapathy gains self – illumination via the attainment of higher consciousness bringing him closer to his goal. He can now communicate with the Divine. A total surrender of his self marks the climax of his Bhakti (devotion). He now experiences the bliss of the Divine. After having transcended the realms of ego, darkness and ignorance, he is confronted by the ultimate reality of the One. This grand surrender yields concrete results. Aswapathy is granted the boon – his heart's desire is fulfilled. Savitri – the future saviour of mankind is born to him. It is however essential to make a detailed study of the process and progression of Aswapathy's yoga, so as to rightly judge his superb achievement. Sri Aurobindo has transformed King Aswapathy into a symbol of the principle of mind in man, a mind struggling to reach beyond its limitations, ignorance and half knowledge to the light of full knowledge.

In this light, therefore, Aswapathy becomes the most important protagonist next to Savitri, since he is the begetter of Savitri in the alchemical transcendental sense in recapitulation we can very briefly run over the saga of adventure that Aswapathy goes through to beget Savitri the *Magna Mater*, the cosmic universal Shakti. As seen in the above statements, Aswapathy during his spiritual psychic odyssey has innumerable yogic experiences involving clairaudience and clairvoyance encounters. He is led through periods of varying intensities of consciousness, periods of ascents and descents, of divine afflatus and its withdrawal and through these is helped to grow integrally and attain complete equality, tranquillity, purity and lasting peace. He also realises that this perfect peace is a dynamic power which sustains the struggling universe, by its luminous silence. Aswapathy experiences deep within the battle of the gods and the titans for the possession of ignorance, he experiences divine knowledge pouring from above and world knowledge welling out from within him. Subsequently he discovers that his inner self is also the self of the entire universe. He thus becomes one with it and goes beyond till he gets the vision of the divine mother. As an archetypal representative of the aspiring humanity, Aswapathy pleads with the Supreme Mother who sends down to earth her own *emanation* Savitri, an incarnation of Her grace to help humanity grow divine.

In the same manner, Sri Aurobindo has transformed the character of Savitri. In the original legend, she is a virtuous woman, who by the strength of her chastity and religious beliefs is able to snatch back the life of Satyavan, her husband, from Yama - the God of Death. In this legend, Savitri had, for three days before the death of Satyavan, observed fast to gain inner strength and thus made Yama yield to her will; resuscitate Satyavan and also grant his parents long life and prosperity.



In Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*, she is the World-Mother's daughter, an incarnation. She is the Divine will missioned on earth to change Fate and lift man and nature to a higher and diviner existence. At the same time she also symbolises the psychic principle in man, the spark of divinity present in each one of us. As Aswapathy's daughter, she marries Satyavan who, according to the sage Narad, is fated to die within one year. Despite all entreaties of her mother, Savitri does not change her mind. As the destined day of Satyavan's death approaches, she does not observe any fast like her legendary counterpart. Instead she performs yoga, in the course of which she undergoes a change "Which in tremendous moments of our lives/ Can overtake sometimes the human soul/ And hold it up towards its luminous sources." (*Savitri*, 571). Savitri is awakened to the awareness that she is the world Mother's divine will. With this realization she rises up in her effulgent glory to confront death, which is actually the shadowy aspect of Light. She thus confirms her victory over the forces of Ignorance and also changes the course of fate by her supramental force and consciousness. This depiction of Savitri is very different from the legendary character in the Mahabharata. Evidence to this effect can be obtained from a detailed observation of the gradual development of Savitri in Sri Aurobindo's epic. She is a paragon of virtue whose nature, character and in fact her whole being undergoes a transformation that results directly from her *tap* (yogic meditations). Sri Aurobindo points out that "To realize what virtue really is, a descent into the nether regions of consciousness, such as is later portrayed at great length in *Savitri*, is necessary."<sup>2</sup> He further adds that the key to virtue is evolution. He explains that "human virtue lies in the evolution by the human being of the inborn qualities and powers native to his humanity."<sup>3</sup> The individual has untapped potential for attaining higher states and levels of consciousness and seizing the divine tier upon tier by spiritual thought. Sri Aurobindo points out:

All the world's possibilities in man  
 Are waiting as the tree waits in its seed:  
 His past lives in him; it drives his future's pace  
 His present acts fashion his coming fate  
 The unborn gods hide in his house of Life. (*Savitri*, 118)

It is therefore possible for man to aspire for and reach the light of spirituality and also comprehend the divine by spiritual thought. Savitri, too, has to transcend the state of average mortal humanity. Only then can she conquer Fate and defeat Time/ Death to establish a new age. In due course of time, she must effect a spiritual transformation which does happen with the defeat of Yama and the path becomes clear for a luminous transformation of earth-nature. It will be pertinent here to briefly touch upon the encounter between Savitri and Yama, the God of Death.

In *Savitri*, we have already seen that Savitri performs yoga, merges with the Oversoul, arouses her latent dynamic energy (Kundalini) and then confronts Yama and ultimately defeats him. What is important to note is the fact that Sri Aurobindo takes us on a mystico – spiritual journey, which is far different from the journey of Savitri in the epic *Mahabharata*.

The female protagonist of Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*, also converses with Yama; this dialoguing, however, assumes the form of a marathon debate in which Yama discourses on nihilism and meaninglessness and Savitri bases her arguments on love and purpose. This debate between Yama and Savitri is one of the highlights of the epic where Savitri exposes the fallacies in Yama's arguments and confounds him at every turn of his sophistry. Finally, Yama challenges her to show her real power, her real truth. He asks:

Reveal thy power; lay bare thy spirit's force,  
Then will I give back to thee Satyavan.  
Or if the Mighty Mother is with thee,  
Show me her face that I may worship her; (*Savitri*, 664)

It is towards the culmination of her debate with Death, that this limit – situation is arrived at. This triggers off the mighty transformation upon Savitri in which Yama is finally encountered and annihilated. The dark shadow of Death is overtaken by the Gnostic Light of the Divine Mother. Both the Transformation and the final encounter are worth noting. First the transformation:

In a flaming moment of apocalypse  
The incarnation thrust aside its veil.  
A little figure in infinity  
Yet stood and seemed the External's very house,  
As if the world's centre was her very soul  
All wide space was but its outer robe. (*Savitri*, 664)

The encounter and obliteration of Yama:

The two opposed each other face to face.  
His being like a huge fort of darkness towered;  
Around I their life grew, an ocean's sieges.  
Awhile the Shade survived defying heaven;  
Assailing in front, oppressing from above,  
A concrete mass of conscious power, he bore  
The tyranny of her divine desire.  
A pressure of intolerable force  
Weighed on his unbowed head and stubborn breast;  
Light like a brining tongue licked up his thoughts,

Light was a luminous texture in his heart  
 Light coursed, a splendid agony, through his nerves.  
 (*Savitri*,667)

Yama tries various ways by which he can escape his doom. He calls to Night but she falls shuddering back; he calls to Hell but it sullenly retires; he turns to the Inconsistent from which he was born, but it draws back instead Yama towards emptiness, till finally,

His body was eaten by light, his sprit devoured. (*Savitri*,667)  
 His enormous will and strength and darkness of inconscient support all abandon him, and so ultimately,"The dire universal Shadow disappeared/ Vanishing into the void from which it came./And Satyavan ad Savitri were alone" (*Savitri*,668).

So, Savitri finds herself before a radiant God who offers her eternal peace and bliss.

To sum up we may say that Sri Aurobindo has, in his inimitable manner, brought about a tremendous change in the legend as related in the epic *Mahabharata*. *Savitri* is the poetic utterance of divine inspiration in which the poet turns the simple legend of conjugal fidelity into a memorable symbol of transformation and spiritualization of the human race. Indeed the Aurobindonian journey has a grandeur and depth, a scope and resonance; it is rich in inward plunges, inner space, and also outer theatre, wherein the mode of dialog has been epically used between Narad - Aswapathy, Narad – Queen Mother and Savitri's dialog with Yama and the latter's with her. These dialogs literally cover themes such as the nature of ultimate reality, its relationship with man, worlds, universe and love. It's a many levelled dialog in which the protagonists speak from positions of conviction

and strength. It literally culminates in a crescendo; it is full of *anuncio dromios*, in that Yama is forced to change his position and it ends in a dramatic encounter in which he is devoured by light and retreats into the Night. Now the dialog between Savitri and Yama in the *Mahabharata* has neither such richness nor reverberation. It is clever and declamatory, no big issues are taken and there are no resolutions. In *Mahabharata*, Yama is impressed by Savitri's uprightness, resolve and ability to argue and hold her ground, and so relents.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri – A Legend and a Symbol* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1978) 501). All quotations from the poem *Savitri* have been taken from this edition. The page numbers have been given there only.

<sup>2</sup>Makarand Paranjape ed., *The Penguin Sri Aurobindo Reader* (Delhi: Penguin, 1999).xxiv.

<sup>3</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *The Harmony of Virtue –vol.3, SABCL* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971)47.

## Pooja Katare

### Experiences of Integral Yoga in *Savitri*

*Savitri* the epic poem is a poetic rendering of Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga as it expresses his experiments, experiences and visions. The epic is the *mantric* expression of his inner finding and conquests, leading to his vision of an age of truth consciousness and immortality. In the poem the poet reveals how at meditation's peak, at one with God, when many ceases their search, he becomes aware of a presence, God's Consciousness, Power and Bliss, which he calls the Divine Mother. He also reveals how Splendor comes down to Earth to transform darkness into light, the unreal into the real and death into immortality.

The Process of Integral Yoga beginning from invocation advances through the process of purification and results in the transformation of the lower nature unto the higher one; that is the divine nature. This purification of the mental being and psychic *prana* (vital airs) along with the body and physical *prana* (vital airs) lead the *sadhaka* (practitioner) of Integral Yoga towards the ideal of integral perfection. This all prepares the ground for a spiritual liberation.<sup>1</sup> "Which is synonym to freedom for what liberty has the soul, which feels not free."<sup>2</sup>

In the words of Sri Aurobindo, *sudhi* leads the *sadhaka* (practitioner) towards *mukti* (liberation). So all processes of purification

prove to be a release, a delivery; for it is a throwing away of limiting, binding, obscuring imperfections and confusions: purification from desire brings the freedom of psychic *prana* (vital airs), purification from wrong emotions and troubling reactions, the freedom of the heart, purification from the intelligence, freedom from mere intellectuality the freedom of gnosis. But all this is an instrumental liberation.

The freedom of the soul, of the spirit is of a larger and more essential character. It is an opening out of moral limitation into the illimitable immortality of the spirit. Thus “freed from the clutch of pain and ignorance, that he stand master of life and fate.”<sup>33</sup> The freedom of the spirit can be considered in two ways. For certain ways of thinking it is throwing off all nature, a *nirvana* (a silent state of pure being), *moksh* (extinction, dissolution of the natural existence in his some indefinable absolute). But an absorbed and immersed bliss, a wideness of actionless peace, a release of self-extinction or a self-drowning is not the aim of Integral Yoga. So here the idea of *mukti* (liberation) is the connotation of that inner change which is common to all experiences of this kind, essential to perfection and indispensable to spiritual freedom. So the spirit’s freedom implies always two things – a rejection and an assumption, a negative and a positive sides; the negative movement of freedom is a liberation from the principal bonds, the master-knots of the lower nature; where as the positive side is an opening or growth into the higher spiritual existence.

The master-knots in the words of the *Gita* are four – desire, ego, the dualities and the three *gunas* (modes of nature); for to be desireless, egoless, equal of mind and soul and spirit and *nistraiguna* is in the idea of the *Gita* to be free (*mukta*). On the other hand, the positive sense of freedom is to be universal in soul, transcendently one in spirit with God, possessed of the highest divine nature – as we may

say, like the God, or one with him in the law of our being. This is the whole and full sense of liberation and this is the Integral freedom of the spirit.<sup>6</sup>

### **Binding curse of ego**

The liberation from ego, the liberation from desire together find the central spiritual freedom here. The idea and the sense of separate self-existence in the universe and force of being into the mould of that experience are the root of all suffering, ignorance and evil. And it is so because it falsifies both in practice and in cognition the whole real truth of things, it limits the being, limits the consciousness, limits the power of our being, limits the bliss of being. This limitation again produces a wrong way of existence, wrong way of consciousness and wrong perverse and contrary forms of the delight of existence. The overall scenario in brief in the words of Sri Aurobindo is:

A capital was there without a stat:  
 It had no rules, only groups that strove.  
 He saw a city of ancient Ignorance.  
 Founded upon a soil that knows not Light.  
 Thus Ego was lord upon his peacock seat  
 And Falsehood sat by him, his mate and queen.  
 There was no altar raised to Liberty  
 Thus freedom was abhorred and hunted down.  
 Harmony and tolerance nowhere could be seen.<sup>7</sup>

In this way the soul limited in being and self-isolated in its environment feels itself no longer in unity and harmony with its self, with God, with the universe, with all around it; but rather it finds itself odds with the universe, with all around it; but rather it finds itself odds with the universe, in conflict and discord with other beings who are its



other selves but whom it treats as not self. So long as this disaccord and disagreement lasts, it cannot possess the world and it cannot enjoy the universal life, but is full of unease, fear, afflictions of all kinds, in a painful struggle to preserve and increase itself and possess its surroundings: for to possess its world is the nature of infinite spirit and necessary urge in all being. The satisfaction that it gets from this labor and effort are of a stunted, perverse and unsatisfying kind: for the one real satisfaction it has is that of growth of an increasing return towards itself, of some realization of accord and harmony, of successful self-creation and self-realization, but the little of these things that it can achieve on the basis of ego-consciousness is always limited, insecure, imperfect, transitory. It is at war too with its own self, - first because, since it is no longer in possession of the central harmonizing truth of its own being, it cannot properly control its natural members or accord their tendencies, powers and demands; it has not the secret of harmony, because it has not the secret of its own unity and self-possession; and secondly, it is not in possession of its higher self. It has to struggle further; it is not allowed to be at peace till it is in possession of its own true highest being. Till then, "A bond is put on the high-climbing mind/ A seal on the too large wide-open heart;/Death stays the journeying discoverer life."<sup>8</sup>

This all means that it is not at one with God, for to be at one with God is to be at one with oneself, at one with the universe and at one with all beings. This oneness is the secret of a right and a divine existence. But the ego cannot have it because it is in its very nature separative and because with regards to ourselves, to our own psychological existence it is a false center of unity; for it tries to find the unity of our being in an identification with a shifting mental, vital, physical, personality, not with the eternal self of our total existence. Only in our spiritual self can we possess our own total being and find

himself one with universal existence and with the transcending Divinity. All the trouble and suffering of the soul proceeds from this wrong egoistic and separative way of existence.

### **Spiritual realization and the freedom of the spirit**

The process of Integral Yoga frees the spirit of this binding and limited existence. Here in the Divine, the self, the spirit, the universal and individual being finds at last their right foundation, and their right harmonies. Again, because it is limited in force, the ego prisoned soul is full of many incapacities; wrong knowledge is accompanied by wrong will, wrong tendencies and impulses of the being and the acute sense of this wrongness is the root of the human consciousness of sin. It tries to set right the deficiency of its nature by standards of conduct, which will help it to remove the egoistic consciousness and self-satisfaction of virtue, the *rajasic* by the *sattvic* egoism. But the original sin has to be cured, the separation of its being and will from the Divine being and the divine will; when it returns to unity with the divine will and being, it rises beyond sin and virtue to the infinite self-existent purity and the security of its own divine nature.

It also tries to set right its incapacities by organizing its imperfect knowledge and disciplining its high-enlightened will and force and directing them by some systematic effort of the reason; but the results are always limited, uncertain, mutable and stumbling. Only with the spiritual realization of Integral Yoga does it return to its large unity of the free spirit and the action of its nature more perfectly as the instrument of the infinite Spirit and in the steps of the Right and Truth and Power of its existence. Without this experience in ordinary state the soul which has externalized itself as ego, is subjected to the unsatisfactory, secondary, imperfect, often perverse, troubled or annulled enjoyment of existence; yet all the time the spiritual and universal *ananda* (pleasure)

is within, in the self, in the spirit, in the secret unity with God and existence.

The culminating experiences of Integral Yoga casts way this chain of ego and leads it back to free self, immortal spiritual being. Thus the experience of Integral Yoga frees the spirit from the Shakti of the desire and the ego and brings its oneness with the God and the universe in its own way which is also a state of a free universal and unifying *ananda* (pleasure). This happy loss of the will of desire and the ego, is in Sri Aurobindo's words, the essence of *mukti* (liberation). This realization turns *sadhaka* into a seer, "A seer was born, a shining guest of time." and,

The landmarks of the little person fell,  
 The island of the little ego joined its continent."  
 The person feel liberated from the binding limitations,  
 peep into the unknown and sees the golden opportunity  
 awaiting,  
 "Freedom and empire called to him from on high,  
 Above mind's twilight and life's star-led night  
 There gleamed the dawn of a spiritual day.

### **Superamental fulfillment in the Supermind**

It's only in the Supermind that the *sadhaka* experiences ideal of true freedom, which is the immanent nature of full-Truth-Consciousness. Sri Aurobindo holds that "It is only in the superamental that the full Truth-Consciousness comes into being. Only those who live in a supreme truth-consciousness and embody it are inwardly made or else remade in the divine image." In the Mother's words "It is the direct descent of the superamental consciousness and power that alone can utterly re-create life in terms of the Spirit." Thus comes

a spiritual conversion and *sadhaka* is awakened to a newer life with a steady expansion of inner being and enfoldment of subtler nature. Sri Aurobindo versifies it in the following way:

Thus came his soul's release from Ignorance  
 His mind and body's first spiritual change.  
 A wide God knowledge poured down from above,  
 A new world-knowledge broadened from within.<sup>10</sup>

### References

<sup>1</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, 674.

<sup>2</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, 10.4.666

<sup>3</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, 2.9.233.

<sup>4</sup>*Gita* :3/37-43, 2/55, 56, 70.

<sup>5</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, 675.

<sup>6</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, 1.2.18.

<sup>7</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri* 2.7.209.

<sup>8</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, 67.

<sup>9</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *Letters*, vol. II, 78.

<sup>10</sup>Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, 1.3.44.

**Parneet Jaggi**

**Matthew Arnold and *The Bhagavadgita*:  
A Study in Influence**

Matthew Arnold lived through a period of radical change—the Victorian age, and spoke more wisely of continuing problems than the contemporary prophets of moral and social revolution or their reactionary opponents. Throughout his life, as poet and as literary, social and religious critic, Arnold was a non-conformist, at odds with the orthodoxies of his age. The problems that afflicted him and other sensitive spirits of the age are familiar enough : the loss of traditional religious faith and its moral imperatives; the loss of Wordsworthian joy in man's unity with nature; the overwhelming growth of knowledge, technology and industrialism, with the consequent harvest of skepticism, rapid and bewildering change in outward and inward way of life; and because of all these things, the uncertainty of direction.

Douglas Bush points out that “Arnold, by instinct and parental inheritance, could not surrender to a naturalistic or ‘pagan’ view of life and become a wayward creature of sense and impulse; he had to find a saving and working creed. In his troubled search for light and direction, he found help in such heterogeneous guides as George Sand, Senancour, Goethe, Spinoza, Carlyle, Emerson, the ancient classics and Stoics, the *Bhagavad Gita*, Buddhism, the *Bible* and *Thomas a’ Kempis*.”<sup>1</sup> In his early years, Arnold appeared at times to stand aloof

from his age, to mock it with aristocratic airs, to resist its evils and its distractions by elevating the life of introspection, of love, of nature, to seek out ‘quiet,’ ‘calm,’ ‘repose,’ ‘peace,’ ‘faith’ – words that recur in his early poems, and that form the core of Oriental thought and philosophy. His divided temperament, distance between the inner and the outer led him to peep into the East for integration. As Kenneth Allott says, “He studied Goethe or Lucretius or the *Bhagavad Gita* for enlightenment, but also obscurely, to obtain spiritual reassurance, and this second purpose grew more explicit as time went on.”<sup>2</sup> In the same tone, U.C. Knoepfelmacher writes in his essay “Dover Revisited : The Wordsworthian Matrix in the Poetry of Matthew Arnold” : “Arnold’s poetry is, to a large extent, derivative. It draws on the classics for much of its mythic substance and the stateliness of its rhythm; on Goethe for intellectual content; on sources as remote as the *Bhagavad Gita* for that ‘wider application’ which Arnold felt was ‘the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is’.”<sup>3</sup> “Detachment” and “disinterestedness” are the keywords which lie common to the Oriental thought and Arnold. Arnold strove to understand the spectacle of life by looking at it with the scientist’s cold, detached eye, by seeing the object as in itself it really was. He loved tranquility, tolerance, clearness, moderation, ordered thought, and passions brought under control. In his poetical works, the impact of the *Bhagavad Gita* is remarkably discernible. Poems like “Empedocles on Etna,” “The Scholar-Gipsy,” “Resignation,” “Self-Dependence,” “Morality,” “Shakespeare,” “The Buried Life,” “Sohrab and Rustum,” “A Southern Night,” “Courage” bear a clear stamp of the Gita. Particularly, Arnold’s admiration for the doctrine of *nishkama karma* is widely noticeable in his poems. Kenneth Allott writes, “As a poet in search of a philosophy he turned first and for preference to the insights of the poet-philosophers, who included for him the authors of

the *Book of Job* and the Hindu *Bhagavad Gita* as well as Lucretius and Empedocles.”<sup>4</sup>

Arnold’s interest in the *Bhagavad Gita* had been aroused by October 1845 and it increased when he read the poem and what had been written about it. Trilling points out that “Arnold had at his disposal several translations of the *Bhagavad Gita*.”<sup>5</sup> He suspects that Arnold had read the essay of W. von Humboldt on the *Bhagavad Gita* (Berlin 1826) and the amplified Latin version made by Lassen in 1846 from the Latin rendering of A. W. von Schlegel (1823). He confirms the fact that Arnold read the first English translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* done by Sir Charles Wilkins (1785). There was no new English translation until that of J. Cockburn Thomson in 1855 and Arnold speaks of the *Bhagavad Gita* before that date. Supporting this fact, Allott says that “Victor Cousin seems to have directed him to Wilhelm von Humboldt’s analysis of the *Bhagavad Gita* in the *Transactions of the Royal Academy of the Sciences*, Berlin (1826). This analysis contains, as does H.H. Milman’s review of it and other works on Hindu poetry in the *Quarterly Review* of April 1831, which Arnold certainly read, the assertion of a likeness between the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *De Rerum Natura* and the fragments of Empedocles.... Associations between Lucretius, Empedocles and the *Bhagavad Gita* had been formed in Arnold’s mind before he began to study the Greek philosopher.”<sup>6</sup>

Arnold himself shows his familiarity with the poem’s ideas when early in 1848 he tries to convert his friend, Arthur Hugh Clough to his own enthusiasm. In his letter to Clough on March 1, 1848, he wrote : “I am disappointed the oriental wisdom, God grant it were mine, pleased you not.”<sup>7</sup> On March 4, 1848, he wrote again to Clough : “The Indians distinguish between *meditation* and *absorption* and

knowledge : and between abandoning practice and abandoning the fruits of action and all respect thereto. This last is a supreme step, and dilated throughout the poem.”<sup>8</sup> The “poem” referred to in the letter is the *Bhagavad Gita*. Arnold’s language and the use of certain specific words in the letter show that Arnold had read Wilkins’ translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* very thoroughly. Wilkins translates the twelfth *sloka* of the twelfth chapter as : “Knowledge is better than practice, meditation is distinguished from knowledge, forsaking the fruits of action from meditation, for happiness, hereafter is derived from such forsaking.”<sup>9</sup> Again in rendering the forty- third *sloka* of the second chapter, Wilkins introduces the word “absorption,” for which there is no equivalent in the original. He also used the word “meditation” for both the Sanskrit words *dhyana* and *samadhi*. The Lists of Reading compiled by Lowry, Young and Dunn certify that he was deeply associated and influenced by the oriental literature, especially the *Bhagavad Gita*. He mentions Arnold’s reading of the *Bhagavad Gita* first in 1869, then in 1882, 1883 and 1884. This shows how thorough Arnold had been with the study of the oriental poem. In the year 1848, when Arnold expressed his ideas on the style in literature, he even spoke of giving up his best friend for not conforming to his ideas of what style should be. “The style,” he says, “is the expression of the nobility of the poet’s character, as the matter is the expression of the richness of his mind. . . it is the style and feeling by which the beloved man appears. Apply this, Infidel, to the Oriental Poem.”<sup>10</sup> The reference here is undoubtedly to the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The study of the *Bhagavad Gita* brought a substantial change in his outlook towards life and it is vividly discernible in the poems of 1849 onwards. More particularly, critics have pointed out the influence of the *Bhagavad Gita* on his poem “Resignation.” The doctrines of *nishkama karma* and *anaskti* advocated in the *Bhagavad Gita* have



been used by Arnold in the form of “disinterestedness,” which is most naturally and impressively presented in “Resignation.” William Robbins in the chapter “The Idea of God” says that “There is even a period under the influence of the *Bhagavad Gita*, as the letters to Clough show, when the All and the Infinite have their attraction, with the thought of absorption into an all-embracing Nothingness.”<sup>11</sup>

But milder natures, and more free –  
Whom an unblamed serenity  
Hath freed from passions, . . .  
The too imperious traveller on.<sup>12</sup>

These lines echo the message of the *Bhagavad Gita* which instructs man to perform action without expecting rewards. Allott interprets the phrase “unblamed serenity” as “Hindu detachment.”<sup>13</sup>

“Empedocles on Etna” proves the philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita* very well, that the mind of man can devise a way of life, an ethic to live by in the universe, if the man is an Empedoclean with a painful awareness of ennui and a recognition like a wise man who “In his own bosom delves” (161). In the same scene, he tells emphatically to Pausanias :

Once read thy own breast right,  
And thou hast done with fears;  
Man gets no other light,  
Search he a thousand years.  
Sink in thyself! there ask what ails thee, at that shrine! (162)  
The same thought is reiterated in “The Youth of Man”:  
Sink, O youth, in thy soul!  
Yearn to the greatness of Nature;

Rally the good in the depths of thyself. (254)

This is exactly the idea that Krishna advocates to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita* when Arjuna yearns for solace and a glimpse of the Supreme. In the chapter “*vibhuti yoga*, (the Path of Divine Perfections),” Krishna says: I am the Spirit seated deep in every creature’s heart; <sup>14</sup> Similarly, Empedocles’ suicide towards the end of the poem reminds one of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Empedocles will not be “all enslaved” because of the equipoise that he attained at the last stage of his life, when he attains stability of mind and meditates on fire. Just as in the eighth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* : “*akshara parabrahma yoga*”, (the Path of Devotion), Krishna says:

at the hour of death,  
He that hath meditated Me alone,  
In putting off his flesh, comes forth to Me,  
Enters into My Being. <sup>15</sup>

Culler agrees with this completely that “Arnold found in the *Bhagavad Gita*, whose thought is very closely related to the Orphic religion of Empedocles, the idea that the disposition of one’s mind at the hour of death is very important in determining the soul’s state after death.” <sup>16</sup>

“The Scholar-Gipsy” has been related to the *Bhagavad Gita* by a number of critics. The whole poem can be studied in the light of the idea of true renunciation as enunciated by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Referring to the scholar’s renunciation of the common path of life, Arnold attributes imperishability to him, because he has “*one aim, one business, one desire*” (364). G.Wilson Knight, J.P. Curgenven and V.S. Seturaman accept the fact that the poem has

various suggestions of affinity with the *Bhagavad Gita* and other literature of the East. Seturaman concludes that Arnold endorses “a state of consciousness which transcends all dualism.”<sup>17</sup>

The action and imagery of “Sohrab and Rustum” lend support to the karma philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is also a mandate for action. Both the father and the son are haunted by the fierceness of action, not fearing the dire consequences of the war. When Sohrab is fatally stabled by his father, the poem echoes the *Bhagavad Gita*: But it was writ in Heaven that this should be. (326) The distress of Arjuna and the distress of ‘King’ in “The Sick King of Bokhara” is a dramatization of a perpetually recurring predicament. The Vizier’s admonitions to the King are reminiscent of Krishna’s exhortations to Arjuna. In his favouring the killing, Arnold demonstrates his faith in the disposal of duty. Only through detached action man can attain peace in life. Aldous Huxley believes that Arnold accepted the post of Inspector of Schools which Lord Lansdowne had procured for him in 1852, as a kind of philosophical action. He did his job and did it well, though it affected his poetic career. “To be a poet in the intervals of a routine work is almost impossible,” Trilling says, “Yet work—routine work – is one of the ‘ways’ of the *Bhagavad Gita*, an alternative to contemplation and an escape from despair.”<sup>18</sup> In “Stanzas in Memory of the Author of *Obermann*,” Arnold indicates the ways to attain *moksha* (liberation) in this world. A man true to his feeling and impulse and devoted to his duty attains perfection:

We, in some unknown Power’s employ,  
Move on a rigorous line; . . .  
They do not ask, who pined unseen,  
Who was on action hurled,  
Whose one bond is, that all have been

Unspotted by the world. (136-37)

In the same pattern, following a similar line of thought, Arnold's several other poems bear the stamp of the philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Expressions like "Must learn to wait, renounce, withdraw" (141) in "Courage"; "Of labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows" (106) in "Quiet work"; "Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,/ Who finds himself, loses his misery!" (144) in "Self-Dependence"; "But tasks in hours of insight willed/ Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled" (259) in "Morality"; "Leave then the Cross as ye have left carved gods,/ But guard the fire within" (262)! in "Progress"; "How boundless might his soul's horizons be,/ How vast, yet of what clear transparency" (271)! in "A Summer Night"; "The same heart beats in every human breast" (272)! and "From the soul's subterranean depth upborne/ As from an infinitely distant land,/ Come airs, and floating echoes" (274) in "The Buried life" echo the thought and philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The picture of Shakespeare in the sonnet is remarkably drawn and greatly resembles the picture of the Buddha or a yogi delineated in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Shakespeare is portrayed as a stable, immortal and a victorious figure standing erect with the head high facing the heavens. He "Didst tread on earth unguessed at" (50). His immortal spirit endured all sorrows, pains and blows yet remained silent. They found "their sole speech in that victorious brow" (50). He did prove himself like the yogi described in the *Bhagavad Gita*: "The Yogi... is compared to a lamp, standing in a place without wind, which waveth not."<sup>19</sup>

The wide range of Arnold's study and experience has led the critics to focus more upon the various Greek and Roman sources in his poetry. His poetic relationships with Goethe, Wordsworth, Byron, Lucretius, Epictetus, George Sand, Senancour and several others have been worked out comprehensively by various critics. But his

relationship with the Eastern literature cannot be denied at all. In fact, it needs to be studied more meticulously to gain a deeper insight into his work. His poems are replete with expressions of his divided soul and Victorian restlessness, but they also bear clear clues that he got answers to his queries and dilemmas, not from the West, but from the East, specially the *Bhagavad Gita*. His prose writings also bear his Oriental ideas, and show the impact of *Bhagavad Gita* at several places. The novel *Oakfield; or Fellowship in the East* written by his younger brother, William Delafield Arnold further strengthens his association with Indian land and culture. Himself torn by diametrically opposite pulls, Arnold seems to have found the solution to his spiritual crisis in the various doctrines of the *Bhagavad Gita* advocated by Lord Krishna to Arjuna – who can be compared to Arnold himself in many respects.

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Medha Sachdev

**Raja Rao's *The Meaning of India*:  
Metaphysics of Creation and Existence**

India is the birth-place of philosophy or metaphysics. It is the land where religion and culture evolved and developed into ever-growing shoots of deep faith leading to the goal of human birth – salvation. The spiritual goal of life, the philosophy of the Atman, inquiry into the nature of the Self – are various tenets which go into the making of Indian psyche or thought. Indian philosophy is not merely a speculation into the nature of reality. It is a sublime and unique system based on mystic and spiritual experience or *aparokshanubhuti*. Dealing with the practical needs of man, it gives clear solutions to profound subtle problems of life, revealing the way to final emancipation.

The philosophy permeating through the oeuvre of Raja Rao, is Vedantic in tone and temper. Besides his novels like *The Serpent and the Rope*, *The Cat and Shakespeare*, *The Chess Master and His Moves* etc., Rao has the credit of writing a non-fictional text, entitled *The Meaning of India*. The essays in this book pertain mainly to Indian philosophy. Being a Vedantin, Rao seeks Truth on Adi Sankaracharya's philosophy of *Advaitavada* and refers to precepts from the Upanishads copiously. Duly recognizing man's deep need to

seek and realize Truth, Raja Rao endeavours to revive the traditional Indian quest with all its rigour. A study of the Upanishads aids in the attainment of knowledge and realization. It refers to the closely shared bond between the guru and the disciple. The Upanishads hold the entire edifice of the Hindu mystic culture in India. They are verily the fountainhead of deep divine esoteric knowledge which provides freedom from the whirligig of metempsychosis. The practical hints and essential clues embodied within these metaphysical treatises throw abundant light on the path to self-realization.

‘Live to acquire knowledge, do not acquire knowledge to live’ has been the aim of life of great thinkers of India since time immemorial. India has always been home to great seers and sages. It goes to the credit of the Orient that at the dawn of civilizations, it has raised profound issues of life, questioned the limitations of human existence, and searched for solutions into the realms of Infinite Power. Answer to the riddle of existence, perception into quintessential nature and innate human destiny, knowledge of man’s relation to man, universe, and the enigma of transcendence constitute the glorious heritage of India. In the words of the German philosopher, Max Mueller:

It I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow – in some ways a very paradise on earth – I should point to India. It I were asked under what sky the human mind has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life and had found solutions to some of them, I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, in Europe, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a



life not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life – again I should point to India.<sup>1</sup>

The Indians have imposed upon themselves disciplines that lead them to perfection. They have strictly adhered to the rhythms of the universal laws, thereby discovering the road to success and achievement. Properties like simplicity of life, truth, devotion and submission to higher powers, eagerness to unfold the mysteries of life and death, and curiosity to reach Ultimate truth are all indivisible parts of the nature of Indian psyche. Subsequently they are manifested in every sphere of existence.

A man is dependent to a great extent on the external human society as well as the society of nature for his existence. Apart from the air that he breathes, the water that he drinks and the sunlight he basks himself in, are greater secrets that never appear to the eyes and that constitutes the question of existence itself. No doubt we do exist, but where? Where have we come from? Whatever be the place from where we are coming, it amounts to saying that we are coming from the surface of the earth. Countries do not exist at all. They are only imaginary boundaries created by man for the purpose of administrative convenience. This earth is a large planet upon the surface of which men are crawling like insects; it is a member of the larger family of the planetary system which is ruled by the great parent of the entire system called the solar system. Thus our family extends through entire galaxies which are the original sources of different systems.

*Swami Krishnanand holds : “Magnetic forces which are undividedly pervading the whole atmosphere taking often the form of what generally people call cosmic rays – which are not actually rays but magnetic energies flowing from outer space, solidify themselves into the visible form of*

*bodily existence of human beings, of trees, of mountains and of the very earth itself.”<sup>2</sup>*

Raja Rao, in *The Meaning of India*, philosophizes the ancient culture of India and the mode of existence of the Indians. In the first essay entitled *The Meaning of India*, Rao views consciousness as the substratum behind man’s vision of looking at things. Talking about the functions of the five senses added by the mind, Rao says that it is the senses alone that go on to make man perceive the world. If the background of the consciousness were not there, there would be no “seeing”. Consciousness is the common factor between the eyes of man and the perception of things in the world. The world, Rao comprehends, exists in duality; in the absence of duality, it would cease to exist. He puts it thus: “It is the undivided consciousness that the mind and the senses seem to divide into subject and object; superimposing on the indivisible, timeless and spaceless – division, time and form.”<sup>3</sup> It is only when the senses and the mind are sacrificed on to the higher plane that one lives in the undivided pure consciousness which is one’s essential nature. In order to highlight the idea of supreme sacrifice, Rao narrates an anecdote from one of the Jataka stories:

Once upon a time, there lived a hare in the jungle. The jungle was surrounded by the mountain on one side and a hamlet on the other. The hare was joined by three companions – a monkey, a jackal and an otter. Then came the holy festive day when gifts were to be given. The otter went by the Ganga to bring seven red fish, the jackal brought from field-watchman milk, meat and a lizard and the monkey brought down a bunch of mangoes from the jungle. But the wise hare’s secret was known only to the god Sakka (Indra). Whereas the hare’s companions offered to the god their respective gifts, the hare, requesting the god to prepare a holy fire, shook himself in

order to take off the beasts in his body fur, and sprang into the holy fire. The fire, instead of scorching him, felt cool like snow. Pleased by the hare, the god Indra scratched the mark of a bunny hare on the moon in order to make his wisdom manifest to the world for all ages to come.<sup>4</sup>

The sacrifice made by the hare expounds the idea that life is a 'yajna' (sacrifice) performed by the individual soul to attain unity with the higher soul through self-abnegation. The external act of sacrifice is a reminder of every object to be poured into the fire of knowledge or the Consciousness within. Referring to the masterly *Purusha-Sukta* in the essay entitled *Look, the Universe is Burning*, Rao illustrates the idea of the entire creation being a 'yajna' of the Universal Being who is not any externalized or projected form with regard to space and time but that which transcends these and is the Individual Supra-essential essence of experience. The Sukta suggests an inwardness of this experience where all objects merge in the Cosmic Person, the Universal Consciousness animating the entire universe. The hymn goes thus:

*sahasrashirsha purushah,  
sahasrakshah sahasrapat,  
sa bhumim vishvatovritva,  
atyatishthat dashangulam.*<sup>5</sup>

(i.e., thousand – headed is the Purusha, thousand eyed and thousand legged. Enveloping the earth from all sides, He transcends it by ten fingers' length.)

The affirmation made by the hymn that all heads, eyes and feet in the creation are of Purusha, helps in developing an attitude of beholding one Complete Person who is governing the entire creation. It naturally points to the fact that the thinker himself is one of the heads

or limbs of the Supreme Purusha. In the chapter entitled *The Significance of the Purusha Sukta* Swami Krishnananda says: “This condition where even to think would be to think as the Purusha thinks . . . . would indeed not be human thinking or living.”<sup>6</sup> This is the ‘divine meditation’ and it must be understood that the Primal man is the ‘seer’, not the ‘seen’ because when everything is He himself, where can there be an object to be seen?

Continuing the central idea of the hymn, Rao translates it thus: The gods . . . wanted . . . to offer a proper sacrifice. And they decided . . . the Primal Man, Purusha, should be the perfect sacrificial animal . . . Thereupon they tied him with durva grass, and laid him out. The sacrifice then began. The oil they poured on the victim was spring, the fuel was summer, and our beautiful autumn, the gifts.<sup>7</sup>

As a result, the Vedas, poetics etc. were born out of it. Finally, Rao says, “Sacrifice itself was sacrificed at sacrifice (*yajnena yajnyamayajanta devah*).”<sup>8</sup> This was the yajna performed by the deities in the beginning of creation. All actions thus, are to be sacrificed at the altar of knowledge, the Consciousness within. Ananda Coomaraswamy says: “Sacrifice thus understood . . . . is no longer a matter of doing specifically sacred things only on particular occasion but of sacrificing all we do and all we are; a matter of sanctification of whatever is done naturally, by a reduction of all activities to their principles.”<sup>9</sup>

Speaking thus on the idea of the Self, Rao moves on to narrate the story of sage Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi from *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. The Supreme Knowledge imparted by the sage to Maitreyi is referred to by Raja Rao through the most celebrated verse:

*na va are patyuh kamaya  
patih priyo bhavati,  
atmanastu kamaya  
patih priyo bhavati.*<sup>10</sup>

(i.e., it is not for the sake of the husband that the husband is dear, but for the sake of the Atman that the husband is dear.)

Further, he quotes: *sarvasya kamaya sarvam priyam bhavati...* For, where there is duality ... one sees the other, one touches the other, one hears the other, one knows the other. But when everything has become one's own self, what is there to see, and what to know. (180-81).<sup>11</sup>

Thus, the Atman becomes the repository of supreme unchangeable bliss and the common factor between the seer and the seen. Pleasure associated with perishable objects is constantly threatened. Although a change in circumstances in life may alter love for the objects, still for atman, love persists because Atman alone exists in the universe.

The essay entitled *The Ultimate Word* in *The Meaning of India* finds Rao quoting from *The Rig Veda* and philosophizing the glory of the Atman. The author also talks about the four states of the Self – the waking state, the dreaming state, the deep sleep state and the Turiya. Quoting from *The Mandukya Upanishad*, he illustrates thus: “*Aumityetadaksharamidam sarvam. Aum, this syllable indeed is all this. Sarvam hyetad brahma, ayamatma brahma, soyamatma chatushpat.* All this is verily Brahman. This self is Brahman. This same self has four quarters.”(169)<sup>12</sup>

Out of these, the first three states are compared to the three syllables of Om – ‘a’ ‘u’ and ‘m’ – ‘akara’ (the vibration of sound ‘a’), ‘ukara’ (the vibration of sound ‘u’ and ‘makara’ (the vibration of sound ‘m’) respectively. The first quarter – ‘a’ is the person in the waking state who perceives the gross material world. The next – ‘u’ is the individual in the dream state. The third – ‘ma’ refers to the deep sleep condition. The final state is the transcendent state of ‘Om’ – beyond the three syllables. It is only a vibration of being, neither a state of sound, nor any material content in its wake. All sounds and vibrations merge in this soundless state of ‘Pranava’ or Om.

Om or ‘naad’ is the source of all sounds. It is believed that when creation came into being, the ‘naad’ was there – a humming sound which existed in the atmosphere. This sound, designated as Om was the ‘first manifestation of the Absolute. Lord Krishna equates Om to the Omnipresent Lord:

*om tatsaditi nirdesho  
brahmanastrividhah smritah  
brahmanastena vedashcha  
yagyashcha vihitah pura.*<sup>13</sup>

i.e., “Om Tat Sat”: this has been declared to be the triple designation of Brahman. By that were created formerly, the Brahmanas, the Vedas and the sacrifices.

Rao mentions the four states of *vak* - the word, i.e., *vaikhari* – the spoken word, *madhyama* – between the speech and mental formulation, *pashyanti* – the seen but not formulated, and finally, the *para vak* – The ultimate word, the silence beyond silence, the origin and the end of the phoneme. The purport behind it is to evoke the

eternal aspect of the word. In the essay entitled *The Writer and the Word*, giving the example of the word 'Rama', Rao says that it is not merely 'ra' added to 'ma' but something beyond both the sounds which provides it the status of a word. Enunciated in a correct manner the speaker is able to convey the same feeling to the listener in which he wants it to be understood. Right communication is possible only when the hearer has the eternal part awakened in him to feel the same thing as the speaker experiences. Rao opines that a man must be an 'upasaka' of the word and enjoy himself in himself in order to evoke the eternal aspect of the sound. In his own words:

We all... would like to have a language that will mean the same thing and for all time. It is just the same way that you feel you will live for ever, though your life span might be seventy or eighty years. The feel that you are everlasting demands that everything be everlasting. Hence the demand that the word be eternal. If man is eternal, so is the word. (154)<sup>14</sup>

Hence, be it the state of Turiya or Para Vak, man, crossing the initial stages, must strive to go back to the eternal aspect of the word or sound.

Questions like – What is soul? Is it apart from the body? What becomes of the soul after death? What is the purpose of human life? – have been ringing in the minds of men since time immemorial.

*The Svetaswatara Upanishad queries thus:  
kim karanam brahma kutah sma jaataah  
jivama kena kva cha sampratishtha  
adhishthitaah kena sukhetareshu  
vartamahe brahmavido vyavastham.*<sup>15</sup>

i.e., what is the (Ultimate) cause? Is it Brahman? Wherefrom are we born? What sustains us? And where do we go? O you, the knowers of Brahman, tell us at whose command we abide here, whether in pain or pleasure.

Rao agrees with the fact that '*prakriti*' is an illusory aspect of Brahman. God is only a witness – unconcerned and unattached. Prakriti derives its power of action from the proximity of Iswara. It constitutes of three *gunas* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. An equilibrium between these properties is the state called '*prakritilaya*'. But this is not the final dissolution into the Absolute. It is only a process of evolution. The Vedanta proclaims that in the beginning, there existed neither being nor 'non-being' but there was an indescribable something called darkness. Even this darkness would have existence for its basis because without it, even darkness would not exist. Sage Patanjali also indicates in his aphorisms that '*avyakta*' or the manifest prakriti is the cause of creation. But this is not independent in itself. It is purely an instrument in the hands of Brahman. Quoting from Bhartrihari's *Vakyapadiya*, Rao illustrates Brahman as the one:

... who is without beginning or end, whose very essence is the Word (sabda), who is the cause of the manifested phonemes, who appears as the object from whom the creation of the world (seems to) proceed. Brahman is called Phoneme (akshara) because it is the cause of the Phoneme. (162)<sup>16</sup>



Patanjali says in his *Yoga Sutras*:  
*tasya vachakah pranavah.*(37)<sup>17</sup>

(Om is name of ultimate reality. It is an inarticulate universalized vibration. Om is to be chanted for the sake of the removal of the dross accumulated in psyche in the form of impressions of past karmas).

*The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* also puts it thus:

In the beginning there was  
only the self. Looking around,  
he saw nothing else than the self.  
He first said "I am". Therefore arose  
the name I. (162)<sup>18</sup>

The idea of creation is well expounded in The Nasadiya Sukta of the *Rig Veda*:

*nasadasit no sadasit tadanim  
nasid-rajo no vyoma paro yat,  
kimavarivah kuha kasya sharman ambhah  
kim-asit gahanam gabhiram.*<sup>19</sup>

(Before creation there was neither being nor non-being, neither space nor that which is beyond space. What was there was a cover. Where was it? Was there any enjoyment? Were there the deep unfathomable water?) (307)<sup>20</sup>

The Sukta further questions as to whence the creation came into being; whether He who is the supporter and the eternal witness of

this creation Himself knows it or not? –*yo asyadhyakshah parama vyoman tso anga veda yadi van a veda.*<sup>21</sup>

According to Rao, man's life upon earth is a continuous series of *samskaras*. Man is born to evolve in the vicinity of Brahman and lead his life as a 'sadhaka' and retreat his life from 'Becoming' to 'Being'. In his own words:

But I am here. Every moment  
I make is *samskara*, ritual; every  
statement I make the sanctifying  
word, mantra. (160)<sup>22</sup>

According to Swami Krishnananda, since the goal of life is a Supreme Aloneness known as *Kaivalya*, and God Himself is alone to Himself, spiritual practice of *Sadhana* in the direction of the attainment of Supreme Aloneness also consists of a development of a kind of aloneness in our own selves. Although, a man is conscious of the purpose of his existence and the nature of the destiny ahead, yet he must not forget that awareness is different from possession. To attain bliss immense effort is required of any human being towards the realization of the great purpose of existence. (13)<sup>23</sup> As the Supreme Being is spaceless, its experience ought to be timeless, i.e. an instantaneous experience which is altogether different from a simultaneity of temporal events.

Such lofty thoughts, feelings and *samskaras* are the metaphysics of India. In the author's view, India is not a "country", it is not a "climate", it is not a geographical local on the map of the world. Rao opines that – India is a "perspective", a "mood". It is a

“centre of awareness wherein one's self dips again and again into the hearth of Agni, as the sacrifice is made.” (18)<sup>24</sup>

Let us conclude in the words of Raja Rao :

If there were no India, with the seven seas to the south and the white-swan Himalaya to the north, if India did not have the holy Ganga and the Cape of the Virgin Goddess (Kanya Kumari), if India were not the land of the elephant and the monkey-world, of parakeets and peacocks, and of the saintly cobra – if India did not have the diamonds of Golconda and the pearls of Coromandel, if India did not possess muslin fine “as a cloud” or spice holy, rich as sandal, with cardamom, cinnamon, aloes, musk – if India were not the land of sadhus . . ., if India were not the country of Asoka or Bhoja Raja, Vikramaditya or Akbar Padishah, India would still be. (17)<sup>25</sup>

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Saurabh Kumar Singh

**Diasporic Conflict and Homeland Reality:  
A Study of Karnad's *Wedding Album***

In recent years one of the most challenging areas of research in the field of English and Cultural studies has been the study of diaspora. The word 'diaspora' derives from the Greek, meaning 'to disperse'. Diaspora is simply the displacement of a community culture into another geographical and cultural region. Its culture is deeply marked by migration, immigration, and exile. Diaspora can be the voluntary or the forced movements of peoples from their homelands into new regions. Vijay Mishra, noted critic, provides following possible definitions of diaspora:

1. Relatively homogenous, displaced communities brought to serve the Empire (slave, contract, indentured, etc.) coexisting with indigenous/other races with markedly ambivalent and contradictory relationship with the motherland(s). Hence the Indian diasporas of South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Malaysia; the Chinese diasporas of Malaysia, Indonesia. Linked to high classical capitalism.

2. Emerging new diasporas based on free migration and linked to late capitalism: post-war South Asian, Chinese, Arab, Korean communities in Britain, Europe, America, Canada, Australia.
3. Any group of migrants that sees itself on the periphery of power, or excluded from sharing power (Mishra, 1-2).

Having arrived in a new geographical and cultural context, they negotiate two cultures, their own and new one. This diasporic culture is primarily mixed and an amalgamation of two cultures. In this connection Robin Cohen says that diaspora works as communities living together in one country who ‘acknowledge that “the old country”’ a notion often buried deep in language, religion, custom or folklore’ always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions. . . a member’s adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link with their past migration history and a sense of co-ethnicity with others of a similar background’ (2001:ix).

The whole of diasporic writing mainly captures two invariables of their experiences: exile and homeland. All diasporic writings continuously try to make negotiations between these two poles. The writings of these writers undertake two moves, one temporal, and one spatial. Meena Alexander calls it, “writing in search of a homeland” (1993: 4). The temporal move involves, as Pramod K. Nayar puts it, the activity of looking back into past (analepsis) and looking forward at the future (prolepsis). Analepsis captures the scenes of negotiation with retreating history, past, traditions, and customs. It mainly involves the literary themes of nostalgia, memory, and reclamation. On the other hand prolepsis involves the phenomenon of writer’s constant engagement with looking into future for new vistas and new chances.

It produces the themes of the ethics of work, survival, and cultural assimilation. The spatial move involves a de-territorialization and a re-territorialization connected by journeys/travels. De-territorialization is the loss of territory: geographical and cultural both. This loss of the territory is almost accompanied by the gain of new ones. To put it in another way: dislocation *from* is followed by a relocation *to*. Thus diasporic literature's dealings with space move between 'home' and 'foreign country', between the similar and the strange, the old and the new (Nayar, 188-89).

How does diasporic (Indian) consciousness relate itself to its homeland or culture? In what way diasporas have been constructing homelands? It seems that they do it in accordance to their needs and compulsions. If we see the case of older diaspora, we without any fail perceive a break with their motherland. This break nevertheless was not voluntary but instead it was determined by the distances between motherland and the new diasporic settlement. The distance was both physical as well as psychological. It was so vast that the motherland remained frozen in the diasporic imagination as a sort of a sacred site or symbol, almost like an idol of memory. The poverty of homeland which caused the diaspora was forgotten with the feeling that it was home, a place where the present alienation of the diasporic person did not exit. Here we find the renewal of an emotional or spiritual feeling. In this connection Vijay Mishra writes:

Their homeland is a series of objects, fragments of narratives that they keep in their heads or in their suitcases. Like hawkers they can reconstitute their lives through the contents of their knapsacks: a Ganapati icon, a dog-eared copy of the *Gita* or the *Quran*, an old sari or other *deshi* outfit, a photograph of a pilgrimage or, in modern times, a videocassette of the latest hit from the home country (Mishra, 68).

On the other hand, the new diaspora has unprecedented access to its motherland/homeland by virtue of its privileged Non-Resident Indian status. As we know that these are not forced by any internal agency to leave the motherland, these have chosen to relocate themselves in big metropolitan centres chiefly for monetary gains. The texts of new diaspora not only describe the motherland/homeland, but at the same time also justify why it has to be left behind. The economic compulsions make their narrative elegiac in tone. They construct the motherland as a site of darkness, confusion, and violence. And that becomes their main justification behind their leaving of homeland (hopeless and doomed country which must be rejected). Certainly this is very harmful to nationalistic ideas. In this connection Makarand Paranjape rightly observes:

Diasporic representations of India can be harmful and misleading in at least two related ways. First, they might end up usurping the space which native self-representations are striving to find in the international literary market place. Secondly, they may contribute to a continuing “colonization” of the Indian psyche by pandering to Western market-tastes which prefer to see India in a negative light. Both these dangers arise not necessarily from a design on the part of the expatriates to “sell” India, though the latter possibility can not be dismissed so easily. Rather, they are born out of the peculiar cultural politics of the diaspora (Paranjape, 19).

Hence the relationship between diaspora and homeland is very complex and at the same time very reciprocal. In this connection the views of Peter van Der veer are relevant: “The theme of belonging opposes rootedness to uprootedness, establishment to marginality. The theme of longing harps on the desire for change and movement, but relates this to the enigma of arrival, which brings a similar desire to return to what one has left” (Veer, : 4).



To put it in another way, a nation needs a diaspora to reaffirm its own sense of rootedness, while the diasporic peoples who did not feel like Indian in India may suddenly discover his Indianness as a diasporan. Or again in the words of van der Veer, "Those who do not think of themselves Indians before migration become Indians in diaspora" (7).

At this crucial juncture it becomes very crystal clear that if, at all, a nation needs a diaspora to reaffirm its identity; a diaspora which must write about its own homeland, then at the same time there is an urgent need of a strong homeland which must write to diaspora about its homeland reality. Certainly the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland is very complex, ambivalent, and, more than often, dialectical relationship with one another. And this relationship which is context specific may powerfully be characterized by both confluence and conflict of interests (Paranjape, *In Diaspora* : 12-3).

Girish Karnad in his latest play *Wedding Album* takes up an issue which is at the centre of every Indian middle class family: arrange marriage of a girl to suitable expat boy which in turn so fraught with anxiety that it has provided the background for many tele-serials and commercial films. In Indian cultural ethos wedding is not simply a simple occasion for party, dance and dinner. Instead, a typical Indian wedding is expected to bring about the notion of solidarity two families and clans, a sort of mutual concern. Ironically the whole affairs of arranged marriage, in its bosom contain many anxieties, riddles, confusions and resentments. Here we are made aware of a stark and naked truth that the forces raging on the global level strongly exert their presence and bring about some new apprehensions, tensions and worries to this holy performance of Hindu marriage. Here we without any fail notice the wide gap between older generation and

younger generation which in turn make former one feel defunct in the new technological scenario. They fail to cope with new powerful scientific revolutions such as computer, internet, chat, webcam, video recording and etc. If old generation is not feeling at ease in amidst these revolutions, the younger generation is extraordinarily buffeted by various aspirations to easy name, fame, prosperity, notion of sexual liberation, dreams and phantasms. Yet it has acquired on ironical twist in it: the above mentioned aspirations and desires are ardently desired but vaguely grasped or least realized. Not only this, they also bring about a plethora of nightmares as they come/float all the way from the other side of the globe (West). These hankerings, desires and aspirations are earnestly lacking spiritual elements in them which could justify and give the life a new turn and valid meaning.

*Wedding Album's* central narrative is a thread in which we encounter the combination of various elements central to any Hindu marriage. This play very beautifully encompasses the caste, class, and age related behavior, sexual and conjugal issues, chastity, obedience, commerce and authority, attitudes of selfishness and sacrifice. Apparently it gives us the illusion of a safe, simple, and very real account of a pending marriage in a middle-class, Karnataka based Saraswata family – the Nadkarnis – *Wedding Album* works as modern myth whose condensed logic straddles both the real and the techsimulated world of today, to help us confront our own mixed-up amoral, craven, unhappy selves (Srinivasan, ix). In this play Karnad explores the traditional Indian Wedding in a globalized, technologically advanced India. Very consciously Girish Karnad locates the most of the happenings of the play in a dreadfully familial space i.e. Nadkarni's living room. He beautifully exploits the private women's spaces – the kitchen, the courtyard and inner sleeping quarters. But to pontificate his views more clearly regarding this new technological India, he shifts

the place of action to the places like corporate world, commercial space of the television production studio, the Internet Café, and the restaurant. He also talks about some new modern Indian domestic concerns regarding birth registration, passport and visa office, the city street, airport and market and the expat Hindu homes in USA and Australia which are connected to all or some of the sites of action through phone, computer, aeroplane, car and mobile communication. On the surface it is a familiar picture- a joyful event when members of the clan come together to celebrate and reaffirm loyalties, but behind the picture perfect smiles, simmer long suppressed suspicions, jealousies, frustrations and aggressions.

The play deals with a normal urban middle- class family: a daughter (Hema) who lives abroad with her professional husband, a brother (Rohit) who is a software designer, a younger daughter (Vidula) happy enough to marry a suitable boy (Ashwin Panje) from the US she has never met, and then, of course, there is the doting mother and the loyal cook. A family, which is educated, liberal, and modern. Each snapshot shows its members frozen in a projection of respectability, but each figure has a double image, with the shadow of a hidden life. Now let me discuss about the basic concern of my paper i.e. diasporic conflict and homeland reality, well conceived and presented by a sensitive dramatist like Girish Karnad. Unlike other creative writers like Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Bharati Mukherjee and several others who depict the diasporic consciousness in the genre of novel, Karnad being a playwright presents his unique vision in the powerful genre of drama. The diasporic man in this play, Ashwin, is a well settled youth in United States of America “a land of opportunity. God’s own country” (Karnad, 80). When he went to USA to seek his future he had only two assets: his brain and his charm. In due course of time he becomes rich. He says; “In the US, I have been a success beyond my wild

expectations. Beyond anyone's wildest dreams" (ibid). But this success does not lure/trap him anymore. Something is missing there. He has drunk the life to its lees. His life has been of physical/worldly celebrations. He has lived most of his life amidst girlfriends, affairs, mistresses, and several one night stands. He has been performing brilliantly on the public stage of glamour and success (worldly), and social connection. In all the possible ways he has been cherishing, nourishing and devouring all the physical pleasures/West. But to this diasporic man above stated things have somewhat been confined to the outer cells of body. They have been merely sustenance for the outer skin of body. They have no values at all. They are futile and of no use. They are bereft of any living meaning. So far, Western society has been privileging and promoting material values above religion and religious values. Spiritual values have been sacrificed on the altar of material aspects of life. No spiritual moorings. This is really strangling the West. They are perpetually drawn to a world which is constantly threatened by a Godless and amoral world. Certainly it has disastrous effects on the soul like Ashwin who hails from a country which is almost opposite to the ideals of West. Now he has no option left except delving deep into himself. Who is he? Where is he? The only hope is homeland (India and true Hinduism). Unlike West, India has an ancient civilization, a country which is a living plethora and storehouse of wisdom and insight. But! Is it the same India in which we are living now? No. By now India should have been the spiritual leader of the whole universe. We are the earliest to evolve the idea of universal brotherhood (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam) which was based on true love and affection among all mankind. But today's Globalization is motivated by pure economic compulsions. There is no place for genuine values and principles. There is no hope for spiritual awakening. We too are deeply affected by this economic crusade. Now homeland reality is entirely different. As Ashwin remarks:

Again darkness. All our ancient culture, our spiritualism, our heritage .Everything had been remoulded to fit the market demand. Behind all our spiritual abracadabra, we had bitched our star, and our hope, to global capitalism. Geeta yajnas, Yogic techniques, upanishadic sermons. Systems assembled out of a grab-bag of trendy brandnames. Gift-wrapped in synthetic saffron. The darkness of our souls illuminated with neon lights and stroboscopes. India had become the Walmart of spirituality (Ashwin, 81).

But the situation is not too worst. Still this world can be changed. Mankind can adopt altogether a different path to redeem itself of all its sins. There is only One solution. India can do it. Hinduism has got all the possibilities to perform this miracle. As Ashwin puts it:

Gradually%and mind you, it has required a lot of painful soulsearching%yes even painfully, I have realized that Hinduism can indeed save the world from moral chaos, but not through this sort of branded spirituality. No dial-a-solution philosophy is going to help the world. We have to look into our hearts, and discover our ancient values afresh. Begin at the beginning (Ashwin, 81).

And for this great undertaking he wants someone from India's small place like Dharwad which he believes to be innocent and pure, totally far from madding crowd of capitalism, market and globalization. And above all, no man, only woman. Someone like Vidula who carries within her the essence of true Hindu spirituality, which treats Women as Mother, Wife, and Daughter. Womanhood as the most sacred ideal. Like West, it does not treat woman merely as a commodity, an object to fulfill sexual instincts. But it does not mean that West does not have

any value left. Still we can learn efficiency and planning from it. But the main idea is not to consider the union between two merely a marriage but a mission. Ashwin wants Vidula to be his perfect partner in transporting the rain of spirituality to the wastelanders i.e. west to save it. This is the sheer height of the theory that those who do not consider themselves as an Indian in India suddenly transforms into Indian. It also boosts up the principle that in order to justify the validity and importance of true nation, one always needs a diaspora to affirm and reaffirm its (nation) rootedness to its deep and ancient cultural/spiritual heritage and civilization.

But as Ashwin has pointed out earlier that Indian culture is being polluted by this advertised form of Hindu spirituality and small town like Dharwad has been able to retain its cultural sanctity, it is not as he thinks it to be. The Western snake of capitalist market and technological revolution has made its way into the very texture of our small cities, and as a result they are losing their innocence. The homeland reality is changed drastically. So is the case of Dharwad and small town girl Vidula who is going to be the spiritual ambassador to the rest of the world. She is no better than any other mixed up, frustrated, unhappy, Hindu girl. She is virtually 'timid' as her mother thinks. But she has an altogether different personality and a secret life to lead. Whether willingly submitting herself as Kuchla the Jezebel to the disembodied randy voice of Swami Ananga Nath the Bodyless, in a darkened Cyber Café, or transmuting her guilt at being found out into hysterical rage, and bitterly screaming 'sexual harassment' to make her moral tormentors run away from the scene. She is not 'innocent' or 'timid'. She has inculcated the guts to find herself a surrogate Swami of virtual flesh and blood to satiate her physical needs. But this resource is not fixed or permanent forever. It is VIRTUAL. The pleasure she seeks in her secret, enchanted and erotic world can after all be served

not only on server but also through real man and Hindu marriage which in turn intend to achieve some higher goals and visions. And she is ready to transform her past life to carry out the responsibility bestowed on her.

Thus we see that the relationship between diaspora and homeland has a complex, ambivalent, and often dialectical relationship with each other. The unreal homeland created by diasporic imagination (Ashwin) must be incorporated with real flesh and blood because this will ensure the survival of diasporic self and at the same time homeland too should be depicted in its true perspective. This is what Girish Karnad performing here. He is letting us know the crucial dimensions related to this relationship between diaspora and homeland. Till today very few have been written in academic world regarding the depiction of homeland by the homelander. Girish Karnad, here, is clearing the misty consciousness of those who have left the homeland and settled elsewhere. He is not only asking the diasporic consciousness to change the fixed notion regarding homeland but also asking them to view the homeland in altered capitalist/globalized world view. And at the same time homeland needs to look back into the mirror of the past to recognize its true worth as far as cultural richness and deep rooted spirituality is concerned. An honest attempt must be made to promulgate the real identity of India (homeland) not merely as a country but as a set of living embodiment of those values and ideals which this world needs at most. In this connection Raja Rao makes a very valid and pertinent statement that "India is not a country (*desa*), it is a perspective (*darsana*)" (1996: 17). Referring to this phenomenon Rushdie makes a similar announcement that he will, "create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind" (Rushdie, 10).

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Sunita Siroha

**Making It New:  
Cultural Displacement in *The Shadow Lines***

The publication of *The Shadow Lines* in 1988 created a new dimension in the history of Indian English fiction. Amitav Ghosh's intensive training in historical and anthropological research did a remaking of the social analysis and one of the consequences of this research is the paradigm shift in writing a novel which can be seen as a very powerful subversion of what Sara Suleri has called "the rhetoric of English India."<sup>1</sup> The opening sentence of *The Shadow Lines* indicates this subversion in totality: "In 1939, thirteen years before I was born, my father's aunt, Mayadebi, went to England with her husband and her son, Tridib."<sup>2</sup> The fact of the matter is that *The Shadow Lines* is designed to unmask the terrifying suppressed memories so that an attempt may be made to identify the thwarting tendencies of exposing the seamless narrative which is composed of cultural and national identity. Ghosh's creative imagination deals with the post colonial as well as diasporic issues. The burden of India's colonial past seems to haunt it. That is why the questioning mode becomes almost a leit motif of the novel – "Don't you remember?" Throwing light on the thematic concern of the novel, Amitav Ghosh writes: "...*The Shadow Lines*... became a book not about any event

but about the meaning of such events and their effects on the individuals who live through them. . . I had to resolve a dilemma, between being a writer and being a citizen."<sup>3</sup> That is why the dilemma serves as a trigger to his creative imagination and the narrator's experience becomes larger than life and tends to border on a subaltern land.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent has been a subject of political, literary and cultural debate. The partition itself and its aftermath left indelible scars on the Indian psyche. The sinister forces of casteism, regionalism, subregionalism, fundamentalism, linguism played havoc and criminal riots destabilised the forces of peace, tolerance and non-violence. A substantial kind of intolerance and persecution prevailed. The criminal forces saw to it that the fabric of social harmony would be torn into fragments. Even women and children were made the target of communal fury and the widespread communal violence stirred the creative imagination of Indo-Anglian novelists. That is why novelists like Khushwant Singh (*Train to Pakistan*), Bhisham Sahni (*Tamas*), and Chaman Nahal (*Azadi*) creatively handled the subject of partition in their own individual way. The partition, in fact, was a sub-continental trauma which has weighed heavily on Ghosh's imagination. Suvir Kaul has a point when he says that:

The pressure of this question – do you remember – generates the form of the novel: its partial answers, its digressions, its looping, non-linear, wide-ranging narrative technique. . . for *The Shadow Lines* is an archaeology of silence, a slow brushing away of some of the cobwebs of modern Indian memory, a repeated return to those absences and fissures that mark the sites of personal and national trauma.<sup>4</sup>

The creative pressure of this question prompts a personal crisis for characters like Mrs. Price, her daughter Tridib, and his grand father etc. Let it be said here at the outset that the historical researcher in Ghosh plays a very significant role in determining the contours of *The Shadow Lines*. At the outset the novel appears to be a novel of history but with Ghosh the definition of history changes. The authority of the novelist is controlled by the official custodian of truth and conscience, as Joseph Conrad puts it.

Judged from the post-colonial angle, *The Shadow Lines* is not simply a story of one young man's coming of age. Ghosh is primarily concerned with the mutual interaction of space and time and throughout the novel one finds a play of psychological sophistication as a catalyst agent. In her book *A Critique of Post-Colonial Reason* Gyatri Spivak argues: "What is the fate of the historians' informant?" She goes on to elaborate: "as every undergraduate historian knows, historical knowledge can't be established on single cases... The anxiety of so-called inter-disciplinary work is that one computes with the methodological training of one discipline, however transformed."<sup>5</sup> This reminds us of the age-old controversy between fiction and history/historical fiction and realistic fiction and what Henry James calls the solidity of specification/the air of reality and the balloon of experience. As early as 1884 James wrote that the "novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life,"<sup>6</sup> he took a position which distinguishes him at once from the realist as well as the naturalist. He may say that "as the picture is reality, so the novel is history,"<sup>7</sup> but that was only to save the novelist from "betrayal" of his "sacred office." James wanted to make it very clear that the novelist's task is not only to make-believe, that, in fact, he was in no way "less occupied in looking for the truth ...than the historian."<sup>8</sup> In its vital and comprehensive sense, it should be clear that the novel is not history,

nor is a novelist a historian. It is in this sense that Amitav Ghosh transforms his knowledge of history into something which is used creatively to convert it into a great work of art. The selection and placing of historical/ cultural events, in his case, becomes the judgments, which are primarily related to the post-colonial dilemma being faced by the globalized world.

The postcolonial critics particularly Fredric Jameson, Hayden White and Dominick LaCapra are also concerned with the problem of justifying the use of historical material for cultural creativity. These critics have extensively analyzed the relevance of archival material and its use in a nostalgic manner. Hayden White of course has questioned the relevance of the archives/recorded history. He has systematically argued that literary theorists have discovered the key to historical understanding by recognizing that language is the prime “instrument of meditation between the consciousness and the world that consciousness inhabits.”<sup>9</sup> Such questions pertaining to history/recorded history, its nostalgic use/unreliable memory have been an integral part of the theoretical deliberations of novelists like Henry James, R.L. Stevenson, Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad. It is true that they were novelists and not literary theorists but the fact remains that their theoretical assumptions paved the way for the post-colonial concept of history and its use for colonial and post colonial discussions. This becomes important in the case of Amitav Ghosh in the sense that his deep interest in sociology, anthropology and history enables him to uncover the metaphoric and metaphysical burden of human condition prevalent in the post colonial world.

A critical reading of *The Shadow Lines* clearly shows that the novelist takes up the problems of diaspora of East Pakistan. Moreover, the title of the novel alludes to one of the important texts of colonialism, Joseph Conrad’s novella *The Shadow Line* (1971). In

the preface to this story Conrad elaborates that an invisible line divides youth from maturity. The protagonist of the novel is a young naval officer. He is given his first command of a ship in South East Asia with specific orders to return it to London. The naval officer has to pass through the agony of the difficult circumstances in crossing back from orient to the west. However, he successfully crosses the shadow line into maturity. The fact of the matter is that Conrad with an artistic stroke suggests how this shadow line super-imposes in a highly complicated manner on the dichotomy between Europe and the Orient. On the other hand Amitav Ghosh complicates this “classical mapping of the world into east and west by dividing his novel into two parts – “Going Away” and “Coming Home.” The very concept of Going Away and Coming Home determines the contours of the novelist’s penetrating imagination. The last paragraph of “Going Away” is particularly crucial to understand the subtle nuances of this dichotomy:

I lay on my back staring up at the ceiling, and as the hours passed, I saw Ila again and again as she was when she stepped out of that car at Gole Park, eighteen years ago; on that morning when she wrenched me into adulthood by demonstrating for the first time, and forever, the inequality of our needs. And when she did not come back to the cellar that night, I knew she had taken my life hostage yet again; I knew that a part of my life as a human being had ceased: that I no longer existed, but as a chronicle. (112)

On the other hand, the ending of the novel suggests quite the opposite:

I used to think so too, she said. I thought I’d killed him. I used to think: perhaps he wouldn’t have got out of that car if I hadn’t made him, if I’d understood what I was doing. I was

safe you see – I could have gone right into that mob, and they wouldn't have touched me, an English memsahib, but he, he must have known he was going to die. For years I was arrogant enough to think I owed him his life. But I know I didn't kill him; I couldn't have if I wanted. He gave himself up; it was a sacrifice. I know I can't understand it, I know I mustn't try, for any real sacrifice is a mystery.

She touched my face gently, with her fingertips, and said: why don't you stay here tonight? – I'll come to airport with you tomorrow morning.

I stayed, and when we lay in each other's arms quietly, in the night I could tell that she was glad, and I was glad too and grateful, for the glimpse she had given me of a final redemptive mystery. (252)

The irony is that his characters in the novel keep on coming and going in different directions. And the narrator is obliged to pose a highly relevant question. What is home? Is there such a thing as a discreet homeland? Can it be a separate identity apart from one's experiences? Is it worthwhile to ponder over the issue in a detached manner? These questions loom large. In a way they haunt the narrator's mind. One may find the climax in the narrator's return visit to the family home in Dhaka in 1964. But the return visit is surrounded by irony – “The madness of riot is a pathological inversion” and the edge of irony becomes sharper:

By the end of January 1964 the riots had faded away from the pages of the newspapers, disappeared from the collective imagination of 'responsible opinion', vanished without leaving

a trace in the histories and bookshelves. They had dropped out of memory into the crater of a volcano of silence. (203)

Moreover the narrator's grandmother wants to bring her uncle back from Pakistan, the land of their Muslim enemies, to her home in Calcutta. She is also nostalgic for the classical conception of culture. She is also highly critical of the narrator's cousin Ila for living in England.

The question of mixing with people belonging to different nationalities crops up very prominently in the novel. Side by side the question of creating artificial borders within a country and the division of country into different nations docks the imagination of the narrator. Ghosh seems to question the very forces of nationalism when the narrator celebrates "that individual's sanity that binds people to each other independently of their governments." Moreover, the narrator looks at Tridib's atlas and finds himself completely awestruck. The main burden of "Coming Home" suggests that all is not well in the postcolonial world where different theories of nationalism criss cross each other and the very idea of free spirit seems to be marginalised. The disjunction between national boundaries, human experience and memory are clearly reflected when individuals are overpowered by the "fear of the violence of the state" (204). It is a fact that historical events create great divisions which keep on haunting nations and individuals for all times to come. That is why towards the end of the novel the narrator is conscious of the cultural and cognitive space:

I was struck with wonder that there had really been a time, not so long ago, when people, sensible people, of good intention, had thought that all maps were the same, that there was a special enchantment in lines; I had to remind myself that they were not to be blamed for believing that there was



something admirable in moving violence to the borders and dealing with it through science and factories, for that was the pattern of the world. They had drawn their borders, believing in that pattern, in the enchantment of lines, hoping perhaps that once they had etched their borders upon the map, the two bits of land would sail away from each other like the shifting tectonic plates of the prehistoric Gondwanaland. What had they felt, I wondered, when they discovered that they had created not a separation, but a yet-undiscovered irony – the irony that killed Tridib: the simple fact that there had never been a moment in the four-thousand-year-old history of that map, when the places we know as Dhaka and Calcutta were more closely bound to each other than after they had drawn their lines – so closely that I, in Calcutta, had only to look into the mirror to be in Dhaka; a moment when each city was the inverted image of the other, locked into an irreversible symmetry by the line that was to set us free – our looking-glass border.(233)

*The Shadow Lines* in fact are used to provide the glimpse of a “final redemptive mystery”. By using innovative technical methods Ghosh is at once able to translate personal experiences and public events in a highly readable novel which opens new vistas of human experiences including the fluidity of our own imaginations.

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<sup>1</sup>See Sara Sulri, *The Rhetoric of English India*. (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2006), 13.

<sup>2</sup>Amitav Ghosh, *The Shadow Lines* (Delhi: Ravi Dayal, 1988)

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<sup>3</sup>Amitav Ghosh, "The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi," *The Imam and the Indian: Prose Pieces* (Delhi: Ravi Dayal and Permanent Black, 2002) 60-61.

<sup>4</sup>Suvir Kaul, 'Separation Anxiety: Growing Up. Inter/National in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*'. *Oxford Literary Review*, 16.1-2 (1994) 125-45.

<sup>5</sup>Gayatri Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward A History of the Vanishing Present*. (Cambridge, Mass/London: Harvard University Press, 1999) 198.

<sup>6</sup>Henry James, *Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. Morris Shapira (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968) 291.

<sup>7</sup>Henry James, 83.

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Aruna Sharma & Rinki Verma

**Social Morality in *The God of Small Things***

The Post-Modern age has witnessed so many socio-political upheavals that the question of raising social morality has become a sensitive and controversial issue. Time and social environment have become the decisive factors in demarcating the boundary line between moral and immoral issues in these days. People tacitly accept the falling standard of morality as a sign of a deep social malady of the age. This tendency is so prevalent that morally degraded but materially well-off people are publicly venerated. No doubt the conscientious people inwardly suffer a great deal. It is both hazardous and sensitive to raise the question of social morality in Arundhati Roy's Novel *The God of Small Things*. The novelist takes up the cudgels for the Indian Family ethos and value systems.

As the novelist deals with the sensitive issues of family and private life, readers may knit their brows pointedly for her liberal handling of the moral questions of our present society. The novelist's role as a creative writer certainly puts her in a critical situation. We should remember that by and large as the writers are the product of their own times, they have inevitably some social commitments. For the sake of morality, the social problems Arundhati Roy focuses in her book cannot simply be waved aside as these are rooted in our modern

life. Our tradition and culture prohibit us to talk about immoral issues publicly because of an orthodox society.

Social morality strongly linked with individual Psychology can be traced back, in the novel, to the life of Pappachi, an entomologist employed in the Central Government Service. Many things went wrong with him because of his eccentric behaviour and he lost control over family life. He became emotionally estranged from his family and thus, lost grip over the bond of relationship as they pay least attention to him. Defect in his personal life can be traced back to his urge for social recognition in his official capacity for the discovery of a species of moth which is nipped in the bud. The fruit of his findings was enjoyed by someone junior to his rank and position in service. Although the mistake was rectified later on, yet by that time, Pappachi was already retired from Government service without any laurel. His life's greatest setback was not to get the moth named after him. Talented people and men of genius are being deprived of their social recognition and this has given rise to heavy brain-drain in our country.

Non-recognition of his genius for scientific discovery gave Pappachi a psychological setback and created irregular 'black moods' in him. He became Priggish, short tempered and starts ill-treating his wife: So every member of his family was vexed with him. Instead of Sympathy and respect he received everyone's scorn. Abberations of mind took in him such a turn that he became jealous of his wife's youth and bodily charm. His invectives and tirades against his wife were couched in the language of sexual jealousy. Wife-beating is a regular Phenomena in our society and Pappachi resorted to this evil practice. His retirement from Government Service puts a sudden end to his daughter, Ammu's hope for higher education. She had just passed the school stage. No effort was made for her college education whereas

Chacko, the son received enough encouragement and financial support for higher education, even to carry out research studies in a foreign country. Pappachi was not prepared to pay a handsome dowry for Ammu's marriage. Being bored with her life in the village, she escaped her parental control. This is a usual ruse grown up girls adopt when they find no other avenues to enjoy their life. Ammu left for Calcutta with a plea to spend a few days with one of her distant aunts. In a wedding reception she came across a young handsome man and gradually fell in love at first sight. Even she went to the extent of, without informing her parents, got married with him hurriedly in church. No doubt, her romantic adventure and the bold step land her in hot water. She discovered to her utter surprise that her uneducated husband worked in a tea plantation not in an executive post in Assam. Moreover when she lead a smart life in the plantation colony with her husband and runs after pleasure; her fashionable dress and affected manners roused the worker's eyebrows.

Ammu's dreams were shattered to pieces and soon she got disillusioned when she knew her husband to be a full-blown alcoholic. His usual habit and pleasure was to swindle her. Increasing rift and use of falsehood widened the distance between the couple. Alcoholism was a social evil which disrupts Ammu's family life. When she was about to deliver twins in a hospital, her husband was so callous that he was found fast a sleep in the corridor of the hospital in an inebriated state. She found in him lack of any concern for her and the children. So she became fed up with his alcoholic stupor and came back to her parents' house Ayemenem with her children and remained there as an unwelcome guest.

Not only Ammu suffered for her wrong choice of a partner, Chacko's (her brother's) life, too, was governed by personal whims and caprices

as far as choosing of a life partner is concerned, while carrying out research studies, he came across a waitress named Margaret in a café and makes all sorts of ludicrous efforts to please her. They gradually came closer to each other and subsequently decide to marry for strong reasons despite their divergent temperaments. Probably no marriage vows were made at the time of their marriage. Chacko liked Margaret for not wanting to look after him and she hated to cater to a man's needs. A hasty and ill-sorted marriage as in Ammu's life worked out to be fatal. His negligence of research studies deprived him of the Rhodes scholarship in Oxford. Margaret's loyalty to her husband weakened as he became financially dependent on her. She fell in love with a friend of her brother at time while the first phase of pregnancy increased her bodily charm. It is not a surprise in the case of a western lady. Eventually she married the man of her second choice, Joe and cruelly turned her face away from Chacko without any consideration for his love and attachment. She had her own reasons to reject Chacko and shift her love and loyalty to Joe as she finds Chacko utterly impractical and unsuitable to manage the domestic work in her absence from home, which of course is not a strong reason to divorce a husband. Bearing the brunt of betrayal and frustration Chacko came back to India, his native place where he led a life of debauchery. He made no attempt to remarry, on the other hand indulged in free sex with women labourers. His mother Mammachi took a lopsided view of her son's 'libertine relationship' with women labourers of her factory. She had no prick of conscience in going to the extent of justifying his libertine life as necessitated as a man's real need. Baby Kochamma too had a tacit consent for Mammachi's view and makes no complaint whereas she did not spare Ammu for her illicit relation with Velutha. To facilitate Chacko's needs of a man, his mother made separate arrangement for the entry of women labourers through a private way into Chacko's bedroom. No one in the family finds fault with Chacko's

‘Marxist mind and feudal libido’. The only fear which lurked in their mind is the forcible action of the Naxalites who compel men from good families to marry the sexually exploited maidservants or women labourers. Fortunately Chacko was never caught red-handed by the Naxalites in his sexual escapades. His mother was always on her guard to take care of Chacko’s victims. The victims were regularly and handsomely paid money for not opening up their lips. Nowhere in the novel the mother made any attempt for Chacko’s second marriage or dissuaded him from his rakish behaviour with the women labourers. To keep her family scandal at bay, Mammachi paid handsomely to Chacko’s victims who in turn accepted money for their children and old parents out of family compulsion, economic necessity and not for gratification of carnal desire. Poverty and suffering forced women labourers into flesh trade. Intellectuals and rich men lead a life of double standards and Chacko is a glaring example. There was a great gulf between his intellectual make up, his professed political idealism of Leftist inclination and his sexual exploitation of poor women.

The character of Baby Kochamma represented the numerous old spinsters in our society. She was Pappachi’s sister whose behaviour draws into controversy Christian sectarian attitude in India. Failure in love affair in her youth made her a hard boiled cynic. Her desperate efforts to consummate love with a clergy man ended in dismal failure. So she could hardly tolerate Ammu’s sexual relation with Velutha. She tried her best in her heyday to lure the mind of an Irish monk, Father Mulligan who stayed in Kerala only for a year. Father Mulligan’s regular visit to Ayemenem to carry on theological discussion with Reverend John Ipe, Kochamma’s Father developed into a love-relationship with her. She took various pleas to meet Father Mulligan near a well by exhibiting charity to a poor boy to “quake with unchristian passion with the Jesuit.” At times the Bible became a medium for ‘gratification

of her carnal desire'. Religion became a mere garb for gratification of one's sensual desire and infernal motives. People occupying high position in religion tend to misuse it for personal enjoyment. Baby Kochamma's exhibition of forced charity drew the intrepid Jesuits sympathy for her, but the latter was in no way to be blamed for her clandestine love affair. It was entirely her devious mind which concocts several plans but all her efforts fall miserably flat without the desired result. She unconsciously endeavoured to pollute the mind of a devout Christian and attracts him towards a life of carnal desires. After a year or so the Jesuit returns to Madras from Kerala putting an abrupt end to their love. Even in such a situation Baby Kochamma did not lose her heart did not show any sign of weakness as women do when they lose their lover. She too followed him upon Madras and made an entry into the convent with the help of her Father, a renowned priest.

The novelist makes a dig at the corrupt practices and immoral life in the convent while narrating Baby Kochamma's efforts to renew her contact with Father Mulligan. The Novelist focuses on the seamy side of life of the nuns and monks who renounce the worldly life so as to lead an ascetic life. It is hard to lead an ascetic life when the mind languishes for human love. While preparing for a life of complete continence and devotion nuns and monks in Churches at times go astray from the path of a disciplined life which tarnishes the sacred image of the Church and Christianity. In the run for winning over the heart of the monks, the senior sisters are ahead in the race. Thus they monopolise access to the higher Church officials. As a junior nun Baby Kochamma failed in her unchristian mission to capture the heart of Father Mulligan. In a desperate bid she tried all tricks and at last leaves the convent. Her frustrated love affair had repercussions in moulding her personality; she became a disgruntled aunt to Ammu's children. She often had recourse to the use of diatribe against Ammu's



children. She also bears grudges against Ammu's physical relation with Velutha. Eventually she became a cantankerous woman who would have left to herself; throw Ammu's family on to the street.

The relation of an untouchable with the members of Pappachi's family, a sensitive issue, is delicately handled. In the post-independence era the heinous practice of untouchability is dwindling gradually, thanks to the efforts of the Father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Shades of feeling for untouchability is still practised in various forms in our social life. In the Hindu community certain traditional beliefs and practices go against the untouchable and social life is governed by these practices to a great extent. Arundhati Roy focuses on this burning social problem in a realistic and poignant way. In the novel Pappachi and Mammachi in their village came across Velutha, a young untouchable boy, a talented worker who can handle intricate mechanical tools. By the time he finished his school education, Velutha became apprenticed to a Carpenter, Klein, and a Christian Missionary. Young Velutha possessed a gifted mind which can repair radio, wall-clock, water-pump, and other electrical equipments. He was very useful for Chacko's Bharat Bottle-Sealing Machine, Canning Machine and an automatic Pineapple Slicer. His presence became indispensable in the factory. Velutha's Father was an orthodox Pariah who does not like the manner of his son as it is not in keeping with the normal behaviour of the Paravans. Differences brew between them; and day by day the Father and the son fall out. Bitterness between them increases to such an extent that Velutha at times avoided coming home much to his Mother's Chagrin. But he was a familiar servant in Mammachi's house and was very much liked by all.

Once being cross with his Father, Velutha disappeared from his village for some days; and soon rumoured in the village spread of

his becoming an active Naxalite in the city. After a year or so he returned to his village. When Mammachi puts him in charge of general maintenance, caste-feeling was roused among the upper class workers of the factory as they can hardly tolerate a Paravan in such a position in the factory dictating terms to them.

In the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi untouchability is a social evil which ought to be extirpated from our country. People still hold the belief that the Paravans give out a bad smell from their body. Vellyan Papen, Velutha's Father being a humble orthodox Paravan, hesitated to out step his caste-limits; moreover, he did not approve of his son's new fangled ideas. He tried to crush his son's intemperance in the bud so as to guard the honour of his family and fore Fathers. He found Velutha putting his hands on everything in Mammachi's household articles and even rowing boat in the river. He promised in the presence of Mammachi to kill his son and expressed high regrets for rearing up a monster-son. Baby Kochamma derived secret pleasure at Vellyan Pappen's promise to kill his son as she did not like Velutha's behaviour.

Incidentally there was a total reversal of situation. The death of Sophie Mol in a capsized boat provides Baby Kochamma ruse to lodge an FIR at Kotlayam Police station against Velutha. Baby Kochamma bore a grudge against Velutha for his secret relation with Ammu a divorcee with two children. She misrepresented the fact to the Inspector to salvage family reputation, at the same time, punish Velutha. The untouchables are looked down upon and bear the anger of the people in various ways as they cannot protect themselves sufficiently. Baby Kochamma related to Inspector Thomas Matthews the many possible ways Velutha and his ancestors have been helped by her family till Velutha's unceremonious dismissal from the factory. As soon as the Inspector heard the account, he lost his temper for the

unnecessary favour shown to a Paravan as a token of mercy by the upper caste people and sarcastically reproached her: “You people, first you spoil these people, carry them about on your head like trophies, then when they misbehave you came running to us for help.” (261)

Of course, people in general are not in favour of giving unnecessary kind treatment to the low caste people as they think them to be unworthy of such treatment. In return such people show invariably least sense of gratitude or obligation to their benefactors.

The problem of untouchability and the condition of the Paravans reflect the Indian social reality in the novel. Even after half a century of our Independence the problems came in various disguised forms. Inter-caste marriages have not yet been widely, socially practiced by the upper caste people. The entry into the houses of upper caste people for the Paravans is through the back door only. So Velutha came to Pappachi’s house through the back door. The Paravans are not allowed to touch the household articles used by the touchables. Mammachi gave an account to Estha the way Paravans were ill-treated in the society in the past:

Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan’s footprint. In Mammachi’s time Paravans, like other untouchables, were not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke. (74)

After the tragic incidence when Velutha came straight to Mammachi’s house, she was so furious that she spewed her blind

venom on his face and hurls insults at him. As she spited at Velutha's face it spattered across his skin, his mouth and eyes, yet he did not retaliate and silently left the house without any protest. Both Velutha and his Father were humble servants very much servile to Pappachi's family. The novelist throws enough light on the life of the untouchables in Kerala. The situations presented in the novel about the pitiable condition of these people are more or less the same in other states of our country even in our modern times.

In addition to the moral degeneration in Pappachi's family the novelist brings a host of other issues that rock our society in these days. The hair rising atrocities perpetuated by the police in judicial custody is a slur on our civilized life. The police Raj at times referred to as goondaraj is because the way they terrorise and inflict torture on the accused persons on the plea of maintaining law and order. It reminds us of the colonial misrule and tyranny of the past. An under-trial prisoner's life in police custody is full of suffering. Velutha's wretched life under the police custody after a false case was lodged against him indicates social injustice and cruelty on human life. Before Velutha's arrest the behaviour of Inspector Thomas Matthews exposed the nexus between the police and the local politician. Police and politicians corrupt most of our society. The police act under the direction of politicians particularly of the ruling party in power.

Soon after Baby Kochamma registered an FIR against Velutha, Inspector Thomas Matthews took sufficient precaution to verify from comrade K.N.M. Pillai if the accused can garner any political support. Even though Inspector Matthews is a congress man, he does not want to take any risk with the Marxist Government. So he rushed to Comrade Pillai for a confidential talk. Comrade Pillai straightly refused to give patronage to Velutha by the communist party. The Inspector

got a green signal from the political party to deal with Velutha squarely so that under coercion he would confess his crime. Inside the lock-up Velutha was beaten black and blue. When Estha accompanied the Inspector to the lock-up, he saw Velutha in a miserable dying condition and the amount of torture inflicted on him could be guessed:

Velutha appeared on the scummy slippery floor. A mangled genie invoked by a modern lamp. He was naked; his soiled mundu had come undone. Blood spilled from his skull like a secret. His face was swollen and his head looked like a pumpkin too large and heavy. (319-20)

Half an hour later at midnight Velutha breathed his last. An innocent, untouchable man died in police custody because he had none to protect him. The premature death of Velutha further signifies that instead of providing protection to a guiltless low caste man, the police inflict severe punishment because he is not supported by anyone. The novelist criticises severely the way the authority responsible for enforcing law and order in the society is governed by the interest of party men in power. Thus crime in some states of India is politicalised and politicians too became criminal as they regulate crimes. Moreover police is just an instrument in the hands of the members of ruling party to sub-serve their interest.

Velutha was cruelly punished on the basis of a wrong FIR lodge by Baby Kochamma in order to avenge humiliation she had received at the hands of Velutha and the men participating in the strike (March) the Modalali Mariakuthy taunts, the forced flag-bearers. She misrepresented the relation of Velutha with Ammu to salvage her family reputation before Inspector Thomas Matthews so as to teach Velutha a lesson.

Atrocities on women particularly by Police (men) were increasing day by day. At times it becomes very difficult to provide evidence and proof of atrocity on women perpetrated by police personnel. Soon after Sophie Mol's funeral, Ammu was summoned to the police station with her children for detailed investigation and further action. While interrogating her in this case, Inspector Matthews taped Ammu's breast repeatedly with a baton while haranguing her inside the police station. The dignity of a female accused under police custody was outraged. Her shocked silence was construed as complicity.

An old spinster's dislike for married and children in a family at times created family rift and differences. In an old spinster motherly instinct dried up. Baby Kochamma's contest opposition to Ammu's children could be marked at various stages in the novel. She snubbed them wherever possible and never showed any sign of sympathy. To her, the twins were the unwanted members in Pappachi's family and thus the unwelcome guests and blasphemous children in the family because they were 'Fatherless waifs'. Moreover, they are 'Half-Hindu Hybrids' whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry. She expected from them some 'token unhappiness' and decent behaviour at every stage of life. Social morality was violated by adults in their shameless behaviour. There are various ways in which grown up people defiled the mind of the teenagers. The behaviour of the orange drink, Lemon drink man in Abhilash Talkies was an example of moral depravity. The man offered a free cold drink to Estha but in turn forced him to hold his private organ for an act of masturbation. It is the way in which grown up people pollute the mind of the young ones with strange ideas about sex. Moreover, the novelist's vivid account of the Sexual union between Velutha and Ammu on the river bed reduced the academic worth of the novel. Ammu, the mother of

the dizygotic twin felt no prick of conscience in keeping Physical relation with an untouchable one, the servant in her house. Perhaps she was helpless in meeting the demand of her flesh. Velutha was severely penalized for his sexual relation with Ammu due to the manoeuvring of Baby Kochamma. Strangely enough, Ammu escapes all sorts of punishment. The incident had a bad repercussion on the delicate mind of the children. As time passed on her children were separated from her because Ammu openly violates public morality. Thereafter, the picture of family life as presented in the novel is very miserable. In Indian Society extra-marital relation is looked down upon as a criminal activity, an unholy affair and a direct violation of social morality.

By focusing on many such issues the novelist makes a dig at the falling standard of social morality in modern Indian Society. This society tries to emulate all the manners of the west even in matters pertaining to social immorality. The book can be studied as a piece of social satire which is realistic and insightful at the same time.

### **Reference**

All excerpts used in this article are taken from Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* New Delhi: India Ink Co. Pvt. Ltd., 1997.

**Ajai Sharma**

**Metaphors We Play By:  
Analyzing Sports News**

Metaphor has been the subject of study since Greek period where it was studied in the discipline of Rhetoric. Rhetoric is an art that taught people how to persuade others to one's point of view by the use of rhetorical devices like metaphor. Since Rhetoric is not concerned with search of truth, as philosopher like Plato understood it, it became suspect in the eyes of crusaders of philosophic truth. Because metaphor in Rhetoric occupies central place, it had to face the ire of such Greek philosophers as Plato. The Greek philosophers found this master trope of Rhetoric nothing but an external ornament of language that hides more than reveals the truth.

However, Aristotle in his *Poetics* finds metaphor a sign of certain type of genius. "It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from other, and it is also a sign of genius, since good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilar." (Aristotle 71)

The discussion in *Poetics* makes it clear that metaphor for Aristotle is integral to poetry rather than to logic. "By doing so, he makes it clear that he does not regard metaphor as integral to language's functioning; rather it is a kind of decoration or ornament." (Punter 12) Metaphor in this sense is an addition to the normal language which in



other words means literal language. In his further elaboration of metaphor, Aristotle identifies metaphor as “giving the thing the name that belongs to something else, the transference being either from genus to species or from species to genus or from species to species on the ground of analogy.” (Aristotle 1909 63) Behind this argument lies the idea that everything in nature has got its proper name. Metaphor as such “constitutes a kind of infringement of this rule, whereby ‘names are conveyed from one thing to another.’” (Punter 12)

Western literary history has intermittently questioned the assumption that metaphor is only an ornament, not an integral part of language. The British poets of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially Coleridge, express such views that metaphor cannot be separated from literal language. Wordsworth never tires of eliding any difference between the language of poetry and ordinary language in his *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*.

In 1980 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson published a slender book *Metaphors We Live By* which revolutionized the way we think of metaphor. Writing within conceptual metaphor theory a sub discipline of Cognitive Linguistics, Lakoff and Johnson argue that “metaphor is not simply a stylistic feature of language, but that thought itself is metaphorical in nature.” (Evans and Green 286) According to conceptual metaphor theory, conceptual structure is organized according to cross domain mappings. Instead of breaking metaphor into tenor and vehicle, conceptual metaphor theory breaks it into two domains: source domain and target domain. Source domain refers to the field from which metaphorical expression is picked up and target domain means the field to which metaphorical expression is applied. In the sentence “He is a lion”, the metaphoric expression “lion” is picked up from animal domain (source domain) and applied to human

domain (target domain). According to conceptual metaphor theory some of the cross domain mappings, if not all, are the result of “pre-conceptual embodied experiences.” (Evans and Green 286) The conceptual metaphors depend on child’s bodily experiences. The child experiences that the increase in quantity of anything results in increase in vertical elevation and hence quantity can be expressed in terms of vertical elevation. A typical example of such cross domain mapping occurs in sentences like ‘She got high marks’ where marks are measured in terms of vertical elevation: height. Likewise, the child experiences that physical features of space change as the child moves from one place to another, say from one room to another. Hence change is conceptualized in terms of movement in space, even if it involves change due to time. Any expression that denotes passage of time involves cross domain mapping. The change of time is expressed as if it was traveling from one point in space to another. Cognitive linguists like Gibbs extrapolate the findings of metaphor to metonymy. “Research since the early 1990’s has begun to suggest that this operation may be at least as important as conceptual metaphor in terms of providing conceptual structures.” (Evans and Green 287)

Conceptual metaphor/ metonymy theory believes that we cannot choose any source domain to describe any target domain. In order to make this point clear, Lakoff and Johnson give the following examples of metaphor to describe relationship like marriage.

1. Look *how far* we have come
2. We are at *a crossroads*
3. We’ll just have *to go our separate ways*
4. We can’t *turn back* now.
5. I don’t think this relationship is *going anywhere*.
6. *Where* are we?

7. We're *stuck*.
8. It's been a *long, bumpy road*.
9. This relationship is *a dead-end street*.
10. We're just *spinning our wheels*.
11. Our marriage is *on the rocks*.
12. This relationship is *foundering*.

(Lakoff and Johnson 44-45)

“This pattern led Lakoff and Johnson to hypothesize a conventional link at the conceptual level between the domain of LOVE RELATIONSHIP and the domain of JOURNEY.” (Evans and Green 295) According to conceptual view, here ‘love’ is the target domain that the speaker wants to describe and ‘journey’ is source domain in whose terms ‘love’ is being described. “This association is called conceptual metaphor. According to Lakoff and Johnson what makes it a metaphor is the conventional association of domain with another, What makes is conceptual (rather than purely linguistic) is the idea that the motivation for the metaphor resides at the level of conceptual domain. In other words, Lakoff and Johnson proposed that we not only speak in metaphoric terms, but also think in metaphorical terms” (Evans and Green 295)

Lakoff and Johnson argue that there is mapping between target domain and source domain even at micro level. In a journey there would be travelers, means of transport, a route and obstacle. All the above roles: travelers etc. are found also in love relationship. “The metaphor works by mapping roles from the source onto the target: LOVERS become TRAVELLERS (We are at a crossroads), who travel by a particular MEANS OF TRANSPORT (We are spinning our wheels) proceeding along a particular ROUTE (Our marriage went off course), impeded by obstacles (Our marriage is on rocks).

As these examples demonstrate, a metaphorical link between two domains consists of a number of distinct correspondence or mappings.” (Evans and Green 295)

Inquiring into the nature of source domain and target domain Kovecses (2002) found that the most common source domains relate to human body (the heart of problem), animals (a sly fox), plants (the fruit of her labor), food (he cooked up a story). The most common target domains are emotions, morality, thought, human relationship and time.

Important aspects of conceptual metaphor that is of interest to any researcher are hiding and highlighting. Whenever a target is conceived in terms of some source, “this highlights certain aspects of the target while simultaneously hiding other aspects.” (Evans and Green 303) For example if an argument is conceptualized as war, the adversarial nature of argument is highlighted but structuring of argument is downplayed. If argument is thought in terms of journey, its adversarial nature is silenced and its organizational and progressive aspect is highlighted. “In this way, metaphors can perspectivize a concept or conceptual domain.” (Evans and Green 304)

My contention is that sport events are conceptualized in the metaphor of war. Here the target domain is specific sport and the source domain is war. There is extensive mapping between these two domains at micro level very much like mapping between love and journey that Lakoff and Johnson talks of. All the entities of war are mapped on to sports. ‘Entitles’ consists of actors and their actions. A war involves two opponents very much like two teams. Conceptualized in the metaphor of war, sports are perspectivized as competition rather than as recreational activity.

In the context of war, the activities are described with the use of certain verbs like BEAT, FAIL, DEFEAT, GAIN (AN UPPER HAND), CLASH, ATTACK, KNOCK, RETRAIN, RESTRICT, STRUGGLE, HIT, FALL (VICTIM), RESIST, FALL (TO), SHOOT, CLASH, CHASE (ENEMY), TRAP, REEL, WIN, CRUSH, PREVENT (SOMEONE), BLAST etc. Nouns that typically occur in war context are AGGRESSION, RESISTANCE, DEFEAT, CLASH, ATTACK, KNOCK, LOSS, GAIN, STRUGGLE, HIT, VICTIM, BATTLE, VICTORY, CONTINGENT, SPOILS etc. Adjectives that are usually needed in the description of war are GUTSY, CRUSHING, FEARSOME, DEFIANT, EMBARRASSING etc.. Prepositional phrases that are used in war are AGAINST, IN (TATTERS) etc.

I hereby propose to analyze sports news that were published by Times of India, 25.1.2010 published from New Delhi, Late city edition in its TIMES SPORT page. There are two important news on this page. Both deal with cricket matches: one between India and Bangladesh and other between Australia and Pakistan.

In the news items under discussion, war metaphors are extensively used. I make bold face the war metaphor in the news in order to show their use.

**Pacemen put India on top.**

### Mahmudullah Lone Bangla Batter To Put Up **Resistance**

Dhaka: Mohammad Mahmuduallah **cracked** an **unbeaten** 96 under pressure but **failed to stop** India from **gaining an upper hand** in the second and final test **against** Bangladesh here n Sunday. Bangladesh were wobbling at 5105 before posting 233 in their first innings, thanks to lower-order batsman Mahamudallah who kept the Indian **attack at bay** with a **gutsy** 156 ball **knock**.

India raced to 69 for **no loss** in reply at stumps with Virendra Swag (41 not out) and Gautam Gambgir (26 not out) at the crease. The visitors were indebted to pacemen Ishant Sharma (4-66) and Zaheer Khan (3-62) for **restricting** Bangladesh at a modest total. Let-arm spinner Pragyant Ojha was the other main wicket-taker with 2-49. Bangladesh were 106-6 when Mahmuddallah walked in to bat, but India had **to struggle** for the remaining wicket as he put on 58 useful runs for the ninth wicket with Shafiqul Islam, who contributed only nine.

Mahmudallah was on 80 when last-man Rubel Hossain joined him but could manage only 16, including 11 in an over from off-spinner Harbhajan Singh. He **hit** 13 fours. Harbhajan finished the innings when he bowled Rubel for his lone **victim**, leaving Mahamudallah just four short of his maiden Test hundred.

India's bowlers were superbly supported by wicket-keeper Mahendra Singh Dhoni who took three catches and two stumpings after missing the previous Test due to an injury. Most of the Bangladeshi batsmen **failed** to apply themselves, with Mohammad Ashraful (39) skipper Shakib al Hasan (34) all getting out when looking well-set.

Ashraful and Shakib both **fell to** rash **strokes**. Asraful stepped out to attempt a big **shot** off Ojha, missed the line and was stumped, while Shakib was caught behind **chasing** an away going delivery from Zaheer. Rahim who added 55 for the sixth wicket with his captain, was **trapped** leg before by Sharma after **hitting** six fours in his 61-ball **knock**.

India **gained an early advantage** when they left the hosts **reeling** at 84-5 in the morning session, with Zaheer and Sharma taking two wickets apiece and Ojha one. Ashraful **hit** six fours in his 31-ball **knock**, while Tamin Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Juaid Siddique and Raqibul Hasan all **failed** to reach double figure.

Bangladesh's batting problems began immediately after **winning** the toss when Sharma had Kayes caught by Dhoni with his first delivery of the match. Zaheer bowled opener Iqbal with a delivery that came in sharply and then had Siddique caught behind **to reduce** the hosts to '13-3

Sharma's second **victim** was Raqibul Hasan caught by Rahul Dravid at second slip after making only four. India lead 1-0 in the short series following their 113-run **victory** in the opening Test in Chitagong on Thursday. AFP

### **Aussies Crush Pakistan at SCG**

Sidney: Australia produced arguably its best performance of the summer to record a **crushing** 140-run **victory** over Pakistan in the second One-day International at the SCG on Sunday.

Having posted an imposing 6-267 on the back of half-centuries from Shane Watson and Cameron White after Pakistan skipper Mohammad Yousuf elected to bowl first in overcast conditions, Dong Bollinger (2-19) and Peteriddle (91-23) produced **fearsome** opening spells to leave the tourists' **pursuit in tatters**.

Skipper Mohammad Yousuf, who was left to  **rue** his decision to insert the hosts in ideal bating conditions, top scored with a **defiant** 58 off 94 balls, but it wasn't enough to **prevent an embarrassing defeat**. Australia now leads the five-match series 2-0 ahead of Tuesday's **clash** at the Adelaide Oval. Both openers **beat** the bat repeatedly from the outset but Bollinger claimed the early **spoils** removing Salman Butt (two) and Younus Khan (zero) in the fifth over when both men edged to White at second slip.

Things went from bad to worse when Kamran Akmal (16 off 31) was run out by a brilliant piece of fielding from Clint McKay (3-15) off his own bowling. And when younger brother Umar Akmal was bowled by a brilliant delivery from Siddle without scoring, the tourists' fate was sealed.

Shahid Afridi gave the Pakistan **contingent** of the healthy 30,774 crowd some reason to cheer when he despatched Nathan Hauritz (2-45) into the stands, but his **aggression** soon brought him undone. Rana Naved showed some **resistance blasting** 27 off 22 including two sixes and a boundary before he was stumped by Brad Haddin attempting to **hit** Hauritz out of the stadium. CRICKET.COM.AU



In order to decide whether some expression is metaphoric or not, I used two criteria: etymology and core sense. Etymology of a word tells about the origin and derivation of a word. The “core meanings represent typical, central uses of the word in question in modern standard English, as established by research on and analysis of the Oxford English Corpus and other language databases. The core meaning is the one accepted by native speakers as the most **l i t e r a l** and central in ordinary modern usage. This is not necessarily the same as the oldest meaning, because word meaning change over time. Nor is it necessarily the most frequent meaning, because sometimes the most frequently used modern sense of a word is figurative one.

The core sense also acts as a gateway to other, related subsenses.”(Oxford Dictionary of English page ix) Oxford English Dictionary 2005 is the only Dictionary that groups meanings into core senses and subsenses. Since it recognizes core sense as LITERAL sense, I have depended on this dictionary in identifying metaphor.

For example the first metaphoric expression in paragraph one in News one is ‘**crack**’ in the sentence: “Mohammad Mahmudallah **cracked** an **unbeaten** 96...” ‘Crack’ is here used in the sense of ‘score’, though Oxford Dictionary of English 2005 does not recognize ‘score’ even as a subsense of the word. The core sense or LITERAL meaning of the word ‘crack’ as verb is “break or cause to break without a complete separation of the parts...” (Oxford Dictionary of English 401) Words like ‘beat’, ‘fail’, ‘gain an upper hand’, ‘against’, ‘knock’, ‘attack’, ‘loss’, ‘struggle’, ‘hit’, ‘victim’, ‘fall to’, ‘catch’, ‘trap’, ‘reel’, ‘hit’, ‘win’, ‘clash’, ‘spoils’ ‘defiant’ etc. can be easily understood as metaphoric expressions when used in the description of a game and need hardly any dictionary consultation.

In order to show the extensive use of metaphor in news, I give numerical details of paragraphs, sentences and metaphoric expressions used in both the news under discussion. As is clear from the tables below, on average no sentence is without any metaphoric expressions.

### News one

Paragraph No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No. of Sentences	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2
No. Metaphoric Expressions	9	2	1	2	1	6	4	2	2

Note: One metaphor expression in subheading (Resistance)

Total No. of Paragraphs	9
Total No. of Sentences	20+1(subheading)=21
Total No. of Metaphoric Expressions	29+1=30

Average percentage of metaphoric expressions per sentence is 1.42

### News two

Paragraph No	1	2	3	4	5
No. of Sentences	1	1	3	2	2
No. Metaphoric Expressions	1	2	6	0	7

Note: One metaphoric expression in heading (Crush)

Total No. of Paragraphs	5
Total No. of Sentences	9+ 1 (heading)=10
Total No. of Metaphoric Expressions	16+1+17

Average percentage of metaphoric expressions per sentence is 1.7

One might wonder if the extensive use of war metaphor shows the bias of the writer or sport cannot be conceptualized in any other metaphor. "Sporting activities are essentially modified forms of hunting behaviour." (Morris 305) William Morris, the celebrated biologist, argues in his book *Manwatching* that warfare is "a corrupted form of" (Morris 309) hunting. Morris divides sports into two types: (1) that is played by only one team at a time like shooting and (2) that is played by two opposing teams against each other. Popular sports like "cricket, badminton, basketball, hockey," (Morris 308) etc. are the sport of "reciprocal hunt" (Morris 308). War evolved out of these sports of reciprocal hunt. The only difference between the two is that in the second type man hunts another man at prey. "Any victim that provided the necessary hunting challenge would do, and there was no reason why a human prey should be excluded." (Morris 309) Morris thinks that sports like Cricket give the thrill of hunting from which war is derived. "Of all the hundreds of forms of competition we indulge in only sports have the special properties of chasing, running, jumping, aiming and prey-killing." (Morris 308) Since sports like cricket are derived from war, it is impossible to conceptualize Cricket in any other metaphor than that of war.

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Sadhana Chaturvedi

**English in India :  
A Global Language with an Indian Identity**

“English have left but English still rules,” is a highly celebrated dictum which gives the inkling of the profound supremacy of English language. English is a living language. It is evolving and changing all the time in response to the needs of people who are using it. It is as if English is to borrow the title from *US News and world report* (Feb, 18, 1985) “Out to conquer the world.” No doubt English language has circled the globe.

English is an Anglo - Frisian language brought to Britain in the 5th Century AD by Germanic Settlers from various parts of Northwest Germany. The original old English language was subsequently influenced by two successive waves of invasion. The first was by speakers of language in the Scandinavian branch of Germanic family, who colonized parts of Britain in the 8th and 9th centuries. The second wave was of the Normans in the 11th century, who spoke Norman, which was closely related to French.

The nearest living relative of English is Scots, spoken mostly in Scotland and parts of Northern Ireland. After Scots comes Frisian - spoken in Germany and the Netherlands. Other less closely related living languages include German, Low German, Dutch and Afrikaans,

Many French words are also intelligible to an English speaker because English absorbed a tremendous amount of vocabulary from French, with minor spelling differences as well as occasional differences in meaning.

English is third or fourth most widely spoken as first language in the world today, after Mandarin, Hindi and probably Spanish. A total of 600-700 million people use the various dialects of English regularly. About 377 million people use one of the versions of English as their mother tongue and an equal number of people use them as their second or foreign language. English is used widely in either the public or private spheres in more than 100 countries all over the world. The language has occupied a primary place in international academic and business communities. The current status of the English language at the start of the new millennium compares with that of Latin in the past. English is the primary language in Australia (Australian English), Canada (Canadian English) The Dominica, The Falkland Islands, Guyana, Jamaica (Jamaican English) Jersey, New Zealand (New Zealand English) Ireland, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, the United Kingdom (Various forms of British English), The U.S. Virgin Islands and the United States (American English)

English is also an important minority language of South Africa (South African English) and in several other former colonies and current dependent territories of the United Kingdom and United States, for example Mauritius. In Hong Kong, English is co-official with Chinese and is widely used in business activities. In many other countries where English is not a major first language, it is an official language. These countries include Fiji, Ghana, India, Liberia, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Malta, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Some linguists believe that English is no longer the Exclusive cultural emblem of native English speakers, rather a language that is absorbing aspects of cultures world wide. Others believe that there are limits to how far English can go in suiting everyone for communication purposes. English is the language most often studied as a foreign language in the European Union (by 89% of school children), followed by French (32%), German (18%) and Spanish (8%).

In terms of English speakers, the Indian subcontinent ranks third in the world after the USA and UK. Studies suggest that over 150 million people speak English in India. English was introduced in India as a tool of imperialism. It is a legacy from the British who ruled the country and since then the language has gradually filtered through some o the most important parts of the society, the government, the mass media, the academics the judiciary and most importantly, the social sector. Today in India it is not seen as a language of the colonial masters but as a medium of international discourse. In recent yeas the language has gained so much currency among the educated Indians that they use it as their own mother language and not as an outside borrowed language. Fundamentally closer to the British English, with the advent of globalization, it has also been heavily influenced by the American way of speaking and writing. Yet it is marked for its distinctly Indian flavour.

India is a vast multicultural and multilingual country. Through the large-scale socio-cultural interaction with regional contexts English became Indianized. A variety of English non-native, lexically, morphologically, syntactically and stylistically different from the standard British form has come to be known as '*Indian Variety of English*' (IVE). IVE is not at all the vulgarized form of English but creative and

resourceful with distinctive socio-linguistic features. Several regional varieties of IVE such as Gujarati English, Bengali English, and Tamil English have come into existence. Each kind of IVE has certain individualistic marks.

Pronunciation really matters among the speakers of English in India. The influence of the mother tongue on English (as L') is known as 'mother tongue pull'. We may consider the following examples to support the fact.

- (i) Many Bengalese pronounce 'sip' and 'ship' alike. As in Bengali there is hardly any difference in short and long vowels. So they tend to pronounce 'sit' and 'seat' alike.
- (ii) Telugu speakers often add an extra /U/ at the end of words (mainly when the words end in consonants). Therefore, 'fan' is pronounced as 'fanu'.
- (iii) Most Malayalese pronounce the /p/ in 'temple' and 'ample' as /b/ the /t/ in 'canteen' as /d/.

We may count numerous examples of such mother tongue interference influencing the speakers of English in India.

A large number of Indian words (from different regional languages or Hindi) pass into '*Indian Variety of English*' register. We can cite a few examples of Indian words which are frequently used in Indian writing in English as well as in the conversation of English.

Indian words / expressions	-	Meaning
Chapaties	-	Indian pan-cakes made of wheat flour.
Vilayat	-	Foreign land - mainly used for England



Hakim	-	Native doctor
Bastis	-	Colony
Bibiji	-	A term of respect for Hindu wife.
Babu	-	A well versed man generally used for a clerk.
Dakdar	-	Doctor
Swadeshi	-	National
Harijan	-	Untouchable, down trodden
Angrezi Sarkar	-	The English Government
Namaskar	-	Traditional Indian greeting.

The list of Indian words and expressions, used in Indian writings in English and in Indian conversation, is really a big one. It covers all the aspects of life. There are some typical Indian affixes which go into the derivation of IVE vocabulary.

**For example :**

Congress + Wallah	-	Congress - Wallah
Pahlwan + Ji	-	Pahlwanji
Rickshaw + Wallah	-	Rickshaw-wallah
Major + Sahib	-	Major - sahib

Earlier IVE was used in a derogatory sense. Now things have changed. In IVE “reduplication”<sup>1</sup> is used for the sake of emphasis. Indian writers in English have explored the resourcefulness to a great extent :

- (i) “See it go higher, higher” (from so many hungers)
- (ii) “Go home ! Go home ! It is only a base rumour spread by our enemies” (from coolie)
- (iii) “Money, money, where to get Money.” (from the railway clerk)

- (iv) “With these very eyes, with these very eyes, .... All killed by magic, by magic” ..... (from *Kanthapura*)

In IVE sometimes present continuous is used instead of simple present tense to denote habitual action.

- (i) “I am doing my duty” (from the railway clerk)  
 (ii) “I am discharging it properly” (from the railway clerk)

IVE has a tendency to use present continuous tense in place of present perfect continuous tense and to convert simple sentences into interrogative forms only by use of a mark of interrogation at the end of a statement such as :

“You are pleased, Onu?” (from *Music for Mohini*)

“You are well, Kajoli?” (from *So Many Hungers*)

“Lions here?” (from *The Guide*)

In Indian writing in English we find several examples of proverb, legends and concrete imagery in Indian context. In the similes and metaphors familiar animals and birds figure most :

- (i) “Money is a winged bird. It will fly off.” (From *So Many Hungers*)  
 (ii) “— Yet he was as honest as an elephant.” (From *Kanthapura*)

Sometimes there are literal translations from different languages like Kannada, Punjabi, Bengali and so on :

- (i) “The police men are not your uncle’s sons.” (from *Kanthapura*)  
 (ii) “”Munoo thinks that the taste of the fresh cotton thread in the factory sickening, like bile in the mouth.” (from *Coolie*)

Onomatopoeic words (Indian) are often used in IVE such as:

Words	-	Meaning
Khit - Khit	-	Useless talk
Phut - Phuti	-	Motorbike
Mush - Mush	-	Sound of shoes

IVE is known for ‘code - switching’ and ‘code - mixing’. India is a multi-cultural land where different cultures exist side by side. People speak more than one language. They tend to mix up their codes in their conversations.

“Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai’! Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai’! The cry went thundering up into the smoke scented evening (*Untouchable*)

In the above extract Hindi code and English code are used together. This is a typical characteristic of IVE. Raja Rao in his preface to his novel *Kanthapura* says, English is not a “Foreign tongue in India, but it is only the language of our intellectual make -up, not of our emotional make - up”<sup>2</sup>. Indo - Anglian writers tend “to bring the hangover of the mother tongue —— into their expressions”<sup>3</sup>.

Meenakshi Mukherjee’s comment “using the English language in a way that will be distinctly Indian and still remain English”<sup>4</sup> is very apt. David Crystal, a noted linguist and author of the *Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, predicts “If 100 million Indians pronounce an English word in a certain way, this is more than Britain’s population - so, it’s the only way to pronounce it”<sup>5</sup>. Hence we can safely conclude that English in India is well established and is well on it’s way to acquire its own independent identity.

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<sup>1</sup>A device generally we find in Indian languages. It means the repetition of words / phrases in statement / sentence.

<sup>2</sup>Raja Rao. *Preface to Kanthapura*, Delhi Orient Paperbacks 1971, VII.

<sup>3</sup>Mulk Raj Anand, "Pigeon Indian ; Some Notes on Indian English writing", *The Karnataka University Journal Humaities*, Vol XVI (1972) 14-15.

<sup>4</sup>Meenakshi Mukherjee, *The twice Born fiction* (Arnold Heinemann Publisher, 1974) 165.

<sup>5</sup>David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, in the *Diviner*, ( Vol.3, No.2, Sept.2006 (Chandigarh: Chandalika press Pvt. Ltd.) 116.

**Ruby Rani**

**Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point*:  
A Study of Female Characters**

On the canvas of his novels, Aldous Huxley presents a gallery of characters, both male and female, but more interesting than his men are his women characters. Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* clearing the point of Huxley being a pure writer of female characters holds does not simply celebrate male virtues and enforce male values. (*A Room of One's Own*, 106). Rather he is keenly alive to the sensibilities of the various women he depicts. "His women are not more accessories in his human scenario. They are not passive, flexible, obedient, subordinated and inferior creatures to men. His women are assertive and aware of their needs. They can be seen struggling continuously for asserting their own identity in patriarchal society. Rupender Kaur rightly speaks of Huxley's women in *East-West Centenary Essays*: "Huxley's women are assertive, alive to their needs with independent minds, and a yearning for a status which they struggle for and do not easily attain. They are in fact the new women, undaunted by the pressures of external forces, who would like to mould rather than quietly agree to be moulded by these." (*East-West Centenary Essays* 35). They are saturated with those qualities that make them superior to his men who are disturbed by the realization that women whom they regard non-entities, were actually mocking at the world for its indifference towards them. His women are not the light frivolous,

sentimental creatures heavily weighed down by their emotions. That does not mean that they are unemotional and calculating. But they are conscious of their capabilities and limitations and remain undaunted by the unfavourable situations of the world of man. This paper intends to make an assessment of Huxley's creative response to his female characters in the patriarchal society as reflected in his novel, *Point Counter Point*.

The *Point Counter Point* contains a collection of unforgettable women who exemplify the reality of the abovementioned observations. Huxley's sensitive handling of them, interspersed with the masculine reactions to their behaviour, adds spice to the narrative. Whatever the role assigned to them, they are able to outshine all other. They are women who are capable of transcending the limitations of their circumstances. Huxley had a good cognizance of female psyche. A critical study of his female characters - Marjorie, Lucy and Elinor give proof of the fact that Huxley was highlighting the dilemmas of the female psyche. All these three women have one thing in common – they are all related to Walter Bidlake in one manner or another. But they exemplify three dissimilar sensibilities engrossed in the problems peculiar to their particular situations. The writer very intelligently lays bare the tensions and fears of these women who do not want to compromise their identities in return of men's love. Marjorie, who is least domineering among the three and aware of limitations of her sex, eventually attains an extraordinary level of dignity and adopts an attitude of insensitivity towards Walter. Marjorie initially seems well-schooled in lessons of self-denial and submission. She is desperate to retain Walter Bidlake's interest and love. She feels cheated because although "she had done whatever he had asked her, she had given up everything, accepted social discomfort for his sake," (*Point Counter Point*, 10) he is turning his attention to Lucy. Walter is the cause of her alienation

from her husband and her home. And, now he is unfaithful to her. In the beginning Marjorie appears to be a weak woman who can only whimper to protest and shed tears at her condition. As the novel progresses she emerges as a determined woman. Now she has enough dignity not to give him any chance for explanation: "She had her and her code of amorous honor, and in spite of unhappiness, in spite of jealousy, she stuck to her principles – he ought to be free; she had no right to interfere with him. And, besides, it was the best policy not to interfere" (*Point Counter Point* 12). After Walter leaves her; she shows stoical courage and ultimately emerges as a self-respecting woman unlike her counterparts who would break down totally in similar circumstances. She aspires to a divine peaceful state and gathers her strength to establish her own identity. Now she is saturated with superior air Walter is irritated with, "a superior angel from whom he could not accept pity". (*Point Counter Point* 368) She has discovered the peace of God that passeth all understanding:

The shaken and turbid liquor of existence grew gradually clam, and all that had made it opaque – all the noise and uproar to the world, all the personal anxieties and desires and feelings – began to settle like sediment, felt slowly and noiselessly, out of sight. The turbid liquor became clearer and clearer more translucent. Behind that gradually vanishing mist was reality, was God. It was a slow progressive revelation. . . .Peace, peace'. She had no more desires, no more preoccupations". (*Point Counter Point*, 367)

Lucy on other hand also tries to assert her own identity in this patriarchal society. She is woman with the temperament of man because like men "she gets pleasure out of casual encounters and has a masculine detachment" (*Point Counter Point*, 297). She does not accept any lover easily but coolly evaluates him before accepting his advances.

Her uniqueness lies in the factor that she is not interpreted as being a merely light heated, unscrupulous woman. Her role gathers new dimensions as she herself and the people around her attribute with feminist interests. As Rampion remarks: “she gives me the creeps. That poor silly Bidlake boy. Like a rabbit in front of a weasel”. (*Point Counter Point*,139). Lucy’s attitude towards Walter is totally reverse of Marjorie’s. Marjorie is ready victim in his hands while Lucy would rather be the victimizer. Her feelings towards Walter are just a reflection of the power-politics that are involved in the man-woman relationship: “she only wanted to assert her will against Walter’s. She only wanted to dominate to be the leader and make him do what she wanted, not what he wanted”. (*Point Counter Point*, 207). So when Walter proves to be an understanding lover, she decides to leave him. She deliberately moves him on and puts him in his place which he deserves:

She did not want to feel that deep tenderness which is a surrender of the will, a breaking down of personal separateness. She wanted to be herself, Lucy Tantamount, in full command of a situation, enjoying herself consciously to the last limit ruthlessly having her fun; free, not only financially and legally but emotionally too—emotionally free to have him or not to have him. To drop him as she had taken him, at any moment, whenever she liked. She had not wished to surrender herself. And that tenderness of his— why, it was touching, no doubt, and flattering and rather charming in itself, but a little absurd and in its anxious demand for a response from her side, really rather tiresome.” (*Point Counter Point*,208).

Thus, she does not like to surrender her free will and existence. She wonders, “Why people make themselves miserable, instead of taking the fun that comes to them”. (*Point Counter Point*,211). She wants to lead a care free life. So she does not want unnecessary



hindrances in her way of life: "if you like speed, if you want to cover the ground, you can't have luggage". (*Point Counter Point*, 211). Actually, she represents that modern lady who is always ready to move ahead, not like to stick to same position for long time. As she herself speaks, "I find its reality impossible to stay in one place more than a couple of months at a time. One gets so stale and wilted, so unutterably bored". (*Point Counter Point*, 211). When Walter asks her how long the new life lasts, she replies, "as long as the old one. . . I am all for progress". (*Point Counter Point*, 211). She definitely is a progressive woman who does not hesitate to flout the Victorian attitudes of her own father and wants to visit the Continent because she is bored with her London life. Even her last letter to Walter breaking her relation with him, also bespeaks her practical and cold-blooded nature. At last she turns to her new lover, an Italian engineer whom she describes as being "beautifully savage". She is completely a practical woman and knows well how to get success in the world of men. She uses men, not allows them to treat herself like traditional women as an object of pleasure. Her practicality is reflected in the following lines: "He came at me as though he were going to kill me, with clenched teeth. I shut my eyes, like a Christian martyr in front of a lion. Martyrdom's exciting. Letting oneself be hurt, humiliated used like a doormat-queer. I like it. Besides, the doormat uses the user. It's complicated". (*Point Counter Point*, 366). While she acknowledges her enjoyment at being overpowered by a savage male she does not fail to remark that even the exploited are indirectly exploiters when she says, 'the doormat uses the user'. The religion and patriarchal society may describe her as an amoral yet Lucy is too independent minded. As Simone de Beauvoir speaks in *The Second Sex* that she likes to enjoy a sense of power by trying

“ . . . to captivate the world for her own profit offering herself for the approbation of her admirers, she does not repudiate the passive

femininity which dedicates her to a man: she endures it with the magical power that enables her catch the men in the share of her presence and better on them: she engulfs them along with her in immanence. If she takes this road, woman does succeed in acquiring certain independence". (*The Second Sex* 271).

Briefly speaking, Lucy is totally reverse of those traditional women who allow themselves to be used by men as an object of delight. Rupender Kaur gives a right assessment of her persona:

Lucy is far from the tame, submissive, passive creature that is acceptable from the angle of moral standards. She is an assertive, egotistical woman who would never compromise her position unless she wished to. Even passionate involvement never makes her lose sight of the 'self' and her role as an individual". (*Aldous Huxley: East-West Centenary Essays*,41).

Likewise Walter's sister Elinor, who is closer to the concept of traditional womanhood than Marjorie and Lucy, also tries to come out of this concept by protesting the existing codes of this patriarchal society. She at last, does not find this concept of traditional womanhood enough satisfying to survive in the world of men. As because of this traditional womanhood, she suffers a lot of at the hands of his cool-hearted husband, Philip. So, she also overtly registers her protest against this patriarchal society. It is through her relationship with her husband that we can notice her quest for freedom and identity. Her quest for freedom and identity shows that she preoccupied with the politics of marital relationship. She is too modern woman who ultimately makes up her mind to obey the dictates of her heart rather than those of her conscience. Now she is fed up with her duties as an ideal wife as these duties do not yield anything to her. Her husband, who is

intellectually good, fails to satisfy her desires. Though she unlike Marjorie and Lucy is devoted to her husband, her devotion does not melt away her cool-hearted husband. Thus, these duties of an ideal wife cause only loneliness in her life rather than satisfaction.

Huxley has made a depth study of Elinor and there is a streak in her character which bears the seeds of protest against this man world. She is more interested in love than logic. But her husband is not reciprocating her love properly. She is disappointed and humiliated by the distant 'telephonic voice' in which Philip responds to her love. She knows well that he cannot do without her: "where would you if I left you, if I went to somebody who was prepared to give me something in return for what I give?" (*Point Counter Point*, 82). Still Philip fails to communicate with her. But Elinor loves him in spite of his indifference. She tries to urge him to come out of his shell, but his coldness enabled him to come out of his shell. Though she knows that it is impossible for Philip to change himself yet she does not allow her anger to prevail over her affection for him:

One might almost as well go on loving a book-case. One day she would really leave him. There was such a thing as being too unselfish and devoted. One should think of one's own happiness sometimes – to be loved for a change instead of having to do all the loving oneself, to receive instead of perpetually giving. Yes, one day she would really leave him. She had herself to think about. Besides, it would be a punishment for Philip, punishment, - for she was sure of that, if she left him, he would be genuinely unhappy, in his way, as much as it lay in him to be unhappy. And perhaps the unhappiness might achieve the miracle she had been longing and working for all these years, perhaps it would sensitize him, personalize him". (*Point Counter Point*, 85).

Thus here we see that Elinor is totally disappointed with her husband. Still, the unhappy married life does not make her insensitive towards the needs of other women. She also shows sympathy and concern for Marjorie who is cheated by his brother, Walter: "I'm afraid he may suddenly rush off and leave poor Marjorie in the lurch. With a baby on the way, too, she's a dreary woman. But he mustn't be allowed to treat her like that". (*Point Counter Point*, 197). His sympathetic attitude towards Marjorie poses her as a 'feminist', who shows her concern for the whole woman class.

Despite her female qualities Elinor is not over enthusiastic about a family or children whom, she thinks cannot handle well. She is frank and does not hesitate to confess this to her mother-in-law. She is not ready to take over the responsibility of Little Phil when her husband suggests it, because she knows he is too restless to remain tied to a place of the sake of his child. So she would not also like to take botheration to bind herself down while he is free to do as he likes. Thus, by refuting her husband suggestion, she reveals her protest against the patriarchal society. Her mother-in-law is well aware of her son's indifference towards Elinor. So when she advises Elinor that she may overcome her frustration, if she could find God. At this Elinor at once remarks that it might be simpler to find a man. Again her sensible reply to her mother-in-law shows that now she is not ready to compromise with situation any more. She turns to Everard who reciprocates her love. She establishes relation with Everard to arise jealousy in the heart of Philip, so as to bring him to her close. But her effects remained fruitless to change Philip. Now Elinor, after having tried her patience too much, is ready to accept extra-marital ties. She does not care for moral grounds of the society. She is simply tempted to teach Philip, as she wants love and warmth, not benevolence. But her relation even with Everard remains unsuccessful as Everard is murdered. Still, Elinor

remains undisturbed in the face of the torments that she experiences with the double loss of the death of her son and the death of her lover, Everard. Here we see that Elinor like Lucy and Marjorie remains unruffled and detached to her difficult circumstances. She does not yield to adverse situations of the life. She is woman who would like to be free but not loose. Thus, Lucy, Marjorie and Elinor represent the whole modern women who will never like to surrender to the strict rules of the world of men. They know how to fight against all adverse situations and to take the control of their fate truly in their hands.

Thus, Huxley presents his female characters as the spokeswomen of those issues that form the arguments of feminist writers who want the elevation of women from object to subject status. His treatment of poignant issues about women's position in the world of men is so sympathetic and sensitive that it causes an upsurge in the mind of the modern women. His female characters are impervious personalities who are commandingly standing against the extraneous norms laid down by the world of man.

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Shrawan K Sharma

**Indian Literary Theories:  
Towards Understanding Translation**

Translation! A very sensitive task! The obvious reason is the involvement of two languages— source language (SL) and target language (TL)— with the linguistic nuances of which the translator should be well equipped. There are innumerable possibilities of slips in translation at different levels of language: phonetic, lexical, grammatical, sentential, episodic, compositional, cultural, historical and sociological. The simple reason is that no two languages are present in equal measures. They cannot operate successfully both at intrinsic and extrinsic levels. Hence, the attitudes towards them vary from nation to nation and from one aesthetic period to another. There are some examples given below which have been picked up from different sources to explore a significant area of intersection between Indian and Western thinking regarding translation. These are : Keats's autumn of 'mists and mellow fruitfulness' and T. S. Eliot's "April", "the cruelest month" (impregnated with irony) are different from those of ours. Similarly a married couple compared to swans by the older generation is different from that of the metaphysical poets who compare the couple to the needles of two compasses. Again a heart compared to a candle is different from the heart throbbing like a taxi in T S Eliot. Such kind of problems in translation which persist at all levels of language lead to possibilities—the possibilities of betterment and vice-versa. Hence the translator has to have the ability of discriminating special mechanism in language.

The above account shows that any discussion on translation finally leads to the ability of having proper understanding of SL and TL. It focuses on the treatment of problems and difficulties identified at large in the process of translation. On the basis of the aphoristic-rhetorical views of the poets, critics and professional translators like James Howell, Dryden, Johnson, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, And Ezra Pound until the mid-century, a fragmentary theory of translation could be reconstructed. The modern theories like J.C. Catford's *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* and Nida's "Science of Translation" are also based on the problems of translation arising at linguistic levels. Catford, defining translation, holds that translation is "the replacement of source language text material by equivalent target language material." (Catford 2002,05) Like Catford, Nida talks about linguistic and cultural translatability at grammatical level, lexical level, the level of style, idiom, and phrases and socio-cultural level. (Amur 45) Prague school linguists also view translation as a linguistic process involving the transfer of a message from SL to TL. Having this overview of translation theories and approaches we can say that in all the theories the central point of focus is the proper understanding of SL and TL- their problems, their use, their propriety, their meaning- and the ability of translator. The modern literary theories such as Russian formalism, linguistics, stylistics, structuralism, dialogic criticism and discourse analysis, which work on the creative use of language, have also influenced human understanding of translation. This overview shows that translation requires a proper understanding of working of both the languages- SL and TL- at the following levels:

- Phonetic level of organization (patterns of speech sounds, meter or rhyme)
- Lexical level (dictional aspect of language)
- Syntactic level (types of sentence structure- deep structure & surface structure, paradigmatic and syntagmatic)

Rhetorical level (the characteristic use of figurative language, imagery and so on)

At the level of relation of the utterance to the prior utterances to which it is a response

At the level of relation of the utterance to the socio-cultural situation in which it is interpreted.

It is remarkable to note that there is a conspicuous correspondence between the above mentioned formulations of Western translation and literary theories and those of Indian literary theories. The whole spectrum of creative use of language as given in Indian literary theories is *sahĀdya* (reader/aesthete) based which is analogous with that of translation. While the translation theorists advise the translator to have a proper understanding of languages—SL and TL—to encounter the problem of equivalence in translation, Indian aestheticians instruct *sahĀdya* (reader/aesthete) to make an assessment of a text on the basis of the creative use of language by the writer. The present paper aims at hatching a graph of linguistic turns as given by Indian Literary theories, which can be central to nearly all the ranks of difficulties in translation. The paper also intends to discuss the nature of *sahĀdya* (reader/aesthete), which is analogous with that of translator.

#### I

Like translation theories Indian literary theories have discovered a comprehensive account of linguistic turns in relation to the verbal aspect, the dictional aspect, the incorporation of excellence and figures, grammatical aspect, the management of plot, local awareness, cultural or philosophical acceptances, traditional ideas, social customs, psychological requirements, thought-contents, the grasp of truth and the creative genius. They discuss these aspects of language under the following broad spectrum: *var<sup>a</sup>a* (phoneme), *pada-pōrv<sup>i</sup>rddha* (lexis) or *vĀtti* (style), *pada-par<sup>i</sup>rddha* (grammar), *v<sup>i</sup>kya* (sentence), *prakara<sup>a</sup>a* (episodes and incidents),



*prabandha* (composition) and *dhvani* (suggestion or semantic pragmatism).

The first aspect which Indian aesthetician talk about is the proper understanding of *var<sup>a</sup>a* (phoneme). ,nandavardhan calls this device as *var<sup>a</sup>a dhvani* (suggestion or semantic pragmatism through verbal figures). Kuntaka treats it as *var<sup>a</sup>a-vinyāsa-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (phonetic obliquity) and Bh<sup>1</sup>mah and other aestheticians of *ala,k<sup>1</sup>ra samprad<sup>1</sup>ya* (school of figures) conceive it as *¶abd<sup>1</sup>la,k<sup>1</sup>ra* (verbal figures). Coleridge's poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* which has a sensory sound-effect exemplify this feature. In the lines : " The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew/the furrow followed free;" the plosive sound /b/ is indicative of explosion and fricative sound/f/ suggests a movement with quickness and friction. Again the plosive sound /d/ repeated in the line 'day after day, day after day' suggests monotony and immobility. Thus the creative use of *var<sup>a</sup>a* (phoneme ) or *¶abd<sup>1</sup>la,k<sup>1</sup>ra* (verbal figures) is decisive in suggesting deep meanings. A translator cannot make a good attempt of translation if fails to listen to such sensory sound effect.

At this level of *var<sup>a</sup>a* (phoneme) Indian literary theories can inform the translator and equip him with all kind of *¶abd<sup>1</sup>la,k<sup>1</sup>ra* ( verbal figures) and arrangement of free and irregular repetition of similar or identical *var<sup>a</sup>as* (phonemes or consonants) at varying intervals and without interval. Here he comes to know how

- i) the repetition of one *var<sup>a</sup>a* (phoneme), two *var<sup>a</sup>as* (phonemes) and more than two *var<sup>a</sup>as* (phonemes) is made;
- ii) the stops are combined with their homorganic nasals;
- iii) the liquids are doubled; and
- iv) the arrangement of *var<sup>a</sup>as* (phonemes) without any interval.

(Sharma, Kuntaka's *Vakrokti Siddh<sup>1</sup>nta* 14-15)

The second aspect of language according to Indian aestheticians is the creative use of *pada* (lexis). V<sup>1</sup>mana, Kuntaka and K<sup>1</sup>emendra call this creative use of dictional aspects *r>ti* (style), *pada-pūrvārdha-vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (lexical obliquity) *padaucitya* (propriety of word and phrase) respectively. V<sup>1</sup>mana (8<sup>th</sup> c) has elevated the creative use of dictional aspect of language to the level of a full-fledged *siddh<sup>1</sup>nta* (theory) called *r>ti siddh<sup>1</sup>nta* (theory of style) based on three types of *r>ti* (styles) :the use of *asam<sup>1</sup>s* (the phrasal organization, devoid of compounds), the use of *madhyama-sam<sup>1</sup>sa* (phrasal organization, made up of small compounds and the use of *d>rg<sup>1</sup>ha-sam<sup>1</sup>sa* (the phrasal organization made up of long compounds). Keats's odes are impregnated with this aspect of diction in the form of compounds. If a translator misses to observe how Keats has been able to attain intensity and strength by the use of compounds, he cannot translate the text. (Shama, *Literary Paritantra* 56)

Kuntaka sees this aspect of diction in the basal forms of the words, which comprises all effects based on the writer's choice of the words – the choice which is guided by strangeness, evocativeness, commonness or freshness of words. There are words that can impart strangeness and freshness to a writer's utterance. There are other words which make *k<sup>1</sup>vya* (literature) one of the joys "in widest commonalty spread", by their very plainness and commonness. There are yet other words which make *k<sup>1</sup>vya* (literature) richly and deeply evocative – one with the soul-stress that lies in the music of the words. Finally, there are words which become luminous centres of transfigured meaning and of imaginative association – quintessential words. It is a kind of divine sureness of instinct that enables a writer to select the appropriate word from one of these categories. The temperament of a writer has also some affinity with certain categories of words and this is one of the bases on which poetic styles are formed. One has only to examine the poetic vocabulary of poets in order to realize the affinity that exists between certain types of poetic temperament and clusters of poetic vocabulary. Kuntaka says that when the words of common usage are

employed so as to include an attribution of associate meaning other than the primary ones, we have *pada-p̄rv<sup>1</sup>rd̄dha-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (lexical obliquity). (Sharma, Kuntaka's *Vakrokti Siddh<sup>1</sup>nta* 45) Let us exemplify this lexical problem. We have the word 'wife' in English. There are many words for wife in Hindi such as *bh<sup>1</sup>ry<sup>1</sup>*, *jay<sup>1</sup>*, *patni* and *k<sup>1</sup>nt<sup>1</sup>* conveying specific meanings—the first means 'a pregnant woman or a woman to be looked after', the second means 'a woman that has given birth to a child and is expected to conceive another, the third means 'one who supports her husband in the old age' or a woman who saves her husband from fall, and the last means 'a beautiful woman'. If this word is translated into English plainly, then the cultural implication and the poetic value and the aestheticism is completely lost.

Here is one more example from Shakespeare's *Othello* to demonstrate this feature:

Desdemona: Am I that name Iago?

Iago: What name fair lady?

Desdemona: Such as she says my lord did say I was. (Act IV, sc ii)

At this juncture Desdemona and Emilia complain of Othello's rude behavior by calling the former a whore. Emilia repeats the very word used by Othello but Desdemona modestly quails before a word so vulgar. It would be a case of impropriety if Desdemona had pronounced the word, "whore". The translator has to be sensitive to such instances of cultural and social values with which the words are impregnated.

At this level of language, Indian literary theories can enable the translator to underline the creative use of conventional words, synonyms, adjectives, pronouns, genders and verbs which are resulted into *r̄̄hi-vaicitrya -vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of usage), *par<sup>1</sup>ya-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of synonym), *vi<sup>1</sup>e-aGa-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of adjective), *sa,v<sup>1</sup>ti-vakrat<sup>1</sup>*

(obliquity of concealment), *li;ga vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of gender) *kriy<sup>1</sup>-vaicitrya-vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of verb). The lexical obliquity is based on *t<sup>1</sup>tparya* (intended meaning), one of the four logical conditions, other three being *sannidhi* (proximity), *yogyat*<sup>1</sup> (mutual fitness) *<sup>1</sup>k<sup>1</sup>,k<sup>-1</sup>* (expectancy).

The third aspect of language operates at grammatical level. Kuntaka and K-emendra treat this aspect of language as *pada-par<sup>1</sup>rddha-vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (grammatical obliquity) and *vyākara<sup>2</sup>a aucitya* (grammatical propriety) respectively. Both the aestheticians are of the view that in *k<sup>1</sup>vya* (literature) the writer is also guided by the consideration of special tense, case, number, person, voice, prefix, suffix and particle. They discuss these various sources in their treatment of *vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity) and *aucitya* (propriety) respectively in the inflectional forms of substantives. This includes all possibilities of varying the grammatical constructions of an expression and most of them have been included by ,nandavardhana in his treatment of *dhvani* (suggestion or semantic pragmatism). Defining it, Kuntaka says that when several forms of literary turns occur together in such a way as to enhance the beauty of one another, they produce artistic charm, reminiscent of myriad-faced beauty. The following speech from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* "O horror! horror! horror! Tongue nor heart/ Cannot conceive nor name thee." (Act II, sc.ii), approves of the importance of grammatical construction for a translator. These broken words fall from the lips of Macduff when he comes at the appointed hour to call on Duncan and finds him lying dead in a pool of blood in his bed-chamber. Here the understanding the grammatical construction is very important. Her "Tongue" is the subject of name and "heart" the subject of "conceive" but not only "tongue" seems to go with "conceive" and "heart" with "name" but each of these subjects seem to go with both the verbs. Thus such grammatical constructions are very important to be observed by the translator.

At this level of grammatical construction, Indian literary theories can facilitate the translator with the transposition of

tense, case, number, person, voice, prefix, suffix and particle which are discussed under the titles of *k<sup>1</sup>la-vaicitraya-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of tense) and *k<sup>1</sup>la- aucitya* (propriety of tense), *k<sup>1</sup>raka-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (propriety of case) and *k<sup>1</sup>raka- aucitya* (propriety of case), *sa, khy<sup>1</sup>-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of number) and *s<sup>1</sup>, khy<sup>1</sup>- aucitya* (propriety of number) *puru-a-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of person) and *puru-a- aucitya* (propriety of person) *upagraha-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of voice) and *upagraha- aucitya* (propriety of voice), *nip<sup>1</sup>ta-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (obliquity of particle) and *nip<sup>1</sup>ta- aucitya* (propriety of particle).

The fourth aspect of language in Indian poetics operate at the level of *v<sup>1</sup>kya* (sentence) or *vastu* (subject-matter) or *arth<sup>1</sup>la, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on meaning). Bharata, Bha<sup>1</sup>mah, V<sup>1</sup>mana, Ru<sup>1</sup>ra--a, Ruyyaka, , nandvardhana, Kuntaka, K-emendra and others treat this literary device in their own ways. Bha<sup>1</sup>mah (6<sup>th</sup>c) has elevated *ala, k<sup>1</sup>ra* (figure) to the level of a full-fledged *siddh<sup>1</sup>nta* (theory). He defines *k<sup>1</sup>vya* (literature) as '*abdarthau sahita<sup>1</sup>u k<sup>1</sup>vyam<sup>1</sup>*' (togetherness of sound and meaning). ( Bha<sup>1</sup>mah 06) Here it is not to be taken as a mere insipid statement but it should be possessed of some charm created by the figures of speech. According to Bha<sup>1</sup>mah, *ala, k<sup>1</sup>ra* ( figure) is the most essential element of poetry and it consists in the striking manner of putting a striking idea in a equally striking words. , nandavardhana's view in *Dhivy<sup>1</sup>loka* that *ala, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures) are those elements which, depending upon word and meaning , minister to the generation of poetic charm, is worth noting in this regard. Kuntaka discusses the use of figures in the creative use of *v<sup>1</sup>kya* (sentence) which is operative to deal with *vastu* (contents or subject-matter). Defining it, Kuntaka writes that the *vastu* (subject )is described in a way conducive to beauty by virtue of *ala, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures).

In order to make a translation of a poem to the level of equivalence, the translator has to understand the nature of *ala, k<sup>1</sup>ra* (figure) in a right perspective. In Donne's "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" there is a famous image which

is a constant source of disagreement among readers. The poet is urging to his beloved that their parting is not really a division.

Our two souls are one  
 Though I must go, endure not yet  
 A breach, but an expansion  
 Like gold to air thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so  
 As stiff twin compasses are two;  
 Thy soul, thy fixed foot, makes no show  
 To move, but doth, if the other do.

And though it in the centre sits,  
 Yet, when the other far doth roam,  
 It leans, and harkens after it,  
 And grows erect, as that comes home.

To the too concretely minded translator, the actual vision of the pair of compasses, the facts that they are stiff and metallic and connected perhaps with unpleasant memories of school days and geometry, destroys the emotional value of the image. But they should not be conceived visually at all. What the poet is concerned with is feel of a pair of compass, that sense of leaning and firmness and the pull between the two feet, and the translation of those sensations and emotional terms.

At this level Indian theories can inform the translator about *ala,k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures) which, classified on the basis of *¶abdaparivÅtisaã* (the nature of the word), fall into three categories: *¶abdarth<sup>1</sup>la,k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on sounds or verbal figures), *arth<sup>1</sup>l,k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on meaning) and *ubhay<sup>1</sup>la,k<sup>1</sup>ras* (hybrid figures). He shall be equipped with the nature and meaning of word caused by *s<sup>1</sup>dÅa¶yamØlak<sup>1</sup>la,k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on similarity),

*virodhagarbh<sup>1</sup>la, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on difference), *ny<sup>1</sup>yam<sup>0</sup>lak<sup>1</sup>la, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on logic), *¶ra, khal<sup>1</sup>m<sup>0</sup>lak<sup>1</sup>la, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures based on chain), *g<sup>0</sup>d<sup>1</sup>rthaprat»tin<sup>0</sup>lakala, k<sup>1</sup>lras* (figures based on inference or hidden meaning), *varg»kara<sup>a</sup>a-bahirgat<sup>1</sup>la, ak<sup>1</sup>ras* (admixture of figures), (*ubhay<sup>1</sup>la, k<sup>1</sup>ra* (hybrid figures) which work at the deep level of language. Sharma, *Literary Paritantra* 55) They produce a mental form impregnated with image, symbol and metaphor, which are the accessories in the function of language. They make the language of literature selective, deliberate, emotive, intuitive, associative and infinite. According to Indian aestheticians the writer uses *ala, k<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures) with a view to increasing beauty, enhancing qualities, depicting nature, heightening feelings, delineating action or activities, circumstances, exposing internal state, delineating character, describing physical beauty, exhibiting objective, depicting scene, characterizing spontaneous movements, and putting thoughts in tune with feelings in accordance with time and place. Thus *alaAk<sup>1</sup>ras* (figures) are the fountainhead of romance, of racing emotions and unified sensibilities of poetic diction.

The fifth aspect is the use of episodes and incidents which, *nandvardhana* and *Kuntaka* entitle in their own ways. The former treat it as *prabandha dhvani* (suggestion or semantic pragmatism through composition) while the latter designates it as *prakara<sup>a</sup>a-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (episodic obliquity). Defining *prakara<sup>a</sup>a-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* *Kuntaka* says that when the intended object is capable of maintaining suspense all along and is the product of the unique, boundless poetic skill underlying it, we have *prakara<sup>a</sup>a-vakrat<sup>1</sup>* (episodic obliquity). (Sharma, *Kuntaka's Vakrokti Siddh<sup>1</sup>nta* 196) Here he means to say that the poet, overwhelmed with the zest of creation, creates an alluring charm in the subject-matter.

Here is an example from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* Act II.sc.i. in which a secondary episode of interaction between Brutus and his servant, Lucius is very important. Brutus is





(episodes and incidents), *prabandha* (composition) and *dhvani* (suggestion or semantic pragmatism).

The first important aspect of this obliquity or suggestion is the title of composition. Ācārya Kuntaka holds that the title of *kāvya* (literature) is also replete with a kind of obliquity. He adds that sometimes even a symbolic mark or name of the source story produces a remarkable beauty. The title of the work attracts the reader due to its striking meaning. Hence, a great poet entitles his *kāvya* (literature) in such a way that it vibrates with strikingness, indicating the tilt being given to it. Kuntaka says that the title does not have merely a ceremonial purpose. The purpose of a good title is to unlock and underline the soul of the work; it enables the reader to know the main idea in either of the ways – symbolic or literal. In a way, it is the skill or art of the poet which Kuntaka calls *nīmakarāṅga-vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of title). Let us see the title *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* which is suggestive of the idea of the poem. Here the word 'Rime' which means frost formed by the freezing of water droplets in fog on to solid objects, suggests the a particular type of weather. Again the word 'ancient' is suggestive of the Mariner's age as well as of the distant past out of which he seems to emerge ghost-like into the present. Hence the translator has to be sensitive to the title of a piece of literature.

At this level Indian literary theories can inform the translator about and equip him with the creative use of *rasas* (sentiments), winding up of the story, intending end, contingent objective and title which Kuntaka discuss as *rasāntara vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of change of *rasas*), *samāpana- vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of winding up the story), *kathā-viccheda- vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of intending end), *anuvāḍika-phal vakrat*<sup>1</sup> (obliquity of contingent objective) and *nīmakarāṅga* (obliquity of title). (Sharma, Kuntaka's *Vakrokti Siddhānta* 241) Kāśmirī treats them as proprieties in his treatise, *Aucityavicāra*<sup>1</sup>.

The last important aspect of translation is *dhvani* (suggestion or semantic pragmatism). As has been referred to



world or the Divine world, which the translator is expected to embrace.

At this level Indian literary theories can inform the translator about and equip him with threesome of ¶*abda*¶*akti* (word-powers)–*abhidh<sup>1</sup>–abhidhey<sup>1</sup>rtha* or *v<sup>1</sup>cy<sup>1</sup>rtha* (primary meaning), *lakṣa<sup>a1</sup>–lak-y<sup>1</sup>rtha* (secondary or derivative meaning), and *vyanjan<sup>1</sup>–vya;g<sup>1</sup>rtha* or *dhvany<sup>1</sup>rtha* (tertiary meaning). It helps the translator to encounter *abhidh<sup>1</sup>–born-dhvani* (suggestion through primary meaning) which acts at the level of *vastu* (subject matter), *ala,k<sup>1</sup>ra* (figure) and *rasa* (sentiment). It also helps the translator to encounter *lak-a<sup>a1</sup>–born dhvani* (suggestion through secondary meaning) which also acts at two levels: at the level of *arth<sup>1</sup>ntarasa;kramitav<sup>1</sup>cya* (partial transformation) and at the level of *atyantatiraskÅta v<sup>1</sup>cya* (complete transformation). In the former case, the *vācyūrtha* (primary meaning) is transferred, while in the later case it is wholly disregarded. In *arth<sup>1</sup>ntarasa;kramitav<sup>1</sup>cya* (partial transformation) the conventional meaning is not altogether out of the place in a certain context, but it itself does not serve the intended purpose. Sharma, *Literary Paritantra* 57) And because of the force of the context, it is associated with so many ideas. Now it looks as something altogether different from itself.

## I

As has been referred to the whole spectrum of creative use of language is *sahÅadya*-based which is analogous with that of a translator. Like translator, *sahÅadya* (reader/aesthete) should be attuned to the level of the nature of the poet. According to the translation theorists the translator should be a man of taste. He should have the aptitude which includes "simplicity, scholarship, beauty, dedication, sensitivity, boldness...purity and propriety." (Patil 23) Hilaire Belloc gives moral responsibility to the translator but at the same time the liberty to change the text to suit the needs of the Target Language." (Belloc 23) This nature

of translator finds an adequate expression in the concept of *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete).

*SahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) has two dimensions. The first is the sensibility and responsiveness of *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) for the proper understanding of text and the second is empathy which is required to become one with the poet. *SahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) is expected to have a heart similar to that of the poet. The two components—'sa' and 'hĀdaya' of the word '*sahĀdaya*' stand for 'equal or same' and 'heart' respectively which approve of the same dimensions. *SahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) has *sam<sup>1</sup>nadhama* (the nature of the poet himself). There may be a difference of degree, but not of kind, in sensitivity and capacity for imaginative contemplation. (Sharma, *Asian Journal of Literature, Culture and Society*, 113) Abhinavagupta puts together the expected qualities of *sahĀdaya* in the following way:

*ye-am k<sup>1</sup>vya<sup>1</sup>astr<sup>1</sup>nu<sup>1</sup>»lanava<sup>1</sup>at vi<sup>1</sup>ad»bh<sup>0</sup>te  
manomukure, var<sup>a</sup>an»yatarmay»bh<sup>1</sup>nayogyat<sup>1</sup>,  
ta eva svahĀdyasa, v<sup>1</sup>dabh<sup>1</sup>jaā sahĀdaya/  
(Dhvany<sup>1</sup>loka Locana )*

(Those who have a pure reflective quality of heart as a result of the study into the *k<sup>1</sup>vya* (poetry) as well as *astr<sup>1</sup>* (poetics) and hence possess the quality of identifying themselves with what is presented, they only are the persons known as *sahĀdaya*) (*Dhvany<sup>1</sup>loka Locana* )

Explaining *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete), Abhinavagupta remarks that those, who by constant practice of reading poetry have acquired in their cleansed mirror-like minds, the capacity to identify themselves with the poet and are thus attuned to the poet's heart, are *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete). Therein, while reading a poem, the heart of *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) also throbs in union with the poet's heart. He becomes a part of the

poet's universe and shares poet's experience, intentions and suggestive implications with sympathy and sensibility. He possesses the ability to get absorbed in the thing being described, with his heart in harmony with the poet's heart. Both the *kavi* (poet) and *sahādaya* (reader/aesthete) in the words of T. N. Sreekantaiyya, are like "two v»<sup>a</sup>'s turned to the same pitch. If one is struck, the other resonates in tune with it". The word *sahādaya* (reader) in itself means a person possessing an alter-ego of the poet. *Sahādaya*'s (reader's/aesthete's) consciousness, cleared of all preconceptions, prejudices and biases becomes maximally receptive and thus achieves identification with the consciousness of the poet.

Aurobindo explains the nature of translator on the lines of *sam<sup>n</sup>nadhama* (the nature of the poet himself) of *sahādaya* (reader/aesthete) as conceived by Indian aestheticians. "In order to be able to translate the Vedas and Upanishads, Sri Aurobindo says that it is not enough to be a scholar; one must be a seer. The poets of Vedas and Upanishads were all seers, and to know what the seer saw, one must oneself have sight and be a student, if not a master of knowledge." (Amur 55) This statement of Sri Aurobindo seems to infuse the nature of *sahādaya* (reader/aesthete) as defined by Indian aestheticians in translator. Indian aestheticians categorically hold that *sahādaya* (reader/aesthete) should have the basic receptivity to attune himself to the level of the poet. If his heart is at par with the imaginative mind of the poet or dramatist, he can have the proper understanding of language used by the poet. Unless *sahādaya* (reader/aesthete) has an adequate degree of intellectual and emotional equipment, he may not be able to establish that rapport with the poet which is essential for the proper understanding of language and its semantic pragmatism. In his *N<sup>t</sup>ya<sup>n</sup>stra*, Bharata gives a detailed account of the qualification of a *s<sup>m</sup>jika* (spectator), which are necessary for a translator also. According to him, the spectator should have the capacity of concentration, the power of quick understanding, the capacity to maintain impartial attitude, interest in the

presentation and the capacity to identify with human focus of the situation. (Bharata 27<sup>th</sup> Chapter).

Thus both the translator and *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) seem to share the same nature of the poet and travel with him on the planes of *sĀ-i* (creation), *stithi* (preservation), *sa,h<sup>1</sup>r* (transformation), *tirobh<sup>1</sup>va* (diffusion) and *anugraha* (grace). Here *sĀ-ti* (creation) is aesthetic intuition that charges the poet. *Stithi* (preservation), denotes object of inspiration which captivates the mind of the poet. *Sa,h<sup>1</sup>r* (transformation) is indication of expression which is the depth of the poet. *Tirobh<sup>1</sup>va* (diffusion) is resulting stimulation which diffuses illusion. And finally *anugraha* (grace) is the manifestation of the universal rhythm.

Having thus equipped with the nature of the poet, both the translator and the *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) are expected to have the proper understanding of linguistic turns which the poet creatively uses at the levels of *var<sup>a</sup>a* (phoneme), *pada-pōrv<sup>1</sup>rddha* (lexis), style or *vĀtti* (style), *pada-par<sup>1</sup>rddha* (grammar), *v<sup>1</sup>kya* (sentence), *prakara<sup>a</sup>a* (episodes and incidents), *prabandha* (composition) and *dhvani* (semantic prgmatism). Now they in their own wisdom can comprehend the varieties of suggestion based upon the power of word and that of the nature of resonance and thus can understand propriety which does not require any rule. Such *sahĀdaya* (reader/aesthete) and translator are competent enough respectively to make an assessment of and overcome all possible difficulties in translating a piece of literature to the level of equivalence.

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### Book Review

Aravind Adiga, *Between the Assassinations*, Picador, New Delhi, 2008, pp. 284. Rs.295.

*Between the Assassinations* is the second novel of Aravind Adiga, the fourth Indian born to win the prestigious booker prize given to an outstanding author from the Commonwealth for his debut novel *The White Tiger*. The present novel under-review is a holistic endeavour of the novelist to study the regional city of Karnataka ie Kittur, covering the seven years period from 1984 to 1991 between the two great assassinations of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi. The novelist has neatly segmented his stories into seven days of narration, representatives of the seven years of life that elapses in Kittur between the assassinations.

Kittur is on India's south-western coast, in between Goa and Calicut-a small, undistinguished everytown. Here, an illiterate Muslim boy working at the train station finds himself tempted by an Islamic terrorist; a Dalit bookseller is arrested for selling a copy of *The Satanic Verses*; a rich, spoiled, half-caste student decides to explode a bomb in college; a sexologist has to find a cure for young boy with a mysterious disease that may be AIDS.

Adiga holds that it is not the Kittur of Belgaun district but is completely fictitious and through this town moral biography of an Indian town is mapped across class, religion, occupation and preoccupation. There are twelve short stories in this novel and Kittur is the common linking factor. The stories are of diverse nature, portraying various shades of characters.



The novel begins with the description of the train station of Kittur and the famous Kittamma Devi temple- the first stop of the visitors to the town. 'None of the other shopkeepers near the railway station would hire a Muslim, but Ramanna Shetty, who ran the Ideal Store, a tea and samosa place, told Ziauddin it was okay for him to stay' (BTA, 3). Ramanna Shetty has a servant named Ziauddin who is soon kicked after being blamed for committing thefts. Protecting his shouts, the boy says 'I'm a Pathan! We came here and built Taj Mahal and the Red Fort in Delhi and so don't you dare treat me like this, you son of a bald woman...' (BTS, 9). Soon the place is visited by a Muslim terrorist who makes Ziauddin his puppet by giving him rupees off and on for furnishing him with information of the trains.

Aravind Adiga's portrays multitudes of people of Kittur belonging to different castes, creeds, and economic status. Life goes on in the township despite riots, corruption, injustice, poor-rich divide, and terrorism that raise their ugly heads time and time again. Through the novel Adiga brings to the lime light the ever widening gap between the poor and the rich, between the haves and have not, which if uncontrolled may flare up in the form of violence and terrorism. These are eye-openers to law makers and administrators to have the political will to deliver justice to the poor and marginalized rooting out corruption in all forms and punishment to the culprit.

All the stories in the novel deal with sources of people that make Kittur come alive in the midst of great change and transformation. Adiga precisely places his characters in the map of the town with their voice and virtues, evil and cunning, all bundled into a great humanity. Through stories the readers are given a tour of the various landmarks and places of importance in Kittur from *Train Station* to *Salt Market Village*.

- Satendra Kumar

### Book Review

Manju Kapur, *The immigrant*. Random House India Publication, 2008, p. 334, Rs. 395.

The present novel under review entitled *the immigrant* (2008) in which Manju Kapur has explored the complex terrain of the Indian family with much insight and affection through the protagonist Nina who is a thirty year old English Lecturer in Miranda College, New Delhi, struggling to make both ends meet for herself and her widow mother but her pursuit is as useless as to search water in the arid soil and as a result of that her fragile new life begins to unravel. No one writes about middle class family life with the nuance and tenderness of Manju Kapur. *The immigrant* is an intimate portrait of an arranged marriage- and another mesmerizing saga from this most beloved of novelists in which an attempt has been made for mental thirst at the cost of physical lust.

The novel unfolds many currents of views and flows of different denizens who are just puppets in the hands of Almighty. 'What is lotted cannot be blotted' seems to prove the novel. Human being is just a victim of circumstances. Nina, though thirty year old but her spirit felt sixty as she walked from the bus stop to a single room where she lived with her widow mother Mrs Batra. The hopes each conversation generated gradually lost luster as the years went by and nothing changed. When she was doing MA she fell a prey with an

English teacher who was 15 years older than her, named Rahul who 'liked to love serially'. Unfortunately for Nina he reminded her of her father. She offered him her heart and expected his in return. . . . Eventually the serial lover moved on. She thought the pain would destroy her. She waited for him to declare that she was the chosen one. 'But Rahul had always made it clear that he wanted to have his cake and eat it too. Like all cakes this was chewed, mashed into pulp and swallowed'. She had her close chap to ventilate her heart namely Zenobia who always encouraged her for higher studies 'that being her only chance of finding a decent guy, for Indian men were mother-obsessed, infantile, chauvinist bastards'. But her mother was too fatalist and believed in astrologist who showed some drop of rain in the dry land of heart, 'By now the mother was in a state of deep excitement and Nina in a state of deep suspicion'.

The hero of the novel, Ananda, with whom the heroine ie Nina was going to tie and migrate in Canada where he, as a dentist has been practicing with the last seven years, recalls the moments he passed in Dehradun with some dreams to serve his old parents but it was not written in his lot, 'these exemplary aspirations were not destined to be realized'. Ananda completed five years course of dentist from King George's Hospital in Lucknow. After the death of his parents Ananda landed in Halifax on 15<sup>th</sup> August where dentist Uncle took the liability of his career. As a result of that he made a smart move in coming. His uncle always used to boost him by quoting, 'If God shuts the door, he opens a window'.

Three months after Ananda had moved into the Galler home where Gary, the close friend, introduced Sue, a nurse who later on became his sexual mate passing through unsuccessful intercourse. His sister Alka found an Indian bride for him, but 'Ananda thought

mournfully of his sexual difficulties and wondered whether the breakthrough moment would come with an arranged marriage. Any possibility on the horizon was accompanied by tension and tantrums. But the time was fixed for face to face talk between Ananda and Nina and Ananda concluded with a small kiss that sealed the proposal and put the ball in Nina's court. On Dec 26 their marriage ceremony was executed at Arya Samaj Mandir in Kailash Colony. Later on they reached Canada for the settlement and to start a new life with a wife.

Ananda thought sexually he was doing better than before even without the anesthetic he sprayed on his penis to delay his climax. 'One day he might try again with a white woman. He loved his wife but he didn't want to feel that was the only one in the world he could have sex with. What kind of man would that make him, with his masculinity so limited? . . . Every female patient lying in his chair with her mouth opens, giving herself trustingly to him'. Nina could see her dreams falling into fragments around the dining table. Tears gathered in her eyes. Nina looked worried. She didn't understand why he had suddenly turned hostile-surely he was aware he had a problem. Sex was a form of communication and if they could not communicate on this basic level, what about everything else?

Finally Ananda went through two weeks' sexual therapy and returned with aplomb hope to mount the castle with suitcase full of books to be read and then trial and error session but he could not satisfy her fire fully which covered under ash of disappointment. Nina also visited Gynecologist for her treatment and satisfaction but it was a fault of her husband than hers. She also read many books on sex and learnt many things. Meanwhile she got a part time job in library there and became officially busy which left room for her husband to do unsuccessful sexual experiment with white women like Sue first

and Mandy later. He mulled: 'It does not rain but it pours. A life that three years ago was a desert so far as women were concerned, now had a wife and a mistress. The first had lead to the second and the second had all the moves. Poor Mrs Hill had broken her leg and needed to rest for two months before she returned to work. Mandy was the result. She was young, ten years than him it later turned out. This was her first receptionist's job. She was so uninhibited, all over him, kissing, licking, sucking.

A few months later Nina got the letter they had all been hoping for a degree recognized by the Association of Commonwealth Universities and with it the possibility of a job anywhere in North America. Her life as a student began for next two years. Among the students of the Library School Anton was one who looked upon Nina and found her attractive. He liked Asian women as he found them warm, intelligent, gentle and empathetic. Library School assumed an excitement for Nina that she hadn't anticipated. In December she went to Ottawa to tour the National Library, the National Science Library and the National Archives for four days and Ananda would spend every night with Mandy. 'Love for Nina began to wear the face of responsibility and when he was with Mandy he naturally felt less burdened'. He mused, 'It was marriage too that had given him Mandy, in his mind his wife and his mistress were inextricably linked'. His bosom friend Gary warned him of the ill consequences of such illegal physical relation with Mandy that can lead to divorce. As a result of that Ananda switched to his wife fully.

Nina was a toy to be used, abused, misused and finally to be thrown from the human phase. 'Her first lover had taken her virginity and her hopes, her second lover had been her husband, her third had made her international'. When she was young she was a prey of Rahul

who exploited her and squeezed her body like lemon and enjoyed the moment. When she was married she was but just a time pass nipple in the hands of her impotent husband Ananda who always used to do experiment with white women. When she was at the threshold of a job of Librarian she was molested, teased, fucked and finally rapped by Anton, 'she collapsed onto the bed, one of many defenseless creatures in an uncaring city'. The novelist spread a message through Anton that 'it is stupid to confine yourself to one person for your whole life. What about adventure, what about experiencing differences? No body owns anybody...' She looked the cards of her life as she wondered which hand to deal. In any game she would have flung them down. Ananda revealed his heart:

Life was what you made of it. You could look at a glass and call it half full or half empty. You could look out of the window and see the sky or stare at the mud. How often had he heard his parents make these distinctions between types of people? Well he knew what manner of person he was. And Nina was definitely his opposite. . . . Marriage had been the most significant step in the remarking of his old self. There was no one to appreciate the irony of this. After he married everything changed, his mind, his heart, his penis. In this change his wife had been left far behind. It was not her fault. It was the situation. Given his social position, he hoped it was a temporary situation.

She stared at him. What he was insinuating was so clear, 'to become a ray of sunshine'. Buds blossomed, leaves emerged, the grass turned green. Nina enjoyed every breath of air, despite her heavy heart. She graduated and applied for jobs and got a call for interview from the University of New Brunswick, 'In her bones she knew she would get the job. Interviews had always been easy for her'. The novelist makes a modest attempt to purport the real meaning of

immigration at the cost of humiliation, inhibition, secret and unwanted sex as the title suggests through the mouthpiece of the protagonist of the novel Nina who concludes ultimately in the end of the novel in these words:

...the ultimate immigrant experience. Not that any one thing ready enough to attach yourself to for the rest of your life, but that you found different ways to belong, ways not necessarily lasting, but ones that made your journey less lonely for a while. When something failed it was a signal to move on. For an immigrant there was no going back....When one was reinventing oneself, anywhere could be home. Pull up your shallow roots and move. Find a new place, new friends, a new family. It had been possible again.

The novel is indubitably sexual, filled with pornography, less appealing and gives the glimpse of Canadian and Indian Cultures and unlocks how the society changes the person and compels to adjust. Manju Kapur, a celebrated author, has written a seductive family story of mental thirst, set at a time of 1970s. It stems the intellectual experience of her academic life.

- Satendra Kumar

### Book Review

**Jon Stock. *Dead Spy Running*. UK:Publisher: Blue Door, ISBN: 0007300697PRICE: £12.99**

*Dead Spy Running* is the third novel of a trilogy by Jon Stock, a British author and journalist. Jon Stock is currently Weekend editor of *The Telegraph*. He is also a columnist with *The Week* magazine in India. He previously worked in New Delhi, India for a period of two years, as a foreign correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*, and has also lived in Cochin.

*Dead Spy Running* is the third novel of his trilogy. It arrives emblazoned with raves from the likes of Lee Child and Robert Goddard – hinting to the reader that both action and storytelling will push all the requisite buttons. The book is expected to take a long flight.

The story kicks off at the London Marathon. Daniel Marchant is an inactive MI6 operative. Rather than languishing in torpor, he has decided to run the London Marathon. But the dangers of his ex-day job are not far away – one of the other competitors is lethally strapped with explosives, and if he reduces his pace, all around him will meet their doom bloodily. There are those who think that he is compromised in his professional life. It seems to CIA that his father, who had been head of MI6, was forcibly retired under suspicious circumstance and they are convinced that the apple hasn't fallen far from the tree.



Marchant finds himself treated like a suspected terrorist (extraordinary rendition, water boarding), and things look very black for him. He finds himself in the custody of his own people, and eventually the CIA. He shuns disaster, but MI5 and the Americans are suspicious about why he was on the scene and whether he himself is hand in glove with terrorists. So he's on the run, trying to clear his name and his father's name. On the run from the CIA, Marchant is determined to prove his father's innocence in a personal journey that takes him from Wiltshire, via Poland, to India. But there are people who are not against him: — but he has friends who are disillusioned with America's war on terror, Sir Marcus Fielding, the new Chief who resents the White House's growing influence in Whitehall and Marchant's girl friend (and inamorata) Leila (another MI6 officer). And, more importantly, new Intelligence chief Sir Marcus Fielding, who is suspicious of America's apparently unshakeable grip over UK foreign policy. He resents the White House's growing influence in Whitehall. More heart pounding events transpire and Daniel soon finds himself on the run from MI5, MI6, and CIA, all while a plot may be unfolding to kill President Obama (the unnamed "new guy") as he visits India.

As for the plot, it's just about believable, although there are a couple of creaky moments, which require suspension of disbelief. A fast-paced opening chapter that literally hits the ground running, immediately draws you into this book, and although the author doesn't always keep up the momentum. The momentum of the book keeps you reading but there are a few structural problems. Our hero doesn't really play a crucial role in the story's climax. There are plenty of twists and action, but these are often squandered - delivered as throwaways rather than being maximized. Stereotypical characters make silly decisions (the head of MI5 is repeatedly a prime example). The characters should indeed be vivid. They make the story move

and interesting. Moreover, the title of the novel should be apt, suggestive and relevant. It is supposed to excite the curiosity and should make us queer to go through it. The title "*Dead Spy Running*" has all these features.

Having not long before watched the London Marathon, this book was extremely topical. Opening with a scene of the hero Daniel Marchant running the marathon and realizing that a suicide bomber is running too but rather too close to the U S Ambassador for comfort the book grips from the start. On the run and not knowing who to trust, we are delivered one cracking good read. Marchant is in some ways an updated James Bond and writ large clearly for the big screen, but this is no bad thing and the writing is more intelligent than typical thrillers. On the whole, it's a solid page-turning thriller, with all the requisite insider detail and international color. It gets especially good once on Indian soil, as Stock's familiarity with India enables him to bring a lot of local color to the story. The writer no doubt draws on his background in India and as a journalist he knows the trick of keeping you with him through the story. It encompasses suspense drama, confusion, misunderstanding, loss and reconciliation. It's all quite readable and dead exciting at least in parts. Thrillers, the plot line may not bear intense scrutiny; Jon Stock knows how to write a ripping yarn to while away a holiday or a train journey.

-S. K. Singh

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