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S.K. Agrawal

Dalit Literature and Dalit Chetna vs Adivasi Poetics and Adivasi Vedna : Aesthetics of Dalit and Adivasi Writings

(Dalit Writings have come a long way since the inception of Dalit ideology in 1970s. Dalit literature is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Dalit power concept. As such it envisions art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Dalit India. In order to perform this task, the Dalit literary movement proposes a radical re-ordering of the Hindu upper caste cultural aesthetics. It proposes a separate symbolism, mythology, critique and iconology. It exposes Brahminism, praises Dalits and supports the lower caste revolution.

In the category, Dalits (the regionally, culturally, economically and socially oppressed groups) are included the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and some of the Backward Classes, besides Minorities. Dalit philosophy is based on the belief that low caste status leads to poverty and oppression; this is, however, conspicuously absent in tribal poetics. Tribal poetics has chosen historical amnesia, economic exploitation, displacement, eviction and unprovoked assaults by the police as its thematic concerns. The paper argues that though both Dalit (primarily the writings by the Scheduled Castes' writers) and Tribal writings are the poetics of the pangs of marginalization; Dalit's marginalization is the outcome of the ills of caste system, untouchability, servitude, etc, but tribal poetics is the expression of the

anguish and pain of the network of the forces of historical amnesia and the so called 'development'.

The paper very succinctly suggests that Dalit Chetna which is applied as a theoretical tool to analyze the 'dalitness' of a literary work of art, cannot be a befitting tool to critically assess and evaluate the tribal poetics. The paper, therefore proposes 'Adivasi Vedna' as a tool for the critical analysis of tribal poetry. It lays down that marginalization may not necessarily constitute backwardness, and a movement to resist the forces of historical amnesia and the so called 'development' and 'modernization' can be successful only when the Omnipotent is there to support us, which Dalit consciousness outrightly rejects.

The paper also brings out the subtle differences between the historiography of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and considers Dalit writing an outpouring of the former group for the ills of caste system being their sole agenda and the Scheduled Castes, being at the lower rung of the mainstream culture the worst hit group.

The paper consists of three parts. Part I deals with the term Dalit and the philosophy of Dalit literature; part II is about Dalit Chetna and Part III explains the need of distinct aesthetics for a proper critical estimate of Adivasi literature and suggests that *Adivasi Vedna* may be a suitable theoretical tool for the aforesaid purpose.)

I

Dalit and Dalit Literature

The term 'Dalit' is generally believed to have derived from the Sanskrit root 'dal' which means 'burst', 'split', 'broken', 'torn' or 'asunder', 'downtrodden', 'scattered', 'crushed', 'destroyed'. From these synonyms, it is crystal clear that a section of people called Dalits has been torn asunder, crushed and destroyed. The Dalits have also been viciously described as 'Dasas'. The word 'Dalits' therefore means

the 'low caste' who have been reduced to that state and now they are living in that predicament. A human being is not inherently Dalit, neglected or untouchable; it is the system that degrades him in that fashion. Eleanor Zelliot (1996) believes that in the term and concept 'Dalit' itself there is an inherent denial of dignity, a sense of pollution and an acceptance of Karma theory that justifies the caste hierarchy(3). Dr. Ambedkar in his book *Ostracized Bharat* writes "Dalithood is a kind of life condition that characterizes the exploitation, suppression and marginalisation of Dalit people by the social, economic, cultural and political domination of the upper castes' Brahmanical ideology"(4).

The present usage of the term 'Dalit' goes back to the nineteenth century, when a Marathi social reformer and revolutionary, Mahatma Jotirao Phule used it to declare the outcastes and untouchables as the oppressed and broken victims of the caste. It was popularized by the Dalit Panthers Movement of Maharashtra in 1970s. Thus, the Dalits are, as Arun Kamble says, those who have been oppressed socially, religiously, culturally, economically and philosophically by the unjust established social organism. The Dalit writings consider the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, Backward classes and Minorities as Dalits (Narasaiah, 1999).

The Dalits lead a life of insults, insecurity and poverty because of caste system and Hindu religion. Brahminism, the ideological backbone of Hindu system is considered the collective enemy by the Dalits. Dalit literature's philosophic soul is Ambedkarism.

Dalit literature owes its origin to a revolutionary philosophy which is the outcome of the great struggle of lower caste people throughout Indian history for the annihilation of caste system and brahmanical ideology. So it is naturally characterized by the philosophic outlook developed by Buddha, Phule, Ambedkar and Periyar's thoughts which in Dalit terminology is called Ambedkarism.

Ambedkarism, the underlying philosophy of Dalit literature emphasises that in India, it is not the economic condition that determines men's social status, but on the contrary, their social status determines their economic position. It is that human beings are what they are because of the caste into which they are born. The caste system generates the sense of superiority or inferiority in relation to other, because one feels superior or inferior as a principle of caste system provided in the Hindu Shastras. (Narasaiah : 1999) Ambedkar observes "that the Indian society was formed with an ascending scale of reverence and descending scale of contempt and gave no scope for the growth of the sentiment of equality and fraternity" (quoted in Narasaiah, 1999).

Michael Foucault (1984) says that knowledge and power are interrelated. Those who have knowledge have power. Denial of knowledge is denial of power. For centuries, caste system in the Indian subcontinent has controlled, regulated and hierarchised knowledge. Prabhakar Palaka also writes :

the powerless are not seen as credible sources of knowledge and explanation. Some kind of writings and writers are more powerful than others, and this is connected to the wider issues of caste and class, economic and political power, ideological and cultural struggle and the relationship between writers and the building and maintenance of hegemony(4).

Dalit literature is the literature produced by Dalit consciousness. Human freedom is the inspiration behind it. Dalit literature must be written "from the Dalit point of view and with a Dalit vision. The 'Dalit view point' calls for a writer to internalize the sorrows and sufferings of the Dalits. Any writer with Dalit sensibility may have 'Dalit View Point' but not necessarily 'Dalit Vision'. The difference between 'Dalit View Point' and 'Dalit Vision' can be found in the desired objective. A person with the 'Dalit View Point' aims for a limited transformation

whereas a person with the Dalit vision demands a total revolution or transformation. When the narrator is from outside the Dalit community, there is a greater possibility of narrating merely as an observer, whereas when the narrator is from within the community, more than his observation, his experience percolates into his thought” (Prabhakar Palaka; 2009).

The foregoing analysis makes it amply clear that Dalit literature must be a means of projecting Dalit consciousness; it advocates along with other fundamentals that the search for Dalit liberation must come from the oppressed themselves. Samir Ranjan’s Dalit characters, whether it is Baba in ‘Man Turns to an Anthill’ or Om Prakash Balmiki’s *Jhootan* are conscious of this fact. They all know that they can liberate themselves. To a greater extent they are all liberated characters who fought against the same exploitative and oppressive forces of society.

II

Dalit Chetna and Dalit Literature

The term ‘Dalit Chetna’ or ‘Consciousness’ often forms a part of the discussions revolving around Dalit politics, identity and aesthetics, etc. It is a fundamental component of an emerging theory of Dalit aesthetics. Besides Omprakash Valmiki’s *Dalit Sahitya Ka Saundaryashastra* (Aesthetics of Dalit Literature) there are three anthologies of essays, interviews, poems and stories published in the late nineties and edited by Delhi-based publisher of Dalit literature Ramnika Gupta entitled *Dalit Chetna : Kavita* (Dalit Consciousness : Poetry, 1996), *Dalit Chetna : Sahitya* (Dalit Consciousness : Literature, 1996) and *Dalit Chetna : Soch* (Dalit Consciousness : Thoughts, 1998) debate the specific understandings and applications of Dalit Chetna. Limbale in his *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature* (trans. By Alok Mukherjee,) defines Dalit literature as “writings about Dalits by Dalit writers with a Dalit consciousness” (1). He further writes “Dalit Consciousness is the revolutionary mentality

connected with struggle. Ambedkarite thought is the inspiration for this consciousness. Dalit consciousness makes slaves conscious of their slavery. Dalit consciousness is an important seed for Dalit literature; it is separate and distinct from the consciousness of other writers. Dalit literature is demarcated as unique because of this consciousness. It is an indispensable attribute of the Dalit literary aesthetics. It is intimately tied to the emancipatory ideology of B.R. Ambedkar and, is the yardstick by which the dalitness of Dalit literature is measured (32). Dalit Chetna has emerged in recent years in a large body of Dalit literary criticism as a theoretical tool with which the architects of Dalit literary culture are able both to set boundaries for the growing genre of Dalit literature and launch a distinctly Dalit critique of celebrated works of literature.

At the centre of Dalit chetna is Ambedkarite philosophy of emancipation. It derives its primary energy from Dr. Ambedkar’s life and vision. All Dalit writers are united with respect to this truth. Omprakash Valmiki enumerates the major points of Dalit chetna thus:

- Welcoming the vision of Dr. Ambedkar on questions of freedom and independence;
- Being for Buddha’s rational, intellectual perspective and concepts of no-god and no-soul, and being against the hypocrisy of Hindu law and custom;
- Being against the caste system, against casteism, against communalism,
- Being against social divisions, and in support of brotherliness;
- Taking the side of independence and social justice;
- Supporting social change;
- Being against capitalism in the financial sector;
- Being against feudalism and Brahmanism;
- Being against supremacy;

- Disagreeing with the definition of “great poetry” by Ramchandra Shukla;
- Being against traditional aesthetics;
- Taking the side of a caste-less, class-less society;
- and being against hierarchies of language and privilege (31).

Dalit Chetna is being used as a strategy for Dalit critical analysis, a ‘kind of test’ by which Dalit critics can judge the ‘dalitness’ of any work of literature, whether written by a Dalit or a non-dalit. It is a concept that permeates discussion of both the future of Dalit literature and the critical re-reading of major works of literature of the 20th century that have widely been heralded as progressive. In its generally accepted avatar it denotes a loyalty to and an expression of the Ambedkarite message of the human dignity of Dalits.

Dalit consciousness is a modern critical concept in the mode of deconstruction. It is an expression of denial, a theoretical tool that contributes to the destabilization of traditional notions of social hierarchy and cultural authenticity. Contemporary Dalit- critics are specific about both the current nature and the importance of Dalit Chetna. Valmiki writes:

Dalit Chetna is elemental in opposing the cultural inheritance of the upper castes, the notion that culture is a hereditary right for them, and one that is denied to Dalits. Dalit Chetna is concerned with the questions ‘who am I?’ ‘What is my identity?’ The strength of character of Dalit authors comes from these questions (28-29)

Dalit Chetna is what gives Dalit literature its unique power. The writings such as Bhakti poetry and the early writings of 20th century by Dalits of Western India cannot be termed Dalit literature because they lacked in the expression of Dalit consciousness. Rather the concept

of Dalit Chetna is wholly modern, even deconstructive in its ability to clear the way for a new understanding of Dalit identity (Valmiki 2001).

A Dalit Chetna does not just make an account of the anguish, misery, pain and exploitation of Dalits, or draw a sensitive portrait of Dalit agony; rather it is that which is absent from original consciousness, the simple and straight forward perspective that breaks the spell of the shadow of the cultural, historical and social roles for Dalit. In brief, Dalit Chetna is an essential component of the growing Dalit literary critical lexicon.

III

Dalit and Dalit Writings vs Tribal and Tribal Literature

The foregoing analysis makes it amply clear that Dalit literature discusses the historiography of India in terms of binaries such as centre and margin, placed and displaced elites and dalits, tribal and non-tribal and tries to establish that the mainstream literature has treated Dalits, marginalized and tribals as subhumans. This, however, does not seem to hold much truth, especially in the case of tribals. Even a cursory glance at Indian history brings to light the fact that tribal and non-tribal cultures co-existed and the sense of subjugation of the tribal and that of dominance of the non-tribal mainstream culture never hampered the cordial relationship between the two.

Approximately four decades ago when Dalit literature started pulling the nations’ attention, tribal writers also came into limelight. In Marathi, for example, Atmaram Rathod, Laxman Mane, Laxman Gaikwad, each belonging to nomadic tribal communities, were hailed as Dalit writers. During that time, the north east was yet to flower its magic in tribal literature to the rest of India. During the last 20 years the various tribal voices and literary works have started making their presence felt. Thus Kocheteri from Kerala and Alma Kabutri from the north stormed the readers almost the same time when L. Khiangle’s

anthology of Mizo Literature and Govind Chatak's anthology of Garhwali literature appeared in English and Hindi translation.

The last two decades have established that Indian tribal literature is no longer only the folk songs and folk tales. It now embraces other complex genres, like the novel and drama. Daxin Bajarange's Budhan theatre in Ahmedabad has been giving rise to gorgeously refreshing plays, modern in form and contemporary in content. Little magazines such as Chattisgarhi *Lokakshar* and *Dhol* have started coming out, providing space for tribal poets and writers. Keeping in mind the Indian tribal historiography, the tribal literature of pre-independent era and the emerging poetic/literary trends of the post-independence/ global era, it becomes imperative to discuss whether tribals and tribal literature real fits into the canons of Dalit/Dalit literature.

Dalit literature's one of the most significant postulates that caste is a hydra-headed beast explains the economic disparity in terms of caste system. Caste system has brutalized and dehumanized the Dalits. Untouchability is one among the various ugly aspects of its system. It is a complex of cruel and humiliating discriminatory practices and disabilities, which may or may not include prohibition of physical contact to which members of Dalit castes were and still are subjected by the rest of society. Untouchability may be regarded both as an important feature of Dalit resistance, and also as a mechanism whereby, as an integral part of the Indian caste system, the dalits have been kept in line through centuries. The history of atrocities which the upper caste people force on Dalits is also closely linked with untouchability. This constitutes an inherent part of Dalit consciousness. Dr. Ambedkar, the father of Dalit Movement, Arjun Dangle, the editor of *Poisoned Bread*, Namdeo Dhasal, the writer of *Golpitha* expose the evils of caste system and injustice done to them by higher caste.

Tribal history, "though a combination of doctrinal tolerance and caste strictness" is speechless about such evil as untouchability.

Nowhere does the tribal oral or written literature of India (Pre-as well as post- independent India) provide a clue, on the basis of which can be concluded that certain sections of tribal society were discriminated and atrocities were inflicted on them. Moreover, there exists a profound continuity between literate Brahmanism and the illiterate animism of the tribal communities which gradually joined Brahmanic society in the past. Girilal Jain, a famous archaeologist, clinches the issue with a very telling example. He writes:

The Lingaraja temple in Bhubaneshwar, built in the eleventh century, has two classes of priests: Brahmins and a class called Badus who are ranked as Sudras and are said to be of tribal origin. Not only are Badus priests of this important temple; they also remain in the most intimate contact with the deity whose personal attendants they are. Only they are allowed to bathe the Lingaraga and adorn him and at festival time only Budus may carry this movable image. The deity was originally under a mango tree. The Badus are described by the legend as tribals who originally inhabited the place and worshipped the linga under the tree (Jain, 24).

Dalit consciousness considers that the history of Dalit people (including SCs, STs, BCs and Minorities) in India has been a record of unbroken continuity of inhumanity, physical and psychological brutality, all designed to deny the dignity of a people. The tribal history in India, however does not seem to have any consonance with this oft advanced statement.

Historically – almost till the end of the Mughal rule- most major Adivasi communities like- Gonds, Kolis, Bhils and Minas- were recognized as dominant existing in compact areas, having their unique cultural and social systems. It was with the advent of British imperialism and their attempts to widen the tax net that the state began to forcibly

bring these communities under systems of revenue collection that were completely foreign to them. K.S. Singh says “whereas peasant society was monetized during the Mughal rule, integration of the tribal society into money economy took place during the colonial period” (Singh, 25). The strategy of tax collection did not remain limited to economic intervention but also included disruption of several social practices of the tribals. It was during this time that the collusion between many local Indian kings and the colonial regime got cemented with the common aim of multiplying revenue from tax. The tribal groups were forced to react in order to protect their livelihood, culture and natural habitat. The major tribal uprisings included Halba rebellion in Chhattisgarh, Chamka rebellion in Orissa, Chuar rebellion in Bengal, Khurda rebellion in Orissa and Bhil rebellion in Rajasthan (1822-81).

The 1857 uprising against the British included protests by a large number of Adivasi communities. The protest was actually a culmination of almost sixty years of repression and resistance that they had lived through and was expressed through several uprisings, such as Tarapur rebellion (1842-54), Maria rebellion (1842-63), Bhil rebellion, begun by Tantya Tope in Banswara (1858), Koi revolt (1859), Gond rebellion, begun by Ramji Gond in Adilabad (1860), Muria rebellion (1876), Rami rebellion (1878-82), Bhumkal (1910), etc.

Several tribal leaders like Shankar Shah and his son of the Gond community; Narayan Singh, the leader of the Binghamal community; who looted the granary of a big landlord to feed his hungry people, Birsa Munda, Khajya Nayak, Bhima Nayak and Janta Bhil lost their lives while fighting their repressors. Historians have recorded the 1857 uprising in fair detail, the protests by the adivasi communities and their stiff resistance against the colonial regime, however, have not found adequate space in the historiography of protest movements. Vibha S Chauhan says “This is a clear reflection of marginalization of the adivasis

in all spheres. This partial historical amnesia has its roots in the epistemology of historical methodology and its implicit collusion with the socio-political power structure” (in Ganesh Devy: 2009).

This is unfortunate that this selective memory continues to live in contemporary India. The discourse of knowledge that evolved in post independence India continues to deny the tribals a history and the social and cultural distinction that grows out of it. For purposes of official administration, the adivasi communities – “Scheduled Tribes” – have been clubbed with the “Scheduled castes” by The Constitution Order, 1950 respectively via Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution of India. “The constitution unfortunately ignores basic differences between the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes and tends to project these as being similar to each other. The groups are, however, poles apart in their culture, social structure, and historical evolution over time” (Chauhan, 2009).

The scheduled castes belong to the caste system, an integral part of the social hierarchy since times immemorial and continues to be an important input of group and personal identity even today. Based on purity – pollution ritualism, the tenets of this system of social stratification are well known. Moreover, despite conventional difference between the high and low castes, there has always existed active social and economic interaction between them.

On the other hand, the tribals have existed as self-sufficient social and economic units with structures of social systems that differ not only from the ‘external’ wider society but even amongst themselves. Having been threatened by the alien cultures and forces in the past, the tribal population continues to be wary of the Diku – the outsider. Not only have the tribals been kept out of the social, cultural and literary history of India, they have also not been allowed to play any meaningful role in the contemporary agenda of development. There

has been a growing feeling among the tribals and also in parts of society at large, that mainstream intervention does not mean much in terms of societal and cultural upliftment of the tribal and they continue to be made easy targets of exploitation.

Several tribal protests against “state industry nexus” are taking place in contemporary India. Development has turned out to be a nightmarish experience for the tribals, leading to a disruption of their traditions. The tribal songs are a beautiful expression of the anguish against the processes of mechanization and development. A village poet of the Damodar vally in Jharkhand writes:

Which Company came to my land
To open a Karkhana
It awakened its name in the rivers and ponds calling itself
D.V.C.
.... You came and made this bloody, burning ghat
Calling yourself a D.V.C.
(*Voices of the Adivasi*, 46)

The government’s insistence on formal and authorized records on paper has led to eviction of tribals from traditional ownership of land. Recent tribal history testifies to the fact that a sizeable number of them are being dispossessed of their land by mega projects. This, however, unlike the scheduled caste agenda could not evolve into a persistent protest movement. Dalits have successfully converted caste into an ideology and by providing grounds for increased political mobilization have created a space within the traditional political discourse. However, a silence surrounds what may be called the agenda of the scheduled tribes.

Tribal literary movement aims at self discovery, preservation and protection of adivasi culture and resources from outsiders. It is the literature of protest and self-assertion on the one hand, and self

criticism on the other. It also aims to rid the society of its aberrations. Govind Guru’s revolt and Kali bai’s sacrifice speak volume of their contribution towards the welfare of society and humanity. Ramesh Chandra Badhera and Khem Raj Pargi discovered them in local folk songs. The tribal poet Hariram Meena has described them in his research articles. Ramnika Gupta writes:

Today we know that a genocidal event more shameful than Jallianwalla Bagh took place, and 1500 tribals were massacred, on the hills of Mangarh with the connivance of the Rajput rulers of states now part of Rajasthan and Gujarat. This event was not recorded in our history books. After Meena’s article was published in *Pahal* and later in *Yudhrat Aam Admi* a quarterly Hindi magazine of Ramnika Foundation and Tribal Literature Forum, it has been included, and a monument was constructed at Mangarh by the Government (Gupta, 2009)

A song about Govind Gurud anticipates independence:

O, the brown haired Bhuriya (white men)
I will not listen to you
I have my authority in Delhi
My seat in Ahmedabad
My forces spread all over Jambu (Sub continent in India)
In Mangarh burns my Dhuni (sacred fire)
Believe it or not
O Bhuriya I will not abide by you.
 (“O Bhuriya I will not abide by you”.)

The tribals understand the conspiracy hatched against them with the sole objective to dispossess and displace them and keeps them off the bandwagon of progress. In a tribal song, the narrator warns his community:

How would you prove
 In this court of civilization
 That this land belongs to you ?
 (“How would you prove?”)

My purpose in mentioning the tribal protests and poetics is to show how they widely differ from Dalit protests and poetics. If we examine the contemporary political discourse of the scheduled castes, we discover that it is intertwined with their culture, collective memory and myths; the primary aim of which is to subvert the dominant elitist political and cultural code. The vital relationship between politics, literature, culture and society becomes evident from the prominence Dalit literature gained after its association with Dalit Panthers, a political party founded in 1972 by writers to fight atrocities against the untouchables. Vibha S. Chauhan writes:

Its (Dalit Panthers) founders Namdeo Dhasal and Raja Dhale were poets committed both to literature itself as well as to “literature as a weapon” against social injustice. While it is true that Dalit creativity began to be noticed in literary circles in the 1960s, it was when it got identified with the political agenda of the Dalit movement that it was able to successfully assert an alternate aesthetics as well as an alternate political order (67)

It is thus crystal clear that caste and caste repression are the major issues of mobilization for Dalit creativity. The tribal poetics, on the other hand, has chosen economic exploitation, displacement, eviction and unprovoked assaults by the police as its thematic concerns. Secondary, tribal literature besides being relevant in the present scenario has been trying to sensitize the mainstream towards the marginalized tribals. This literature is trying to bridge the gap between “us” and “them”. An example is Nirmala Putul. Though she has been inspired in

her writings by the adivasi movement of protest and self assertion, she has succeeded in arousing empathy with the tribal people.

Tribal literature thus, unlike Dalit literature is not confined only to the ‘tyrannical’ caste system and brahminical ideology; it is all pervasive and extensive in its reach. The consciousness behind it is realistic in its approach. It is committed writing aiming at the welfare of society and humanity. It is democratic and believes in equality, fraternity and liberty.

Given the above perspective, it is needless to say that each literature demands its own kind of historiography. The history of tribals as writes G.N. Devy :

is filled with stories of forced displacement, land alienation, increasing marginalization, the eruption of violence and counter violence by the state. Going by the parameter of development, the tribals always figure at the tail end. The situation of the communities that have been pastoral or nomadic has been even worse. (Dey, XV)

In a word, tribal literature depicts the ‘adivasi Vedna’ (tribal pathos: ‘rather than dalit consciousness) which is a cumulative product of economic repression, displacement, historical amnesia, ‘developmental deprivation’ and eviction. Naturally, the whole tribal literature is bereft of an attitude of hatred towards Brahminical ideology. It is equally interesting to note that the mythical tribal story such as that of Eklavya has been exploited by the Dalit (SCs) writers to serve their own set perspective. Nowhere does any tribal folk song or the emerging tribal poetics hint at it. The tribal folk songs deify lord Rama who has been termed as murderer in Dalit writings. Does this dissonance not necessitate a different strategy and propound the need of distinct aesthetics for the critical analysis of tribal literature? Will it not be right to say that tribal literature needs distinct parameters for its assessment

and evaluation as there exists a profound continuity between Brahmanism and animism of the tribal communities? Is tribal poetics not an expression of 'adivasi vedana' rather than 'Dalit Chetna'? Is it not true that Dalit identity gives way to a re-examination of Indian history from Dalit point of view, where as the tribal literature, by and large deals with the idea that they suffer from historical amnesia as their protests have not found adequate space in the historiography of protest movements? Is it not necessary to understand the historical and contemporary contexts of adivasi protests which made the tribals travel on a trajectory so very different from the Scheduled Castes?

The questions, however, bring one very solid reason interrelating the tribal poetic ethos with the dalit poetic consciousness. Like the Dalits, the adivasi population has remained on the margins of the social, economic and political march of Independent India and the process of intergrating them forcibly into the network of what is perceived as "development" and "modernization" has largely resulted in their greater impoverishment and alienation. Thus, it is evident that both Dalits and Adivasis have suffered due to marginalization; the Dalits, however trace their marginalization in the evils of Brahmanic ideology where as the adivasi's vedana is the result of the network of the forces of amnesia and the so called "development". Moreover, what is important is that tribals were a powerful influence in the earlier days, and enjoyed a dominant position. It is also interesting to note that the tribal identity that we claim today cannot be said to be purely tribal. It has undergone such deep processes of Sanskritization; what we now have is a complex, deep intermingling of what could have been pre sanskritized tribal elements with elements of Hinduism brought about by the Aryan civilization during 1200-1000 BCE. Hence, there is a need to evolve a distinct theoretical tool and strategy which encapsulates tribal anguish and pain. Like Dalit Chetna, the theoretical tool may be 'Adivasi Vedna' comprising the following features :-

- i) Marginalisation, and not backwardness (which is the focus of Dalit poetry) is the main concern of tribal poetry.
- ii) It advocates a society based on egalitarian principles.
- iii) 'Dikku' or the 'outsider' is the collective enemy of the tribals.
- iv) Exploitation, Displacement, eviction and Issues of contemporary relevance constitute the major thematic concerns.
- v) The adivasi historical amnesia has its roots in the epistemology of historical methodology and its implicit collusion with the socio-political power structures.
- vi) The post independence discourse of knowledge continues to deny the adivasi a history and the social and cultural distinction that grows out of it.
- vii) Poetics of protest aiming at state industry nexus.
- viii) There has always existed an uninterrupted tribal - mainstream cultural continuum.
- ix) An impassioned expression of "unevenly distributed development" of the post - independence era.
- x) Anguish at the assimilation of tribal culture into the mainstream culture.
- xi) Tribal integration with the mainstream culture is not possible; even otherwise there is nothing so beautiful in the mainstream Indian society.
- xii) A literature of self - assertive consciousness.
- xiii) Language of oral literature and hence, musical in nature.

xiv) Unlike the Dalits, the poetry of faith in Superpower.

The concept of Adivasi Vedana tends to differentiate between the 'marginalised' and the backward, and is therefore against all kinds of oppressions, unlike the Dalit consciousness which finds all ills in the caste system and aims at its annihilation. The tribal literature, therefore, needs to be assessed and analysed in the light of 'Adivasi Vedana' which truly represents the tribal literary ethos of protest and contemporary relevance.

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Pawan Kumar Sharma

English Curriculum as Cultural Construct: A Postcolonial Perspective

The postcolonial India, as a nation and as civilization, is at crossroads. After the advent and adoption of the neo-liberal economic policies, a common grand narrative has carefully been crafted and constructed by ‘corporate media’ erroneously claiming to represent the nation as a whole, that lends its big voice in celebrating the arrival of India on the global stage as an emerging economic power with huge potential and tremendous leaps in human resource development. This grand narrative also includes English language as one of the essential and prerequisite conditions for proud arrival on that grand stage. English studies today have occupied an envied space in all education curriculums at every level. But as a consequence of the unleashing of this untamed monster of globalized capitalism as the only viable model of progress, we also witness an emergence of a sordid reality reflected in socio-cultural and economic upheavals, giving rise to the huge upsurge in communal, casteist and gendering tendencies, widening gulf between the rich and the poor, violent extremism of various manifestations, blind pursuits of the Western modes of consumerist living by rejecting all the finer points of our own tradition and culture, and, above all, ecological degradation of horrendous proportion. The educational discourse, especially in

humanities and particularly in English studies with its apparent or contrived importance, has failed to provide the modern youth with any ‘centre’ to create the requisite critical faculty to judge the more correct, authentic and balanced mode of existence. After all, language, identity and related issues are not ends in themselves, but are rather means to other ends. These ‘other ends’ range from mundane concerns of day-to-day interaction and existence to self-realization at all levels within a framework of justice and morality. Languages and cultures reflect a collectivity’s image of the ‘self’ and the ‘other’. In fact, one of the most basic functions of language is the construction and creation of a collective self-definition in order to socialize each new generation to seeing itself, its own world, and its relation to the ‘other’ world much as others do (Aggarwal, 124). Thus there is an urgent need to relook at and redefine the English curriculum at college and university level in the contextual framework of post-colonial contemporary reality, leaving aside the colonial legacy..

To recreate a new consciousness so as to critically examine and interrogate the onslaught of prevailing existential ideas, what we, as a nation, need to focus on is the right kind of course curriculum in English studies. In this post-colonial reality when we enjoy the sovereignty to determine our own destiny, there is an urgent need to move away from already established curricular metaphors/concepts and their reflections in practice, and re-imagine and re-articulate them in ways that facilitate the development of new habits of mind based on the careful selection and rejection of our own heritage and value systems. The move itself is a recognition that multiple modes of theoretical representation emerge from genuinely valuing alternative insights and perspectives grounded in a dynamic variety of human experiences, thereby adding richness and complexity to curriculum and curriculum discourse. It is a well-documented fact that, historically, the entire practice has been mediated through a colonial imagination “contrived to the disbenefit of the other” (London, 45). What is direly

required is to re-imagine and re-theorize this metaphor and its function in a postcolonial context. The paper makes an attempt to relook and reexamine the existing English curriculum and pedagogical practices in the wider context of the contemporary post-colonial reality. Curriculum has always been and should always remain a cultural practice, making cultural inquiry very important in contemporary understandings of educational reform, especially as reform relates to social inclusion and exclusion, and to the relation of knowledge and power. Given the social situatedness of learning and its implications, and the cultural assumptions that underlie these practices, this attempt endeavours to provide the most appropriate unit of analysis in understanding education, curriculum, and pedagogy. Thus, it is the position of this paper that an analysis of English curriculum as cultural construct, past and present, along with the imagination through which it has been mediated, will provide an appropriate beginning place for curriculum reform.

The term *postcolonial*, with its diverse resonances and usage, has resulted in a laxity of meaning that has created considerable debate about its precise meaning and application. Of course 'Postcolonial' broadly speaking refers to the period after independence or the departure of the Euro-imperial powers from the territories occupied and colonized. But this kind of simplistic interpretation seems to suggest that the tendencies and the trends which defined the colonial age are no more existent now. However if we try to penetrate deeper into the diverse layers of body politics today, we shall locate the unchanged and unchangeable face of reality glaring everywhere, and the world and its inhabitants continue to go and behave the same way even in the brave new world of 'post-coloniality'. Only the players or protagonists have changed, with a little bit of difference in the modus operandi. Instead of territorial occupation as a way of subjugation or oppression, today we see the deft use of technology to perpetuate the same old games of exploitation. We all have been helpless witness to

the same colonial culture where the sole big brother of post cold war era does not even hesitate to send its occupational armies in case of recalcitrant nations. From this perspective, 'colonialism', in a way, has always continued unabated and uninterrupted. It refers to the period before colonization, with the cultural productions and social formations of the pre-colonized society, as well as to the post-modern reality of globalized world. Therefore 'Post-colonialism', as a theory, does not suffer from any such semantic contradictions and refers to a framework for the study and analysis of the power relations that inscribe race, ethnicity, and cultural production and relations—including education—as hegemonic ideological apparatuses. From this stance, "postcolonial" becomes the site where a variety of assumptions accepted on individual, academic and political levels are called into question in the struggle for more democratic social relations.

Like all ages this postcolonial or neocolonial age too has its own peculiar contours and features. One of the essential features is its universality in scope and reach as a consequence of the tremendous advances in the field of information technology. It has become a cliché to call this arrangement by the carefully crafted term of 'globalization'. And this fashionably wooly term, as Block and Cameron observe, pervades "contemporary political society, technology, and culture" (1). All the images and narratives intend to impose a certain view of the world and undermine the very idea of freedom by unleashing such unending images of synthetic dream world that our vulnerable minds are no more in a position to resist, thereby, accepting it as the only reality worth pursuing. The broad contours of this world view are that you will be modern, progressive, developed and better off in every sense of the term in case you adopt a subversive attitude to everything that you call your own and gleefully accept the 'other' kind of world view. And this 'other' epitomizes the entire value system, language, logic and structure of significance of the Western or American view of reality.

Once it was a widely held formulation that English language is one such addition to the spatial dimension of the colonial/neocolonial discourse based on the dichotomy of dominance and marginalization. The famous postcolonial linguist Green is of the view that “language is culturally constructed and its form imposes meaning on its users”. He further adds that “meaning is produced in the dynamic interplay of thought, language and social processes” and, thereby, calls for a rethinking of “available rhetoric of meaning” in the English classroom situation (4). In the colonial era, English curriculum and usage did not receive its rightful critique and contestation. However, in what appears to be a time of ‘recolonization’ there should be more critical awareness of its status as a means of control and of distribution of social, cultural and economic capital. Today Education policy-making bodies, political bureaucrats, and learners and learning institutions in most governmental and non-governmental organizations are increasingly embracing English as the official, the formal or the instructional language in their everyday businesses (NSW Department of Education). The growing body of literature on postcolonial studies reveals that the most powerful tool that seems to have taken homogeneous and universal mandate of ‘ruling the world’ is the discourse of the internationalization of the English language (Foucault, 15). These writers and critiques of postcolonial literature argue that the current usage and impositions of English in most global institutions replay colonial relations (or hegemonies) and thus require more ‘critical’ studies. Thus there is an urgent need for historical ‘self-invention’ and the urge to recreate or “to erase the painful memories” of the colonial era and its processes of ambivalence and subjugation even thereafter.

Thus It becomes essential for us all to explore and identify the perceptions that embody the selection or otherwise of the English texts. Further, the attempt has to be made to consider the reading positions around Indigenous texts, as alternatives or adjuncts to English curriculum. This is important because for a number of decades, the

debate on the politics and the question of language and literature – English or Indigenous language - has generated complex ideologies and schools of thought, even though the once wide divide between those fighting to retain English language usage and those pushing to reintroduce indigenous languages/literature in the curriculum at college and university level is becoming arbitrary and more of an unconscious desire than being ‘real’ or based on policy prescriptions. Since teachers’ roles have now changed from being knowledge dispensers to “learning facilitators”, this also calls for an analysis of teachers’ positions regarding the teaching of the prescribed English texts and to the level these affect their professional attitudes such as teaching desires, pleasure, and the love of textual analysis towards the English language/literature. In addition to that, what the students, the community, and the education authorities and political government of the day want should also form an important component of the entire practice of reforming and streamlining the studies of English studies so as to make them relevant to the Indian context. As all narratives reflect or actively create the ‘self’, ‘the other’, and ‘the world, this shift to a student-centred, socially critical English necessitates a ‘post-curriculum’ that allows a student to coexist with traditional English content and goals. There lies the importance of employing the postcolonial theory that will enable the students, as L. Gandhi argues, to rethink ‘self’ and deconstruct the discourse of the “regimes of othering” (5).

It is really sad that many teaching practices in our colleges and universities appear to be limited to teaching for the passing of examinations. There is less emphasis on the students extending the knowledge gained from prescribed texts to exploring the complex ways in which texts depict multiple reading positions and interpretations of the world around them. Even when this kind of exercise is intended, especially at postgraduate level, the students fail to evoke any connectedness to the world presented through these texts. One of the reasons for this disconnectedness is the sad fact that our policy makers

and curriculum designers have all along persisted with the teaching of western texts. The world that unfolds through these textual positioning does not belong to the world view of the students. The entire purpose of teaching literature is defeated if it fails to affect any refinement of personality in a certain cultural context. Teachers too fail to evoke any contextual relevance in terms of existing socio-cultural milieu. In such a situation there is less possibility for a teacher, through extended conversations and critical discourse analysis of competing ideologies, to create awareness among the stakeholders of alternative positions around these texts.

One of the essential parameters of viewing post-colonial concept is the emergence of India as a nation state. But today the very idea of nationhood appears to be under duress. The secessionist tendencies are on the rise almost everywhere in one form or the other, trying to question and disrupt the very concept of nationhood. Our language curriculum has been inadequately equipped to strengthen the idea of national unity and integrity. The recent attempt of the educational discourses on reform and research by the UGC should be thought of not only as exhortations of change but also constructions of imaginaries that potentially embody “a deep reshaping of the images of social action and consciousness through which individuals are to participate” (Popkewitz, 172). Underlying the noble venture should be the temporal and spatial imagination that “denotes a collective sense of a group of people, a community that begins to imagine and feel things together” (Rizvi, 223). This imagining of ourselves as a community participating, interpreting ourselves, and creating knowledge together is critical to curriculum reform in a postcolonial context. Only this kind of curriculum construction can signify possibilities for alternative means for a more democratic future within the inviolable unity and integrity of our cultural unity as a nation state. A carefully crafted course content in English curriculum has thus to be employed to neutralize differences and establish for the “other” a worldview and a concept of

self and community (London, 76), which will exhort the youth to celebrate diversities outstripping the meaningfulness of any homogenizing models.

This nobility of purpose for creating a nationalist spirit is bound to fail if we do not interrogate the viability of the concept of nation and nationalism in postcolonial times, of citizenship and national identity, in the English literature or language classroom. Cultural theorists Homi Bhabha and Stuart Hall have very rightly called attention to the ambivalence of the nation in the production of national identity. In the introduction to his book, *Nation and Narration*, Bhabha refers to “the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force in spite of the attempt by nationalist discourses persistently to produce the idea of the nation as a continuous narrative of national progress” (2). Stuart Hall also locates the attempt to create a “sense of nation” in discourses that constitute what he calls “the myth of cultural homogeneity” within the nation-state, asserting that: Instead of thinking of national cultures as unified, we should think of them as constituting a discursive device which represents difference as unity or identity. They (national cultures) are cross-cut by deep internal divisions and differences, and are unified only through the exercise of cultural power (297). Ideally, the classrooms in schools and colleges have to function as the state’s vehicle for ideological assimilation and homogenization. Language curriculum should be intended not only to normalize those whose attitudes, norms, values and behaviours are different from what is construed as the norm, but also to inscribe particular rationalities in the sensitivities, dispositions, and awarenesses of individuals to make them fit into a single set of imaginaries about national citizenship (Popkewitz, 157-86). The contention is that school is a constitutive part of these relationships and its purpose is to create a form of consciousness that enables the inculcation of the knowledge of dominant groups as “official knowledge” for all students, and the maintenance of social control without the dominant groups necessarily

resorting to avert the “repressive state apparatus (Althusser, 1971)”. According to Apple, the “politics of official knowledge” works not through coercion but through accords and compromises that favour the dominant groups. Apple elaborates: These compromises occur at different levels: at the level of political and ideological discourse, at the level of state policies, at the level of knowledge that is taught in schools, at the level of the teachers and students in classrooms, and at the level of how we understand all of this (10). Power and control, then, are exercised through a formal corpus of knowledge which the school distributes through curriculum, rules and regulations. Thus, schools are said to not only control people and meaning but also confer cultural legitimacy on the knowledge of specific groups (Giroux, 257-93).

In many parts of India the recurring incidents of honour killing, female foeticide and the spurt in violent manifestations of a deep caste and communal divide must put the entire India of 21st century to shame, and eventually awaken the education policy makers, teachers and other stake holders to the inadequacies of the literature taught. The very purpose of teaching literature to refine human sensibilities seems to have failed in the context of social emancipation. We must sit together to design curriculum for ethical, responsible and revolutionary education which addresses these social aberrations and heals the distorted mindsets. The present curriculum replete with Western texts and ideology is no answer to the needs and exigencies of our orthodoxies and feudal tendencies. Gender and caste issues have to have an inalienable and primary focus in our syllabi with special contextual framework of socio-cultural reality in mind. The nation today is poised at a critical juncture where positive and progressive change is the need of the hour, but people are at a loss regarding a suitable course of action and the authorities themselves are hesitant of initiating radical transformation. In this claustrophobic environment it becomes the proud privilege of teachers to usher in an era of ethical freedom by bringing out the best in young minds. Translated literature that deals with these

kinds of issues and tendencies can be thought to be one of the options for teaching for graduating the young generation to the new reality of their expectations and requirements. The entire endeavour has to be aimed at creating a new, progressive consciousness through the studies of literature, which is completely in consonance with the democratic, liberal values of the modern society and cultivates a harmonious and integrated living both within and without.

Today there is a vigorous and focused attempt at every level to completely integrate the stake holders with the neoliberal version of globalization by introducing English as compulsory subject from class 1 onwards in schools. This is intended to give its citizens access to white-collar jobs in the multinational companies. Otherwise too, we, as individuals and as society, still seem to harbor a certain status in the knowledge of English language. It is nothing more than the colonial legacy which has carried throughout the country even after independence. Our bureaucrats, defense officers, CEO's, all deliberately use English as a symbol of their superiority to the others. Every discourse about English teaching begins with a presumption that in today's knowledge economy English is the only language of success and advancement. This horrible shift has affected particular policies for educational issues such as educational financing, curriculum, testing, and teacher education. This undue legitimacy and primacy assigned to English is bound to have a huge effect on the education system and cultural practices. This tendency, though intended seemingly to empower the English language, ultimately subjugates and marginalizes indigenous languages and literature. It can also suppress and marginalize the diverse historical values and attitudes that the various indigenous languages and literatures could possibly foster in the younger generation. That probably was the reason why our great visionary leaders like Gandhi and Nehru, though educated and well versed in English language, advocated and tried to make Hindi as the national language of the nation. They knew that it was only through their own

language that the people can realize their true uninhibited potentialities and promises. But sadly India today is not the country of their dreams.

So our universities and govt. must first look for balance in terms of giving requisite space to English and other indigenous languages, and then re-conceptualize the current discourse about curriculum and its relationship with cultural practice. Curriculum reform and research must be seen through the lens of a postcolonial perspective by properly understanding the Western prejudice that lies at the core of almost all education systems that operate in the world today and has permeated curriculum discourse and practice. This prejudice has to be exposed by the postcolonial approach which strives to deconstruct and challenge Western European practices and philosophies in curriculum, including perspectives from autobiography, feminism, postmodernism, and phenomenology. We must also propose innovative ideas and textual positions that result in a critical discussion about bridging the gap between curriculum and cultural practice. Initiatives should range from concepts such as hybridity, Third Space, hermeneutic pedagogy, and engaged differences to ecological diversity, transnationalism, and indigenous knowledges, secularism and spirituality etc.

While formulating policies we must aim to explore the following specific questions:

1. How and why does the English curriculum continue to receive 'empowerment' whether in discourse, pedagogy or its socio-economic dominance over the indigenous languages while becoming a neocolonial tool to racially define the indigenous students?
2. Do the stakeholders in their indigenous contexts perceive that the prescribed pedagogy, conceptual framework and content of the English curriculum include possibilities for reconstructing the integrity and value of indigenous languages and literature?

3. Is the teaching of English language and literature bring about a type of historical, social and cultural intervention into the discourses of self-invention, revisiting and interrogating the post colonial constructs of indigenous people?
4. Do the English studies inculcate a sense of confidence about the use of the hybridized form of English as compared to the puritan form, or do they create a complex of unease inferiority by taking away the originality and creativity from its practitioners?
5. Does the idea of secularism (a western term) better served by excluding the finer principles of our own indigenous culture and traditions, especially the universal values and practices of dominant Hindu culture, as part of the curriculum?

These suggestions, though by no means a complete representation of a heterogeneous field like postcolonial studies, may suggest imaginative and innovative ways by which change may occur by adopting some ideas that serve to contribute to and revitalize current curriculum discourses. We must direct our efforts in making a progressive curriculum towards understanding and critiquing what has come to extend the colonial influence through colonial themes and images that still exist in the usual canonized literary texts. Efforts must be made to consider the contestatory and hybrid nature of postcolonial language and literary studies in relation to the intellectual engagement and cultural negotiation of reading practices and curriculum. There is also a dire need to focus on teacher education for the purpose of locating English studies around post colonialism as framed through the lens of globalization. We require teachers who are knowledgeable enough to speak across disciplines, cultures, and national boundaries, and act as interpreters of culture and curriculum as opposed to simply being transmitters and managers.

To conclude I must say that an earnest endeavour must be made to problematize the issues surrounding curriculum, imagination, and the post-coloniality. We, as teachers of English studies, must reexamine current teaching practices critically and look for ways to make them relevant and meaningful interventions for the contemporary times. Secondly our curriculum and policy framework of English Studies should be conceived and placed in such a way that it does not hinder the continuity and growth of our indigenous languages and literatures. Instead of marginalizing and silencing the minority, tribal and other indigenous languages in the colonial fervor to promote English as a global language, we should propose a postcolonial plan for English-language education as being multilingual, multi-literate, intercultural, and grounded in biolinguistic diversity and ecological sustainability.

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Manjusha Kaushik
& Deepa Agarwal

English Language Teaching : Indian Metaphysical Approach

Recently, the Prime Minister of Japan, having had some tips of English, visited Mr Obama and in stead of greeting him by saying 'how are you', he said, 'who are you, Mr. Obama'. Obama, thinking him to be joking responded in a lighter vain, "I am Michelle's husband" and in the same vain Obama asked the Prime Minister, "Who are you? and with confidence, the Prime Minister said, "Me too." This is an internet joke but it refers to the global challenges of English language teaching also.

According to the ELT experts, the challenge areas concern the average college student, the average college text and the average college teacher. They hold that the average college student cannot write acceptable English; he/she cannot understand spoken or written English; he/she is very slow at reading and does not take up the subject seriously; he/she does not procure books. They say that there is a certain apathy about learning language among average students. He/she does not know clearly the needs and purposes of learning English. He is less motivated for learning a language. They also say that the student comes to the colleges because he/she wants some certificate, a diploma or a degree. The experts curse the average college textbooks and other teaching aids that are used. Besides this,

they hold the college/universities responsible for not procuring procure good books and teaching material. Textbooks are full of mistakes—factual as well as linguistic. According to them, the teachers are also responsible to make the challenge areas more complex. Taking these challenge areas in view they provide various approaches and strategies time to time but the challenges remain of the same nature and degree. The reason is that the approaches and strategies which ELT experts suggest, generate challenges themselves.

Let me reproduce a story to understand the problem:

A hawker of hand-fans was passing by the palace of a king, shouting out, "I have created unique and wonderful fans. Such fans have never been seen before." Listening to the hawker, the king asked, "What is unique about those fans and what is their price?" The hawker replied, "Your Majesty, they don't cost much. Considering the quality of these fans, the price is very low: one thousand rupees a fan." The king was amazed. "One thousand rupees!." He asked "what is special about these fans?" The hawker said, "Each fan is guaranteed to last one hundred years." The king purchased the fan at the asking rate. The king started using the fan and only in three days, the king saw that the central stick of the fan came out, and the whole fan was disintegrated. The king called up the hawker. The king was furious. "You fool! Look. There lies your fan, all broken in pieces." The man replied humbly, "It seems my lord you do not know how to use my fans. The fan must last one hundred years if you use the fan in a right way. Saying so he explained the way, "Hold the fan steady. Keep it steady in front of you, then move your head sideways to and fro." In the palace now the ministers instead of rejecting the approach of the hawker, had discussions on how the head should be moved.

This applies to the approaches of ELT. The ELT experts, instead of rejecting the ineffectiveness of the imported methods and approaches, hold responsible the students, the texts and the teacher.

It is irony that the imported methods and approaches are being used in a stereotyped manner for teaching English. Most of the methods and approaches have been designed in monolingual countries and so they are not effective in a multi-lingual context. The basic difference between the situations—the one wherein the tools are prepared and the other wherein these tools are used—makes the challenge of teaching English more complex. This can be understood with the help of Indian scenario explained by Prof Kapil Kapoor. He says that the ‘educated’ Indian has been de-intellectualized. His vocabulary has been forced into hibernation by the vocabulary of the west. For him, West is the theory and India is the data. The Indian academy has willingly entered into a receiver-donor relationship with the western academy, a relationship of intellectual subordination.¹ This is true of all multilingual countries where English is taught as a second language. This ‘de-intellectualization’ needs to be countered and corrected by locating their own situation in which their own methods and approaches can facilitate the students, without making the challenge complex.

Before we embark upon encountering the challenges, let us have the broad spectrum of Western approaches and strategies of ELT which are based on the following western premises²:

- the classroom is composed of individuals pursuing their own goals and projects;
- in the classroom, each student should be free and informed in making decisions;
- the purpose of teaching English is to affect the world to adapt it to one’s desires;
- the classroom activities incurring non-desired consequences are rationally unadvisable;
- the classroom activities that are not effective in achieving one’s goal are not rationally advisable.

The teachers have to teach English to students with such typically goal-oriented Western approaches advocated by ELT experts, as focus on individuality, goal orientation, effectiveness and desired results and as seem to have consequentialist nature with a kind of manipulation. In a situation where English is taught as a second language, the strategies and approaches designed in a monolingual situation are not workable. The Western approaches draws a line of demarcation between a teacher and a student which is not relevant in a multi-lingual situation. Consequently it creates a certain kind of apathy about learning among the students.

Let us begin with the first presupposition which says that the classroom is composed of individuals pursuing their own goals and projects.” Indian metaphysical approach which says that the ultimate nature of reality is interconnected, encounters this presupposition. Here real meaning of one’s self is conceived in relation to the ultimate self. The *Bhagavadgita* describes this relation in the following *shlokas*:

*acchedyo 'yam adahyo 'yam akledyo shoshya eva ca
nityah sarva-gatah sthanur acalo 'yam, sanatanam
avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam avikaryo 'yam ucyate
tasmad eva, viditvainam namushocitum arhasi*

The *Bhagavadgita*, 2:24-25

In the above *shlokas* this Self is described as the Self of all beings. This Self is unbreakable, insoluble, everlasting, immortal, unchangeable, immovable and eternally the same. In the *Bhagavadgita* Krishna adds that

*yo mam, pashyati sarvatra sarva, ca mayi pashyati
tasyaham na pranashyami sa ca me na pranashyati*

The *Bhagavadgita*, 6:30

Here Krishna says that I am never away for one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never away. I am

present to those who have realized me in every creature and every creature in me. Continuing this explanation, He says that

*aham atma gudukesha sarva-bhutasha-sthitah
aham adish ca madhya, ca bhutanam anta eva ca*

The *Bhagavadgita*, 10:20

Here Krishna holds that I am the true Self in the heart of every creatures. I am the beginning, middle and end of all beings.

Let me explain this approach with the help of another story, told by one of our colleagues.

Once there was an old guru who had two disciples to whom he had been imparting education for years together. After a due course of time, the old guru one day called his disciples and said: "Well my sons now my job is over. I feel now you understand the ways of life. Tomorrow you can proceed to your home but before you leave for your places as per tradition of the ashram you will have to undergo an examination. I shall give you a test tomorrow." Next day the guruji called one disciple and affectionately said in a low tone: "My son, go to my cottage. There is a bird in a cage. Could you get me the head of this bird." The disciple immediately went to the cottage, chop off the head of the bird and place it before his Guruji. The Guruji then called the second disciple and in the same manner said to him: My son go to my cottage. there is a bird in a cage. Could you get me the head of this bird. This disciple too immediately went to the cottage. The Guruji and the first disciple were anxiously waiting for him there. But he did not come back. Hours passed. Days passed. Months and years passed. One day this second disciple appeared in the ashram with a bird in his hands and said "Guruji, I am sorry. I have failed to perform the deed you asked for. I tried to chop off the head of the bird in the cottage. But I realized that somebody was watching me there. So I went to the forest outside to chop off the head of the bird

and again I realized somebody was watching me. Guruji I visited every nook and canny to perform this deed but every time I realized somebody was watching me. I am sorry Guruji." Then the Guruji said, "Don't worry my son. You have learnt what I wanted to teach you. I wanted to teach you to love the voiceless without concealed hates and to realize that there is Somebody watching you always. I wanted to sensitize you to be sensitive to the worlds within and without. I wanted to realize you the Absolute in every creature and every creature in the Absolute.

This is the basis foundation of the ultimate nature of reality, as contained in Indian metaphysical approach, conveys the important message that one should see oneself in others. It considers individual self, contrary to Western view, as illusion blocking enlightenment. This insight into the nature of humanity and existence can be valuable for the empathy that is due to a student of an English Language class of a public speaking situation. Indian philosophical texts conceive that humans deny their ontological unity with all things because of this illusion of ego individuation. Our individuation, a key element in teacher-text-student proces model, is an obstacle to living well. The solution, according to Indian approach is to see oneself in all others. Instead of solely relying on the nature of the Individual in the Western context, the teacher should use this prescription of the metaphysical approach which concentrates on sensitive empathy. It will make the student one with the true self of the teacher. The students now are at an advance metaphysical level, an intimate extension of the teacher.

The realistic dimension of this metaphysical foundation is an answer to the second presupposition i. in the classroom, each student should be free and informed in making decisions. This presupposition arises in context of manipulation. If the approaches and strategies are designed to enable the teachers to see themselves in their nature, then there are reasons to treat the students with kindness, empathy, and

consideration while teaching English Language. Hence the approaches should be designed with the intention of recognizing the humanity in students and in appealing to that noble quality, instead of making contents understandable for practical purposes. It is hoped that the teachers will recognize themselves in their students. Recognizing themselves in students can lead to a heuristic reflection on what it means to be an ethical teacher, just as the *Bhagavadgita* cautions against selfish action. It also holds insights into why the ELT experts should long for communicative interaction, as opposed to strategic manipulation of students through the instrument of Western approaches. One is inherently similar, if not metaphysically identical, with ones students. With this kind of approaches and strategies the teacher can cultivate this attitude and its implications in them.

The last three presuppositions— the purpose of teaching English is to affect the world to adapt it to one's desires; the classroom activities incurring non-desired consequences are rationally unadvisable; and the classroom activities that are not effective in achieving one's goal are not rationally advisable—also share the consequentialist nature. Here goal-oriented phenomenon is the key element which the ELT experts press on. The desirable attitude of ELT experts can be gleaned from the *Bhagavadgita* which points out that the empirical illusion of the self should prompt one toward acting within this world, without selfish attachment to one's action. The *Bhagavadgita* unveils:

*karmany evadhikaraste maaphaleshu kadacana
ma karma-phla-hetur bhur ma te sango 'stv akarmani
yogasthah kurukarmani saꣳnga, tyaktva dhananjaya
siddhy-asidhyoh samo bhutva samatva, yoga ucyate*

The *Bhagavadgita*, 2:47-48

In the above *shlokas* Krishna counsels that man has the right to work but not the fruit of work. Man should never engage in action for the sake of reward, nor should he long for interaction. He further counsels to perform work in this world as a man established within himself—without selfish attachments, alike in success and defeat.

Let us now see how a teacher can act in a teaching situation without concerns for goals, success and his/her ends. The ability of perform work in this world as a man established within himself—without selfish attachments, alike in success and defeat” is possible if the teacher is able to recognize the universal rhythm which takes place in a particular state of mind of a teacher. There are five states of the mind and the mind changes over from one state to another at a fast speed. Sometimes it is *kshipt* (sensitive and agitative), sometimes *mudh* (insensitive and dull), sometimes *vikhipt* (interruptive and disturbed), sometimes *ekagra* (concentrative and pointed) and sometimes *niruddha* (meditative i.e. a state of total stillness). Of the five, *niruddha* is the highest. It can further be divided into two sub-states : *samprajñjata* (conscious) and *asamprajñjata* (trans-conscious) (Sharma, Shrawan K. 67). Here the first state helps one achieve ones purpose for oneself and society. Here the primacy of one's self as mentioned in the presuppositions is encountered. The teacher should come to this state of mind to achieve his purpose for himself and for the students. There is also a way of this paradox in the *Bhagavadgita*.

*na hi kashcit kshanam api jatu tishthaty akarm-krit
karyate hy avashah karma sarvah prakriti-jair gunah*

The *Bhagavadgita*, 3:5

Krishna states, that we all act according to the qualities of our material nature.. There is no one who rests for even an instant; every

creature is driven to action by his own material nature.” This *shloka* provides a ground where it can be argued that even inaction is considered action by the *Bhagavadgita*. This seems to suggest that it is not that men act wholly and without ends. Rather men ought to reconstrue the relation of means to ends in their actions. Their actions should not perform merely for the sake of ends. Similarly the ends must not absorb or expunge the means in their deliberation. Human action, far from being a stranger to goal-orientation must be seen a holy, worthy undertaking that also gives value. Valuing action only so far as it achieves a certain end transforms the spent time into wasted time if the goal is not achieved. This conception of action directly challenges the consequentialist leanings of the three presuppositions—the purpose of teaching English is to affect the world to adapt it to one’s desires; the classroom activities incurring non-desired consequences are rationally inadvisable; and the classroom activities that are not effective in achieving one’s goal are not rationally advisable.

To conclude that the act of teaching is an art like the three arts of poetry, music and architecture. Like them it has value above its ability to impress upon ones personality upon others. If the ELT approaches have the crux of Indian metaphysics the teacher can establish his rapport with the student and immediately this rapport will be transformed into mutual faith leading to the objectives. Hence the ELT experts must try to capture this insight of action in their attempts to frame the very act of English language teaching in the class room. They must see the value to English teaching above and beyond the goal-oriented approaches. The value in teaching does not lie only in completing the classroom activities which the third prescription holds. Because this will leave the act of English language teaching meaningless if the goal is not achieved in the light of the fourth and fifth presupposition. Following the lead of Indian metaphysics, the ELT experts should know that the means of teaching are intrinsically valuable and such should be considered a ritual to revered. The very

act of constructing and delivering it to one’s own satisfaction can be an act of empowerment. The very act is a sacred offering to both our socially implied duties as a citizen and as a rational human. In a word, it can be said that the teacher will not respect humanity if he does not stand up for what he believes in, regardless of the results. Thus the ELT experts should prepare workable approaches for a monolingual situation so that the teachers can enjoy the adrenaline rush of teaching, the fortune of a captive students to their views and the opportunity and power to express themselves in the social environment they find surrounding them. The ELT approaches and strategies prepared with such intentions will allow the teacher to be enthusiastic and ethical to participate in the arena of English language teaching.

Notes

¹ Prof Kapil Kapoor’s “Rejoinder” to the Mr. John Oliver Perry’s Review, “Eleven Objections to Sanskrit Poetics.”

²The premises of ELT approaches and strategies is based on the broad spectrum of communication given by SA Beebe and SJ Beebe in their book *Public Speaking: An Audience-Listener Oriented Approach, 2000*.

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Sanjiv Kumar

Evolutionary Paradigms of Culture and Cultural Studies: An Overview

Though the term Culture has always been the subject of conscious enquiry for being a dynamic reality, it has gained special prominence after the emergence of Cultural Studies in 1960s. The concept of culture has undergone numerous paradigmatic shifts with the association of the term with different disciplines, schools of Cultural Studies and Cultural theorists. It has evolved as an all inclusive entity signifying anthropology, archeology, sociology, language, literature, art, fashion, music, media, communication, architecture, cinema and what not. The complexity of the term *Culture* may be realized through the definition given by Raymond Williams:

Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. This is so partly because of its intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought. (Williams, 76)

The term has got such a wider connotation that it signifies every walk of life. Now, it is not restricted with the adjectives 'high' and 'low', but, it has a phoenix like effect and hence may take any

number of qualifiers like subaltern, elite, alien, hybrid, creole, dominant, marginal, modern, postmodern, urban, hegemonic, cyber, mass, popular, folk etc.

Besides, the Cultural Studies as a theory gets impetus from scores of prominent theorists including Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, F.R. Leavis, Jafferson, Benedict Anderson, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Ruth Benedict, Tylor, Antonio Gramsci, Donna Harraway, Terry Eagleton and other postmodern theorists, besides the prominent English poet Matthew Arnold. All the Cultural theorists have added different dimensions to the definition and approach to the Culture as well as Cultural Studies. The ongoing debates at the time of globalization have interrogated the essence of culture as the notion of Cultural Studies is now fraught with the antithetical cultural terms like alienation and assimilation, acculturation and mongrelisation, monolithic and polyolithic, Eurocentric and Indocentric, Syncretic and cryptic, hybrid and pure, native and foreign, national and global, and ethnic and national.

The present paper aims at highlighting the divergent definitions and connotations of culture and cultural studies under the sway of modern and postmodern sociological and literary theories through some rhyming lines. However, the entire focus of the paper is on tracing the evolution of the term 'culture' from merely a biological or agricultural term implying cultivation or growth to a recent definition when no body can feel sure of defining it for the inherent dynamism in the term.

The origin of the term '*Culture*' lies in the tending of something, basically crops or animals, maneuvering with nature by way of cultivation, growth, development and advancement i.e. an improvement upon nature. Gradually the tending of natural growth was extended to process of human development. Jyotirmaya Tripathy keenly observes the shift from "the cultivated field to the act of doing cultivation ... as

the field is made suitable for growing crops by the act of cultivation, the minds of people can be improved by training. In this way culture was removed from nature and was associated with human society” (JSL, 89). The etymological definition and nature of the term *Culture* can be perhaps put in the rhyming lines:

Cult, cult(us), cultura, *coliere*, *cultivate* and *culture*;
 Signify a complex of human beliefs, values and nature.
 Culture manifests itself in art, media and sculpture;
 And also in communication, tourism and architecture.
 Evolving nature of ‘Culture’ leads it to a crucial juncture;
 Study of the Cultural artefacts is not a lesser adventure.

Being dynamic in nature, it has constantly been gaining different connotations by shedding off some of the previous traits and also by taking newer dimensions in its domain. Since 1950s, different theorists throughout the world have come out with multifarious explorations of the shaping impact of culture on different walks of life and vice-versa. Considering culture as human belief system, Eliot aptly highlights the reciprocity between culture and day to day behaviour when he remarks that “behaviour is as potent to affect belief, as belief to affect behaviour” (Eliot, 30).

With the publication of Hoggart’s *The Uses of Literacy* (1957) and Raymond Williams’ *Culture and Society* (1958) in the backdrop of post-war England, the idea of culture being pivotal could be properly determined. Richard Hoggart aimed at establishing the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (later on CCCS) to spread out the domain of Cultural studies so that it may study cultural values, attitudes, forms and relationships in a period of transition and crisis paying special attention to language, media, images, symbols and myths. Though CCCS provided a suitable platform for the study of

the contentious term, the subsequent theorists and their theories are the testimony to the fact that locating *Culture* is a Herculean task.

Hoggart, Williams, Hall, Tylar, Althusser, Benett and Jameson;
 Followed by Gramsci, Thomson, Haraway and Jefferson,
 Endeavoured to locate the dynamics of culture & cultural
 notion;
 Ending up in proliferating confusion and cultural commotion.

The significance of *Culture* can be undeniably perceived across the disciplines owing to its inclusiveness of the term. The prominent Cultural theorists represent different disciplines and different approaches to the study of *Culture*.

‘Culture’ and ‘Cultural Studies’ being progressive and massive;
 Sociology, Anthropology, Literature, Linguistics and all
 inclusive.
 Aboriginal, Black, Dalit, Women, marginalised and subversive;
 Cultural Studies claim to make them all assertive.

Now, *Culture* does not only confine itself to Arnoldian notion of human contact with the best which has been thought and said in the world and it having “its origin in the love of perfection” (Arnold, 8); rather, this abstract idea has been countered by Williams’ who asserts that ‘*Culture is ordinary*’ and its simply a lived experience of everyday life. Similarly Eagleton observes the populist view of culture even in T.S. Eliot who “may be a connoisseur of high culture, but he is also a champion of culture as popular way of life” (Eagleton, 112). For him, culture is not only a way of life, but the whole way of life—from birth to grave from morning to night and even in sleep. However, in spite of the seeming correspondence between Williams and Eliot, Eagleton notices the difference:

For Williams, a culture is common only when it is collectively made; for Eliot, a culture is common only when even when its making is reserved to the privileged few. For Williams, a common culture is one which is continuously remade and redefined by the collective practice of its members . . . Williams' common culture is both more and less conscious than Eliot's . . . " (Eagleton, 119)

Besides, Leavisian ideology of dissemination of Bourdieu's '*Cultural Capital*' through the literature of great tradition had to face the disapproval of the Cultural theorists as their primary aim was to give voice to the least resourceful people especially working class people. In this pretext, Williams propagates Cultural Revolution run by Culture workers. Gradually, Cultural Studies didn't only discuss the 'High' and 'Low' culture, but also the numerous other types of cultures. In the course of time, Culture being distanced from nature and primitive, Terry Eagleton could rightly sense the politics of culture when he remarks that "There is no document of culture which is not also a record of barbarism" (Eagleton, 215). The ever evolving nature of the term has led it to take different names:

Every adjective claims to qualify the term under question;
 Cultures may be low, high, alien, elite, mass, hegemonic and subaltern.
 Primitive, global, traditional, national, pure, hybrid, Western or modern;
 Followed by Postmodern, Cosmopolitan, cyber, consumer, Gay or Lesbian.

The study of the paradigms of cultural growth being the agenda of Cultural Studies, it took an entirely different course with the emergence of Postcolonial multicultural societies across the globe. The conventional viewpoints regarding *Culture* were threatened with

the multifarious remarkable cultural processes (*-ations*) noticed during this period. Besides, under the impact of multiculturalism and globalisation, the notion of culture has become all the more complex. Now, it doesn't refer to the stereotyped tags of cultural growth; rather, it has started referring to the seemingly astonishing concerns of gays, lesbians, trans-sexuals, bi-sexuals, holiday brides, people in live-in relationships and twitters. The implications of different cultural processes including colonisation, creolisation, hybridization, acculturation and transculturation are:

Purity is threatened by displacement or colonisation;
 It changes the traditional culture through Creolisation.
 And also by *acculturation*, cultural *assimilation* or *hybridisation*;
 The process of multicultural ethos ends up in *transculturation*.

The cultural processes have been so powerful that they determined the identity and future of different cultures coming into contact with one another. The clash or conglomeration of cultures posed certain existentialist questions before the world making the theorists like Ngugi, Fanon and Bhabha sensitize the people not to allow mental cultural or linguistic colonization. The consequences may be traced in the lines:

Blurring in modern world confirms some cultures to be distinct;
 In the meanwhile the primitive cultures are made to be extinct.
 The magic of dominant culture suppresses the mass instinct;
 The conflict between binary opposites is thus succinct.

With the postmodernist philosophy of 'global village', the interface of cultures is obvious and the consequences thereof are not always predictable because the '*resistance*' to change is generally observed when '*residual*' asserts itself. It may further lead a society to be the victim of *Cultural Lag* as it fails to keep pace with the time:

Though interaction among cultures mark the difference;
 Conformist native culture is known for *resistance*.
 While 'Residual' implies the adherence to the essence;
 With counter-discourse, euro-centric effect somehow lessens.

With the high sounding philosophies of different theories, the common man feels all the more baffled as knowingly or unknowingly, he/she finds his/her culture being somehow diluted its purity. This inexplicable apprehension in the mind of the common people further questions the canonized theories of culture: "Questioning the canons of 'Culture' has become a fashion;/Culture that was monolithic is now searching for solution."

Starting with the issues of working class exclusively, Cultural Studies has now expanded its horizon to the extent that it incorporates each and every aspect of man's life. Besides, it aims at tracing the growth or decline of all the disciplines, ways of life, value system and sociological institutions. With the overwhelming impact of cyberspace on the lives of the people, institutions of marriage and family are at stake. Erstwhile sanctity of these sociological institutions has been threatened by the social networking sites like Facebook and Orkut, and also by overdependence on the virtual devices like webcams and chatrooms even while deciding the matrimonial issues. With the changing trends, Cultural Studies traces as to how culture has undergone the enormous change:

Cultural Studies makes us question the drastic change;
 As relationships, life-style, language & beliefs have wider range.
 Different parameters guide us even while marriages we arrange;
 Media, cinema, fashion, art and literature tend to derange.

Undoubtedly, western culture has the extensive influence on the psyche of the modern generation and more often than not, the present generation tends to prefer the West over the East but at times,

it breeds ambivalence among them. It can be observed in case of the Indian Women solemnising cross-border marriages under the spell of westernisation, more often than not resulting into utter disillusionment. These so called *holiday brides* can better narrate the consequences of being trapped by the glaring reality of the west where individuality dominates over social institutions. It may be put as:

Sweeping influence of West over East is the common trend;
 There are others who retreat, and their mistakes they mend.
 Some natives resist it, but others, respect it as modern brand;
 Diehard natives condemn hybrid, and mass culture they defend.

In the present global world, the wish to nourish purity seems to be absurd. In this regard, Edward W. Said rightly asserts that "there is no such thing as a pure unmediated culture anymore than there is a pure unmediated self. All people, all cultures, are hybrid" (Said 1993). In spite of all the cultural jargon used by the theorists to underline the heart of the matter, no body can perhaps answer with certainty the pertinent question: "Who knows whether one enjoys the cultural *mongrelisation*?" Perhaps as the part of fashion to 'write back', most of us play as antagonistic to everything western but at the same time the penchant for 'mimicry' is equally noticeable.

In words, at least, we pretend to shun Westernisation;
 Who knows at the heart of heart, we relish syncretisation.
 I have doubt whether the enterprise will ever reach to
 conclusion;
 All confused, then why to wait, let's launch a still new
 conception.

Thus, the concepts of *Culture* and *Cultural Studies* can not be compartmentalized and narrowed down to any singular thrust. The history of Cultural studies itself suggests that the flow of Culture is like a flooded river whose direction and impact can hardly be measured

or predicted. In the postmodern age Culture has emerged as all the more colossal as it refers to certain developments like cyberculture, cyberfeminism, cyberpunk and cyborgue which were never ever dreamt before. However, the need of the hour is to develop a Gandhian outlook to culture who asserts: "I don't want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any" (Gandhi 2008: 241). Unfortunately, the fluidity of culture mixed with inherent complexity has resulted into unprecedented ambivalence among the people across the globe. With the Cultural Studies as an inclusive discipline, the more one gets sensitized to the question of culture, the more complex shape it acquires. Perhaps, the need of the hour is not the coinage of a new cultural jargon but to appreciate the spirit of the existing cultural concepts like *multiculturalism*, *melting pot* and *mosaic* of cultures which somehow focus on celebration of cultural differences by way of synthesis and syncretism. With the blurring of spatial boundaries in the new world order, 'Cultural Competence' has become as important as linguistic 'competence' or 'communicative performance'.

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Navleen Multani

**Narrating Subaltern Resistance :
Reading P Sachidanandan's *Govardhan's Travels***

The discourse of the 'subaltern' is actually the discourse of resistance which can be interpreted as a protest of the non-elites that aims at political, social, cultural, ethnic, economic, religious changes across the globe. Any writing that focuses on the people is mainly concerned with voicing the silences of the world and creating an equal and just place for them.

Govardhan's Travels presents a subaltern character, Govardhan, who suffers endlessly because of the ruthlessness and absurdity of justice. *GTs* was first published as *Govardhante Yatrakal* in Malayalam and later translated into English by Gita Krishnankutty. Not being formally trained, P. Sachidanandan develops his own literary speech to portray the cruelty and irrationality of justice of the civilized world. Hence, this work of translation challenges the limits of elite historiography. It calls for a better understanding of the oppressed, ordinary people who suffer at the hands of those who wield power. *GTs* projects an absurd universe where ideologies, scientific theories, laws, grammar, metaphors or musical notes can provide no answer to the questions raised by injustice and cruelty confronted by the people in history whom the conventional history has not found worthy of mention.

P. Sachidanandan borrows the subaltern figure, Govardhan, from Bhartendu Harishchandra's famous play on injustice, *Andher Nagari Choupat Raja* and re-engenders him into a common man seeking justice from Indian history and Indian society. He is unjustly condemned to death, from drama to real life and is driven to a life of endless wanderings. Govardhan's travels are not like the ordinary travel which have a final destination but are the wanderings of homelessness as he belongs to the periphery of society. He is a sufferer of history who is forced to travel across space and time by the so called elite group - the producer and the consumer of knowledge that determines the levels of rights, freedom, property and justice. He struggles with the system of justice, questions the unjust laws and raises a storm which gains momentum as he journeys through space and time. His wanderings illuminate the hidden 'other domain' treated as unimportant by the dominant elitist discourse. These wanderings help in understanding the various problems faced by the oppressed and in doing so act to restore to them their historical being. The silence of the subaltern is not the result of their individual merits or demerits but because of adverse social, political, economic and cultural circumstances in various historical periods.

As Bhartendu releases Govardhan from his pen and P. Sachidanandan releases him from the lines and columns of space and time, Govardhan becomes a man of all places and all times who keeps on asking for help in vain. This act of Bhartendu and Sachidananda reveal their faith in the fact that "the insignificant beings who drift over a sea of plunder, arson, massacre, rape and humiliation" are capable of fighting the oppressive system, winning a space for themselves and achieving liberty, equality and justice as well. Therefore, Govardhan's wanderings trace the lines of Indian history and society covering the times of Gautama Buddha - sixth century before Christ, Sankaracharya - the eight century, Mughal period-the reign of Humayun, Shah Jahan

and Aurangzeb, Amir Khus rau - the fourteenth century, Kabir - the fifteenth century, Kepler's and Galileo - the seventeenth century, sufi poet Sarmad, Mirza Ghalib, Mirza Mohammad Ruswa - the nineteenth century and the British rule till the twentieth century, thus, recreating history and geography which makes the actual map of India shine forth.

In the 'fair' markets of the city of Andher Nagari every commodity - wheat, flour, rice, dal, firewood, salt, ghee, sugar - is sold at a rupee a seer. When a man brings the complaint to Choupat Raja, the king of the city, that Kallu's wall collapsed and killed his goat, Choupat Raja first sentences the wall to death. On the minister's pointing out that there is a flaw in the judgement, the king sentences Kallu, who owns the wall, to death, then the mason who built the wall, the chunewala who mixed the mortar for it, the bhishti who poured out water for mixing the mortar, the kasai who sold the goat-skin water bag to the bhishti, the shepherd who sold the kasai a big goat, and finally, the town kotwal who, while patrolling the town, diverted the shepherd's attention, causing him to sell big goat instead of a small one. As the noose did not fit the kotwal's neck, Govardhan, a passer-by, is finally led to the gallows because his neck happened to fit the noose (*GTs* 5-6). Though Bhartendu releases Govardhan, who is unjustly condemned to death, the noose still hangs over Govardhan's head as he walks out of the prison as a representative of all those who are victims of the ruthlessness and absurdity of justice. What is the noteworthy here is that the equality of the rates of the commodities actually hides the political inequalities of the city and the substitution of the victim is just a fictional rescue.

The silences are made to speak by mixing the history with the present and historicizing the present. This is done by the author by bringing in hosts of people from mythology, history, literature and society who join Govardhan in his travels, attest to his innocence, but,

can do nothing. Govardhan himself knows that though he has been freed from the play, the noose still hangs over his head and that there is no safety for him in past or future. The mythological figures like Yama and Chitragupta express their helplessness in administering justice. They admit that "in the books of Samyamani, there is provision only to punish the sinner and reward the virtuous. No relief is offered to him who suffers for the sins of others" (*GTs* 55). As Govardhan moves back to the Mughal period (the reign of Humayun), he finds that what matters to the rulers is only "victory and defeat", sin and virtue are totally ignored by them. Success or failure are the main concerns of the rulers. The rulers are always brutal and make the lives of the ordinary people miserable. When he goes into the days of colonial rule, Govardhan finds brutal laws that unleashed tyranny on the natives. So, be it the days of king's rule or days of company's rule, there is no difference in governance. The powerful or the elite group is not concerned with the suffering of the ordinary. This makes one thing very clear that there is no escape for the Govardhan's of this world - the innocent have to suffer because of the deeds of the rulers, power-intoxicated group of people for whom justice never matters at all.

When Govardhan comes across the 19th century Urdu poet Mirza Mohammed Ruswa, the author of *Umrao Jan Ada*, he explains to Govardhan that poets and writers like him weave dreams - "heaven of freedom, of revolution, of scientific wonders, theocratic states, ethnic fantasies, and miraculous powers" in a miserable world where injustice prevails (*GTs* 209). He believes that an ordinary life woven into a victory can definitely bring movement and transformation (217). And Govardhan belongs to that class of subaltern who march forward expecting emancipation and justice. Endless atrocities on the ordinary people provoke resistances which lead to various changes in the society.

The class of intellectuals including the mathematician Ramchander, scientists like Galileo and Kepler who could solve mathematical problems efficiently realize the shortcoming of reason and logic of mathematics and science in solving the problem of injustice prevalent in the world. During his journey through space and time, Govardhan finds out that even Kepler's mother (accused of witchcraft) suffered because of unjust laws. Govardhan also witnesses Sarmad, a sufi poet, visiting the world after his death who points to the harsh reality that "Most of the victims who suffer atrocities are innocent. And many who are rewarded do not merit it" (348). Govardhan's fingers and ears are chopped and his forehead branded. Though every agency from the king to the law courts shows interest only in making him suffer, his unjustified punishment encourages Govardhan to knock at the doors of many including scientists, mathematicians, sufi poets, Urdu writers, religious leaders and prophets. He questions everybody and provokes them to think about the injustice prevailing in the world. Hence, Govardhan becomes a secular character moving throughout India, through various periods. During his travels he also comes across masses, ordinary people, helpless women and helpless children who have the courage to resist the cruel dominant order and pave a way for themselves. He comes across the Portuguese trader Nunis, an ordinary mahant and Gautama Siddhartha who emphasize upon moving forward. He is overwhelmed by the music composer Tyagaraja's and saint Kabir's concern for the ordinary. The way to liberation from suffering lies not in *nirvana*, tells Siddhartha to Satyakama (a marginalized character, son of Govardhan). *Nirvana*, he says, is a flight from fear, sorrow and sufferings of one's body. It is only when one fights all ills, resists the unjust that one can make life meaningful. Through this rewriting of Indian history, multiple dislocation of the character, the reincarnation of Govardhan, P. Sachidanandan accomplishes the task of making the subaltern speak and also making the non-elite an agent of political and social change.

M. L. Garg

Arundhati Roy and *the God of Small Things* and Aravind Adiga's *the White Tiger*: A Comparative Reading

As one goes through the pages of Aravind Adiga's debut novel *The White Tiger* (2008) one is constantly reminded of Arundhati Roy's celebrated Booker Prize winning novel *The God of Small Things* (1997). There are striking similarities between the two books. Both the novels present a sordid picture of the India of Darkness, both critique the caste-ridden Indian society, exploitation of the poor and the downtrodden by the rich and the powerful, both indict the corrupt police force, politicians and our political and social system. Both Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga employ unconventional language and narrative technique to express their point of view.

Arundhati Roy focuses on a small scene. *The God of Small Things* is basically a saga novel that depicts the life, destiny and fluctuating fortunes of three generations of a Syrian Christian family in Ayemenem, a sleepy village in central Travancore, Kerala. Roy's geographical range may be said to be limited and in this regard she may be compared with R. K. Narayan. Adiga's canvas seems to be much larger—the action of *The White Tiger* begins in the village of Laxmangarh, in the district of Gaya, moves to Delhi and towards the end of the novel to Banglore. But basically it is the India of Darkness:

I am talking of a place in India, at least a third of the country, a fertile place, full of rice fields and wheat fields and ponds in the middle of those fields choked with lotuses and water lilies, and water buffaloes wading through the ponds and chewing on the lotuses and lilies. Those who live in the place call it darkness.

Please understand, Your Excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light and an India of Darkness. (Adiga, 14)

Roy begins *The God of Small Things* with a description of Ayemenem in the month of May:

May in Ayemenem is a hot, brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on the bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die, fatly baffled in the sun. (Roy, 01)

Similarly quite early in the novel Adiga presents a sarcastic and sordid description of the black river Ganga and the village of Laxmangarh:

...Mother Ganga, the daughter of the Vedas, river of illumination, protector of all, breaker of the chain of birth and rebirth (has become) river of Death, whose banks are full of rich, dark, sticky mud whose grip traps everything that is planted in it, choking and stunting it. ...Everywhere this river flows, that area is Darkness. (Adiga, 15)

There is a small branch of the Ganga that flows just outside Laxmangarh; boats come down from the world outside, bringing supplies every Monday. There is one street in the village; a bright strip of sewage splits it into two. On either

side of the ooze, a market: three more or less identical shops selling more or less identically adulterated and stale items of rice, cooking oil, kerosene, biscuits, cigarettes, and jaggery.

Laxmangarh is your typical Indian village paradise, adequately supplied with electricity, running water, and working telephones; and that the children of my village, raised on a nutritious diet of meat, eggs, vegetables, and lentils, will be found, when examined with tape measures and scales, to match up to the minimum height and weight standards set by the United Nations and other organizations whose treaties our prime minister has signed and whose forums he so regularly and pompously attends (Adiga, 19).

Roy has described the central preoccupation of her writings as “the conflict between power and powerlessness”. Her novel is a representation of the traumatized marginal and subaltern section in post-colonial context. She expresses her concerns about the manifold maladies of the subjugated communities with focused energy, candor and anger. We notice the intersection of different discourses of marginality, such as feminism, caste segregation and untouchability in the novel. *The God of Small Things* deals with oppressed and marginal groups and individuals, namely a confined and constricted woman, her unprotected children, and a low caste carpenter against institutional domination and power under various guises.

Ammu, Chacko's young sister and a major character in the novel, does not have the same rights as her brother has in the matters of higher education, marriage and inheritance. Her decision to marry a Bengali Hindu- an assistant manager of a tea estate in Assam- is an ‘unchristian’ act. Although she riles against the prescriptions of those who rule over the Ayemenem House, her transgressive quest appears doomed from the very beginning. Her marriage is shredded with quarrels and, worse still, her husband treats her as a pawn when he

propositions her to gratify the lust of his English manager, Mr. Hollick. Outraged by this horrendous proposal, she breaks off with her irresponsible husband and returns to her parental household with 7-year-old fraternal twins. In Ayemenem, she falls in forbidden love with Velutha, a Paravan, or an untouchable in the caste hierarchy. Intimacy with an untouchable Paravan is an uncleanable taint in conventional social structure. Ammu's affair leads to tragedy, leaving her twins, Rahel and Estha, "doomed waifs", precarious and adrift.

Velutha is on the periphery of the caste-ridden, feudal Ayemenem society. Ironically his name means 'white'. The symbolic correspondence between blackness and dirt, between whiteness and purity is reversed in his representation. Although he does not speak, he acts. Ammu's stifled longing and brooding despair find an outlet in a tempestuous erotic encounter with Velutha. Roy's novel only articulates a subdued gesture of Velutha's defiance, but a decided flicker of rebellion is seen in Ammu's character. Her midnight forays to seek sexual union with Velutha are a courageous act in a conventional caste-dominated society. Eventually she has to pay for defying the prevailing caste restrictions.

The fate of Ammu and Velutha brings to mind the death sentences being meted out to lovers by Khap Panchayats in the name of honour in various parts of the country today.

Like Arundhati Roy, Adiga also highlights the animal-like existence of the marginal, the oppressed, the downtrodden, and underdogs in the caste-ridden rural India of darkness. The inhabitants of Darkness have no access to even the basic amenities of life. In Laxmangarh, all the natural resources—water, land, roads, mines—have been appropriated by the powerful landlords—the Stork, the Buffalo, the Wild Boar and Raven. The Stork "owned the river that flowed outside the village, and he took a cut of every catch of fish

caught by every fisherman in the river, and a toll from every boatman who crossed the river to come to our village". His brother, the Wild Boar, "owned all the agricultural land around Laxmangarh. If you wanted to work on those lands, you had to bow down to his feet, and touch the dust under his slippers, and agree to swallow his daily wages... The Raven owned the worst land, which was the dry, rocky hillside around the fort, and took a cut from the goatherds who went there to graze with their flocks. If they didn't have their money, he liked to dip his beak into their backsides, so they called him the Raven. The Buffalo was the greediest of the lot. He had eaten up all the rickshaws and the roads. So if you ran a rickshaw or used the road, you had to pay him his feed – one-third of whatever you earned no less". (Adiga, 25) The lower class people can not enter the area in which the mansions of landlords are situated. (Even in the India of Light the poor can not enter Malls.) In this land of darkness the destinies of the poor are ruled over by the hierarchical structure of caste-ridden society. In the old days there were one thousand castes and destinies in India. These days, there are just two castes: "Men with Big Bellies and Men with Small Bellies. And just two destinies: eat or get eaten" (Adiga, 64). Ms. Roy calls these castes "Big Man the Laltain, Small Man the Mombatti". There is supposed to be free food at the village school—"a paradise within a paradise"—but the children have never seen *rotis*, or yellow *daal*, or pickles, as the school teacher had stolen their lunch money. The diseases of the poor are never get treated. Balram's father Vikram Halwai, who is a rickshaw-puller, dies of T. B. spitting blood on the walls of the hospital as the government doctor is busy in some private hospital. People have no jobs in rural India and migrate to cities for jobs. Ramadin, a Muslim, has to disguise himself as a Hindu and change his name to Ram Prasad to get a job. Balram is surprised to see the Stork in Dhanbad: "Why isn't he back home, screwing poor fishermen of their money and humping their daughters"? (Adiga, 61) The Constitution grants voting right to every

adult Indian but the marginal are not allowed to vote. Balram's father tells him, "I've seen twelve elections – five general, five state, and two local – and someone else has voted for me twelve times" (Adiga, 100). If anyone shows the temerity to exercise his voting right he is taught a lesson by them and regarded as mad by his ilk. The rich and the powerful like the Stork consider it their prerogative to hit their servants who, they think, "respect us for it".

There is a lot of similarity in the thematic concerns of the two writers. A number of similar themes can be discerned in the two novels. When asked whether her personal view amounts to loss of happiness and of love, Arundhati Roy replied, "I don't think I offer you one thing. If there's tragedy, there's also comedy going on somewhere on the side. If there's sadness, there's also happiness, there's also joy". Another concern of the novel appears to be class division and casteist oppression. Feminist rebellion against patriarchy and political satire against Marxism can also be claimed to be the two major themes of the novel. *The God of Small Things* accounts for the life and sufferings, even tragic hope and triumph, of the downtrodden like Vellya Paapen and his sons Velutha and Kuttapen or the ostracized like Ammu. The novel represents all those people who are victimized by the forces of history, dead conventions, false pride and respectability, the tyranny of the state and the politics of opportunism and andocentric order. If these themes appear to be the main concerns of Arundhati Roy, Adiga launches a scathing attack on every thing in our social and political system – polytheistic Hindu religion, casteism, democracy, police administration, political system, educational system, medical system, judiciary, feudal landlords, and democracy. If Roy indicts communism as practised by K N M Pillai, Adiga pillories Socialism as practised by the Great Socialist. He considers the Indian Parliamentary system of which we are so proud *a fucking joke*.

Adiga begins his satire with orthodox Hindu religion. He wants to follow the ancient and venerated custom in our country to start a story by praying to a Higher Power – "kissing some god's arse" – but faces difficulty in choosing one out of "36,000,004 divine arses". The writer mockingly comments, "It's true that all these gods seem to do awfully little work – much like our politicians – and yet keep winning election to their golden thrones in heaven, year after year" (Adiga, 8). He asks how a man can win his freedom in India when the god – Hanuman – he worships is himself a "shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love, and devotion" (Adiga, 19). The way search for the murderer Munna alias Balram Halwai is conducted by the police is a severe indictment of the law enforcing agency in our country. When Ashok's wife Pinky Madam kills a poor child in her late night drunken driving, Balram's employers persuade him to own the responsibility of his mistress's misdeed. Adiga, however, reserves the butt of his satire for democracy and parliamentary system. He tells the Chinese Premier, "I gather you yellow-skinned men, despite your triumphs in sewage, drinking water, and Olympic gold medals, still don't have democracy..... that's why we Indians are going to beat you: we may not have sewage, drinking water, and Olympic gold medals, but we *do* have democracy" (Adiga, 95-96). When the voting age is lowered to eighteen all the teenagers in Laxmangarh are certified to be eighteen by the government official. But the teashop owner sells their thumb impressions to the agents of the Great Socialist "who had ruled the Darkness, winning election after election". Adiga also takes a dig at the criminalization of politics:

... a total of ninety-three criminal cases – for murder, rape, grand-larceny, gun-smuggling, pimping, and many other such minor offences – are pending against the Great Socialist and his ministers at the present moment. Not easy to get convictions when the judges are judging in darkness, yet three convictions

have been delivered, and three of the ministers are currently in jail, but continue to be ministers. The Great Socialist himself is said to have embezzled one billion rupees from Darkness, and transferred that money into a bank account in a small, beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money. (Adiga, 97-98)

Ms. Roy and Adiga also deserve comparison with regard to their narrative technique, imagery and use of language. Both the writers tell the tale in a nutshell in the first few pages of the novel. Then they move on to narrate the story using the flashback or interior monologue technique moving backward and forward in time. The narrator narrates the narration as the various incidents in the plot come to his/her mind in an unsystematic/ systematic manner. In *The God of Small Things*, the action is revealed through the memory of Rahel in such a complicated manner that it becomes difficult to follow the various strands in the plot. The reader finds it hard to remember where she stops and the writer takes over from her. The different incidents in the plot are revealed place-wise – Paradise Pickles & Preserves, Abhilash Talkies, God's Own Country, and The History House, character-wise – Pappachi's Moth, Mrs. Pillai, Mrs. Eapen, Mrs. Rajagopalan, Kochu Thomban, incident-wise – Work is Struggle, The Crossing, theme-wise – Saving Ammu, The Cost of Living, and Big Man the Laltain, Small Man the Mombatti. In *The White Tiger*, The protagonist Balram Halwai acts as the narrator and reveals the plot place-wise and theme-wise. There is no table of contents as a result of which the reader cannot anticipate anything. The novel starts abruptly using the epistolary mode which is not very common these days.

Both the writers make abundant use of animal imagery. *The White Tiger* is replete with animal images. Adiga names the landlords of Laxmangarh as Stork, Buffalo, Wild Boar, and Raven because of the animal-like traits they possess. The elder brother of Mr. Ashok,

Balram's employer, is Mongoose. Vitiligo-Lips, who is one of the drivers in Delhi, calls the protagonist Country-Mouse. Balram compares himself and other toiling masses to asses: "See, I was like that ass now. And all I would do, if I had children, was teach them to be asses like me, and carry rubble around for the rich" (193). But the best image in the novel, and one of the best in contemporary Indian novel in English, is that of the Rooster Coop:

...and look at the way they keep chickens there in the market. Hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured roosters, stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages, packed as tightly as worms in a belly, pecking each other and shitting on each other, jostling just for breathing space; the whole cage giving off horrible stench – the stench of terrified, feathered flesh. On the wooden desk above this coop sits a grinning young butcher, showing off the flesh and organs of a recently chopped-up chicken, still oleaginous with a coating of dark blood. The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they're the next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop.

The very same thing is done with human beings in this country. (Adiga, 173-4)

Arundhati Roy also uses animal imagery at different places in her famous novel. Ammu compares Esth and Rahel to frogs: "To Ammu her twins seemed like a pair of small bewildered frogs engrossed in each other's company, lolloping arm in arm down a highway full of hurtling traffic. Entirely oblivious of what trucks can do to frogs." (Roy, 43)

Baby Kochamma's Australian Missionary friend is Miss Mitten. Rahel ruminates over her life as a waitress in New York and her image as a "Black bitch".

An important point of comparison between Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga is their use of English language. Both the writers use unconventional and innovative language to express their themes. However, Adiga's language appears to be prosaic in comparison to Roy's poetic "exuberance and verbal virtuosity". In fact Roy's innovative use of language had an important role in winning her the Booker prize. *The God of Small Things* is a feast for a linguist. A full-length paper can be written on Roy's linguistic excellence. However, a few examples will suffice here.

At many places in her celebrated novel Roy treats inanimate objects as animate:

It (Chacko's tie) had had its breakfast and was satisfied. (Roy,137)

In the Hotel Sea Queen car park, the sky blue Plymouth gossiped with other smaller cars: *Hslip Hslip Hsnooh-snah*. A big lady at a small ladies' party. Tailfins aflutter. (Roy,113)

The mirrors watched Estha. (Roy,102)

Yellow bamboo wept. (Roy, 335)

The boat-on-legs approached the hut. (Roy, 205)

Sometimes she provides animals with human traits:

The deepswimming fish covered their mouth with their fins and laughed sideways at the spectacle (Roy,204).

Roy has panache for using one word as different parts of speech in the same sentence:

"...an insane whisper (noun) whispered (verb) to him" (Roy, 212)

"Only what counts (noun phrase) counts (verb)." (*The God of Small Things*, 218)

"...to supervise (infinitive) the supervision (noun) of last rites of..." (Roy,220)

"...prepare (verb) to prepare (infinitive) to be prepared (participle)..." (Roy,204)

The novel is replete with verb less sentences:

"Both things unbearable in their polarity. In their irreconcilable far-apartness". (Roy,93)

Both Roy and Adiga use slang and taboo words:

"Hey, you! Black bitch. Suck my dick". (Roy, 18)

"The one who had led her (swimming) through her lovely mother's cunt" (Adiga,93)

"It is a fucking joke – *our political system* – and I'll keep saying it as long as I like". (Adiga, 137)

"I guess, Your Excellency that I should start off by kissing some god's arse... How quickly do you think you could kiss 36,000,004 arses" (Adiga, 8-9).

"We screwed the girl's family hard". (Adiga,51)

To conclude, despite some difference in their focus, there are a number of similarities in the representation of caste and corruption ridden Indian society by the two authors. A paradigm shift can be noticed as they invent a new idiom to say the unsayable.

Ambuj Sharma

The Reflection of Adolescent Sensibility in the Short Stories of Shashi Tharoor

Shashi Tharoor started writing short stories when he was merely six. He was an asthmatic child and quite often suffered from asthmatic attacks and was not allowed to play with the children frequently. Consequently, he spent his time in his family's library and, moreover, there were no televisions in his city to divert his attention. These circumstances drove him to write in such an early age:

I wrote from a very young age, my first 'story' emerging when I was six. I was an asthmatic child, often bedridden with severe attacks, who rapidly exhausted the diversions available to me. Like every child, I found few books on the family's shelves that appealed, and those I read inconveniently fast. . . . Perhaps the ultimate clincher was that there was no television in Bombay of my boyhood. So I wrote (11).

Most of his stories reflect an adolescent sensibility: "The stories largely reflect an adolescent sensibility with one or two exceptions their concerns, their assumptions, their language, all emerge for the consciousness of an urban Indian male in his late teens" (10). In an early age Tharoor was able to look into complexities of human nature. His stories cover a big canvas. His youngest protagonist Joseph Kumaran in 'The Five Dollar Smile' is seven year old and his oldest

character his maternal grand father in 'The Death of a School Master' is quite old. Though his range of depiction is limited- most of his characters are from urban society; but he has also depicted the persons from the Kerala villages. In this way, there are different shades of human life in his stories. They are full of love, compassion, discrimination, intrigues, surprise, whims, deceit, jealousy sycophancy and immortality etc.

'The Five Dollar Smile' deals with a poor orphan child's psychology when he is on the way to US in the aeroplane and looks at his own posture, a sort of estrangement hoverround his mind and he feels that the picture in the poster is not his own picture:

As usual, he viewed it once more with that curious detachment that had come to him during those last four years. He could not see it as a photograph of himself, a record of his past, a souvenir of his younger child hood. . . . The little boy who stared out him was not him Joseph Kumaran. . . . (13-14).

When Joseph goes to America to live with his foster- parents, he is not he is not disturbed- he does not feel that he is going to the world unknown to him. When sister Celine sees him off there are tears in her eyes, but the child is not moved, he is unperturbed and thrilled by the new venture:

Sister Celine was there to see him off, she smiled at him through misty glasses and Joseph felt the wetness on her cheeks when she hugged him at the departure gate. But he could not try in return, he was a little scared, but more excited than upset, and he certainly was not sad (24).

'The Boutique' describes a teen agers feeling of pity, compassion, desperation and anger. The protagonist in this story is a teenager and his mother. When they reach the hotel, The Plaza Lounge to attend the opening ceremony of a boutique they are insulted

everywhere. The liftman looks at them ‘incredulously’ and contemptuously. The boy shows his resentment tinged with helplessness: “I suddenly felt like rushing out of the lift, the hotel, the area. That was not our place. We did not belong here” (28). When they are ignored and treated badly, the boy becomes reactionary, but his helplessness comes in the way: “I wanted to pick up a brick, a stone, a tile from the pavement, anything and throw it at the glass front of the building. But I didn’t. I couldn’t have the right to’ (32). Though he is not willing to attend the function, he half hearted agrees to accompany his mother. His mother wants to purchase a black leather jacket for him but when the sales girl tells him the cost of the jacket the mother feels embarrassed as she knows that she would not be able to pay seven hundred rupees for the jacket. Although the boy dreams of putting on attractive clothes, he wants to look smart but, the helplessness of his mother makes him look contented:

In wanted to say no Amma, I don’t want it, I don’t need it at all, I am quite contemt with the clothes I have, but I could imagine my self in that leather jacket, the envy of the boys and the wonder of the girls in the neighbourhood, and no words came out of my lips. I watched her half in hope and half in anticipation (30).

When his mother looks broken hearted, he wants to give solace to her: “I didn’t want it anyway. What shall I do with a jacket like this?.... ‘Anyway it is far too big for me- I’d look life a scarecrow in a wrestler’s leftovers if I wore this’ (30). Similarly when he looks at famous radio disc jockey, DJ who is smart, handsome and tall and is wearing a silk shirt, scarf and flaored trousers he feels envied like hell’ (31).

‘How Bobby Chatterjee Turned to Drink’ is one of the stories which are deliberately ‘divorced for reality’. But in the story the craftsmanship of Tharoor is at its best. Bobby Chatterjee is taking

wine in Light Horse Bar. It is a matter of great surprise and shock for Ram and Jit because Bobby Chatterjee never touched wine normally and considered wine as the cause of all the ills of the society. Cedric tells them that he will narrate the whole story if they offer him wine, John Collins: ‘and if you chaps will stand me a John Collins, rally around and I’ll tell you the tale’ (35). He narrates them a fictitious love story of Bobby and Myra: “The reason for all –er-all this - is the universal one: the one cause of all the world’s ills, etc., in short, love. Love came to poor Bobby Chatterjee’s heart and broke it too” (35). Cedric’s sole motif is to have a few pegs of John Collins by befooling Ram and Jit which he manages smartly and covertly by narrating them the fabricated love story of Ram, Raheem and Myra and craftily manages to fulfill his desire. When Ram goes to Babby to console him, he is taken by a great surprise:

‘I came to say I heard about Myra and I want to tell you I’m very sorry....’

‘what the devil are you talking about?’

‘Myra...’

‘And who the hell is Myra?’

At first I thought drink had dulled his memory and then a sneaking suspicions crept into my mind. I turned to look for Cedric: he had just finished his fifth John Collins, at my expense, and was sliding to the door.

‘You mean you don’t know a girl called Myra?’

‘Certainly not’ (42)

In this story even the readers feel shocked and surprised in the end. Here Tharoor has been able to portray the tendencies of the youth off his time successfully and meticulously.

The protagonist in the 'Village Girl' Sunder is a nineteen year old urban youth who goes to his village in Kerla on the annual visit with his family and meets a girl, Susheela. She reminds him of the 'behenji' of Delhi University. He wants to avoid a meeting with the girl but for politeness' sake he could not avoid the meeting. Susheela is seventeen year old and calls him Sunder 'etta'. Susheela is a typical village girl who has not seen any big city. When Sunder asks her whether she has visited Delhi or Madras or Bombay, she replies" 'I have never left the district, Sunder 'etta'. The farthest I have ever gone anywhere was to Guruvayoor Temple, with my Amma' (51). Nevertheless, she is smart, intelligent and propitious village girl somewhat like an urban girl. When Sunder wants to smoke a Cigarette, she doesn't have any objections; "Hey do you mind if I smoke?" "No, of course not, Sunder 'etta', the girl said" (51). She is crazy about big cities and there atmosphere:

'I mean, in what way is your life in the city like the foreign countries?' For once her words were halting. 'I can see you are so modern, Sunder 'etta'. Here in the village I am knowing nothing of the kind of the life you are leading in the big city. It must be so different. Please describe it to me, Sunder 'etta'. I am really wanting to know' (51).

Susheela does well in the SSCL exam and is eligible for the admission in same university. But, unfortunately, her father doesn't allow her for higher education and she is engaged to a bad looking already married man, a drunkard. When Sunder comes close to her, he realizes that the girl is beautiful and intelligent. When he touches her breast by chance and has physical relationship with her, he feels 'too suffused with guilt and shame'. But on the other hand the girl was probably too surprised to resist and too ingenious to know how to' (54). Surprisingly, Susheela doesn't feel shocked and broken after that episode. She rather looks briskly and invigorating and her face shines with satisfaction: "It was lit up in the radiance of dreams fulfilled,

and her smile was no longer that of a nervous girl, but of woman who had touched a happiness she had not expected to be hers (55). In the end the readers are taken a back when Susheela thanks Sunder: Thank you, she said. 'Thank you Sunder' (55). In this story Tharoor has depicted an amorous and amoral relationship between a teen ager boy and a teen ager girl.

'The Temple Thief' is the story of an idol thief, Raghav who is not an atheist. He is a thief due to his economic necessity. Nevertheless, he is God fearing and religious. He steals idols just 'to keep his bread buttered'. He feels that after committing this odd job of stealing idols he will get redemption and the Lord Shiva will forgive him if he bows down before Him. The Brahmin priest in the story is the embodiment of opportunism. When he sees Raghav stealing idols from the Shiva Temple, he preaches him and delivers a long speech regarding sin and redemption. When Raghav leaves the sack full of idols with tears in his eyes the Brahmin grasps the opportunity heaves the sack on his shoulders and disappears into the night. Tharoor was fifteen year old when he wrote this story. Here he has scrupulously discerned mature subjects deceit, intrigue and opportunism: 'the sensibility in the story is a fifteen year old's and the central idea opportunistic' (56).

'The Simple Man' is again based on imagination and fantasy like 'How Bobby Chatterjee Turned to drink and the Other Man'. Here Tharoor has aptly vivified the trauma of a 'failed writer'. In the state of inebriation he narrates a story of his friend, Karan Dhillon, a famous cricketer and Mamta, a Bengali girl, his beloved and wife. The acme of the story is when Kiron Dhillon and Mamta are together on the bed and consequently Southey stabs them. The bathos of the story is when the readers find out that it was a fictitious story of a failed novelist, Poor Southey and Mamta never existed and was the heroine of the very first short story she stop which was rejected by forty seven magazines:

‘I see you’re new here. This is a pretty frequent occurrence, I’m told – ask the bartender. Poor Southey – unsuccessful novelist, failed sportsman, marital dropout: the murder is a recurring fantasy. And this is the only way he can get ride of it – by working the frustrations out of him self’ (68).

The stories like ‘The Professor’s Daughter’ ‘Friend’ and ‘The Pyre’ are the eventuation of Tharoor’s Delhi University college days. The stories reflect his own experiences as a collegian. He witnessed and explicated all the happenings of his student days in Delhi and effigiated them in the form of fiction.

In ‘Professors’ Daughter’ Tharoor has described an ambience of the male institution. Professor Chhatwal, a Professor of Philosophy, is the epitome of age old Indian traditions. He doesn’t show any signs of progressiveness and advancement. He is a dull and unassertive teacher even after a long service in the college: He doesn’t allow his only child, Jasvinder Kaur to cross the border line of his house. The boy discerns her when she goes for a walk with her parents. The protagonist is a youth, Harbhajan Singh, H.B. Banny, Chhotu and Hafiz are his college friends. They call professor Chhathal as ‘Chhaty’ and Jasvinder as ‘Jazzy’, not something unusual in the college days. In the very first meeting with Jasvinder, Harbhajan ‘palces his had on her on the door knob’ (79) and tries to come closer to her. Chhatwal witnesses this thing and becomes furious. He feels that his daughter has disobeyed him and has shattered his faith. He beats Jasvinder till the cane is broken. In this story Tharoor has drawn a true picture of a male institution where the boys are always crazy about the girls. It is the story of one sided love.

‘Friends’ is again the reflection of Tharoor’s own Delhi University College days. PM and VV (Vicky Vohra) are close friend who ‘face life together, ‘cut classes together’, ‘went to movies together’, ‘acted in plays together and ‘chased girls together’ (83).

Their friendship is exemplary and well known in the campus. A girl called Rekha comes between them and a furrow of differences creeps in. It is not a love triangle which becomes the cause of estrangement between them. A trivial matter becomes the cause of bitterness and finally, of separation. PM is hurt by Vicky’s comments about Rekha and he hits him on the face:

‘I mean’, Vicky added, ‘I didn’t think I’ve ever seen anyone less sexy than dear Rekha. Hell, man - she’s got shoulders like a clothes hanger, and there’s less on her bosom than in my pockets on Monday morning’.

Shut up: I said suddenly venomous. He didn’t seem to thechange in my tone.

‘If I took her to our room and the warden came in, he’d really find a Skeleton in our cupboard’, added Vicky

Suddenly, I hit him. (92)

After this incident Vicky leaves their roon soon leaving PM unhappy and sad: “I sat down heavily on the bed, and for the first time in many years, I wept.” (94)

‘The Pyre’ is a tribute to the two friends of Shahsi Tharoor who died in motor cycle accident. The theme of the story is a very serious subject death, particularly at the age of seventeen. Tharoor rightly puts it: “The proximity of death was not easy to come to terms with at the age of seventeen. The ‘Pyre’ was a reflection of my attempt to do so” (95).

In ‘Auntie Rita’ Tharoor has dealt with the amorous love between Arjun, a teenager and his auntie Rita, a thirty two year old good looking woman with sound physique. Arjun is sexually wanton guy who doesn’t bother about moral values. When he goes to Calcutta to live with his uncle, he succumbs to the bewitching charms and good

physique of her own auntie, who is double of his age. In absence of his uncle, he is not able to control himself and makes love with her. It happened too quickly for chronicling convenience. Without hesitation, he leaped the gap between him and Auntie Rita and was suddenly on top of her, pushing her on to her back in a spurt of aggressive male dominance that nearly ended in both of them falling off the bed, devouring her in the ardour of his passion as they fought not so much against each other as against the law of gravity (122).

‘The Solitude of the Story Writer’ is based on Tharoor’s new experiment with the imagination and creativity. This story is different in content and texture from other stories in this collection. He started the story with a little bit of tentativeness:

I found myself describing the creative process exploring my own connection with my craft, my experience as an author whose stories had been seen as too close to reality, and ambiguous relationship with my own imagination. I didn’t know how the story would end when I began it (130).

In this story Tharoor has tried to reconnoiter the world of American fiction. This story won him laurels and was published in a collection of the best of New Review’s output’ (130).

Thus Tharoor's stories largely reflect an adolescent sensibility. Their concerns, their assumptions, their language, all emerge for the consciousness of Indian male in his late teens. Though his range of depiction is limited—most of his characters are from urban society; but he has also depicted the persons from the Kerala villages. Through these stories Tharoor makes the reader able to look into complexities of human nature. Joseph Kumaran in ‘The Five Dollar Simle’, a teen ager in ‘The Boutique’, Sunder, a nineteen year old urban youth and Susheela, a village girl in the ‘Village Girl’, an idol thief, Raghav in the ‘The Temple Thief’, Jasvinder Kaur, the only child of the Professor in the ‘Professors’ Daughter’, Vicky and Rekha in ‘Friendship’, the young

characters in ‘The Payre’, and Arjun, a teenager in ‘Auntie Rita’ unmask adolescent sensibility impregnated with the feeling of love, sex, pity, compassion, dsperation, anger, discrimination, intrigues, surprise, whims, deceit, jealousy, sycophancy etc.

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(All the subsequent references to the short stories *The Five Dollar Smile* are to this edition and are given in parentheses in the text of the paper.)

S. Sujaritha

**Subjectivity and Women's Empowerment :
A Study of *Kamala* and *Inside the Haveli***

The present paper aims to portray the condition of women in the nineteenth and the twentieth century Indian society by analyzing Krupabai Sattianadhan's *Kamala: The Story of a Hindu Life* and Rama Mehta's *Inside the Haveli* respectively. The novels selected for the study represent the social condition of women in the Indian society and the evolution of changes in the condition of them. The first part of the paper analyses the depiction of women's condition in both the novels. Both novels are located in the space and time where women were treated merely as an object by the patriarchal society. The second part of the paper shows how two writers Krupabai Sattianadhan and Rama Mehta insert the revolutionary thinking and practices upon their protagonists to some extent. It helps the readers to visualize the gradual shift that occurred in the condition of women. The paper signifies the condition of women in the 19th and the 20th century and the emergence of the revolutionary thinking in the society through education and how it was effectively portrayed by the writers in their works.

Women condition in the Indian society is dynamic. It changes according to the changes in the society. The 19th and 20th century Indian society was a patriarchal one. It believed in the suppression of

women. By forcing several practices such as female infanticide, child marriage, dowry system and sati, the society controlled women's development with iron hand. The society started looking at women as men's dependent and not as individualists. Yosuf Ali writes, "With us, the daughter is not a daughter all the days of her life. She is only a daughter until she is a wife. Then she enters into a new circle and new relationships, and she literally worships a new set of Gods" (Quoted in Devendra, 2). Education for women was severely restricted by the nineteenth century Indian society. Many thought that education might spoil women so it was forbidden for them. People were not willing to accept educated girls as their daughter-in-laws. It is because they doubted that educated girls might not follow the culture and on the other hand they might fight for their rights.

The 19th century Indian women faced only problems in their lives. They were fully dependent upon men for everything and without knowing/bothering regarding their suppressed conditions, they lived in ignorance. During the British rule some of the upper class women began to have colonial education. Slowly due to it, the condition of women began to change. British government passed many laws against women's discrimination. In 1929, the Child Marriage Restraint Act which is popularly known as Sarada Act was passed. Even though child marriage was not fully stopped, it helped to control child marriage.

Beginning of the 20th century is marked with an emergence of modern Indian womanhood due to the Western education and also through their participation in the National Movement. During 1920s many women took part in the freedom struggle. It enabled them to come out of their suppressed state. Mahatma Gandhi encouraged women's active part in the freedom struggle. He believed:

Woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details

of the activities of man, and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he ... By sheer force of vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying the superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have (Gandhi, 105-106).

Women's participation in the National Movement gave them courage to fight for their own lives. Many successful women such as Sarojini Naidu, Muthulakshmi Reddy, Rajkumari Amrith Kaur, Mridula Sarabai, Suchita Kripalani, Padmaja Naidu, Durgabai Deshmukh, Aruna Asaf and Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya stood as a living example before the common women. Due to the increase in the number of industries, women began to get opportunities to work. It enabled them to be economically independent. Due to their economical independence and education, women began to live their lives by themselves. It resulted in the abolition of child marriage, sati, female infanticide and dowry problems. Even though these problems were not completely eradicated from the 20th century Indian society, yet it was reduced to a greater level.

The 19th century Indian literature is filled with a few works from the women writers. During this time education for women was an unimaginable issue. Some women were educated to read and write by their husbands during night time. It enabled them to write about their lives. Most of the 19th century women writers used the genre autobiography to portray their life condition. Their autobiographies were filled with the struggle women faced in the 19th century patriarchal Indian society. In the end of 19th century, the trend of educating women spread widely and it resulted in the development of women's literature in India. Writers such as Bhabani, Jageswari wrote about the patriarchal domination. In the beginning of the 20th century, due to women's involvement in the freedom struggle most of them wrote about their part in the National Movement. At this period women's

writing was concentrating upon women's education and improvement in the society. Many women writers began to produce their works in English. In the late 20th century women writers concerned about the upliftment of women's position in the society. Writers like Sashi Deshpandey, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya and many more wrote for the upliftment of women.

The novels selected for the present study are from two different societies and from different times. The novel, *Kamala* talks about the 19th century Brahmin society and *Inside the Haveli* narrates about the lives of the 20th century Rajasthani's. Even though both books are written in different time and space, the novels do not display a great deal of difference in the women's status or position. The protagonists of the two novels, Kamala and Geetha respectively from *Kamala* and *Inside the Haveli*, even though they belong to different time and cultures are similar in many aspects. Both of them are viewed as a threat to the society to which they enter after their marriage. In spite of their changes after marriage, they are viewed often with a suspicious eye by the society. Both the protagonists are pampered by their parents till their marriage and both are expected to adjust with their in-laws. Both the novels centers around the experiences both the protagonists face after their marriage in a new society. These two novels narrate how the protagonists' experiences the new atmosphere to which they enter to live and what are the changes it leaves upon them.

The two novels, as already stated, even though written in different periods, present the general condition of women almost in a similar way. Women were looked with a suspicious eye by the patriarchal society. It made the male community to suppress women in several forms. By their way of controlling women, they shaped women to accept their subordination willingly. When a threat comes for this construction, the society controls it with an iron hand. In every stage of women's life they were made to depend upon men. Not only

in the 19th and the 20th century, but also in the 21st century many women in the Indian society occupy lower position. Certain practices and rules of the society keep women under the control of men. Birth of male child enlightens the home and in the case of a girl child it upsets the whole family. It represents the unwanted nature towards the girl child by the society.

The major problems women face in the society are child marriage, widowhood, sati and dowry problems. The child marriage system which the Indian society practices dismisses women even from the basic education. They are used as servants in the household works. During their childhood itself they are parted from their parents and forced to live with their in-laws. The major concept in the institution of the Indian marriage system is dowry. Men expect to receive dowry from bride's families. It is believed implicitly by the men that the amount they are getting as dowry proves their value and power in the society. Problem of dowry is the major reason for the killing of female infant. In both novels one can find several statements made regarding dowry. In *Kamala's* case her in-laws begin to torment her due to the reason of dowry. Finally when they knew that she is very rich, without shame they changed their attitudes towards her.

Practice of child marriage was deeply rooted in the Indian society from 200 B.C. In the 19th century it was compelled by the society and even the religious practices recommended strongly. Women were expected to marry in their early age that is from 5—11 in order to adjust with their in-laws. The novels, *Kamala* and *Inside the Haveli* give vivid details of the dark realities of the child marriage. Children consider their marriage day as a kind of festival to enjoy and were ignorant about the realities of that. In the novel *Kamala*, the author narrates children's experiences on the day of their marriage as, "the pageantry and the excitement of the event have a peculiar charm for children, who are of course utterly ignorant of the nature of marriage

and look upon it in the light of a festival" (Sattianadhan: 32). Girls reached motherhood at the early age of 14 and 15 as a result of the childhood marriage. Lakshmi in *Inside the Haveli* becomes mother at the age of 15.

Condition of widow is much worse than the married women. During the 19th and the 20th century, after marriage most of the girls were left in their mother's home till they reach puberty. In between if their husbands die they should practice Sati and in the later years instead of Sati they were made to follow widowhood even without living a single day with their husbands. They were not allowed to participate in any celebration, not allowed to wear color dresses or jewels. In some cases small girls became widows and without knowing the reason they became prey to their society's discrimination. Sai in *Kamala*, in order to escape from the miseries of widowhood, ran away from her house. In the later part of her life, she repents for her hasty decision.

For a time a great bitterness passed over her soul. Her whole life came before her and the dreadful nature of the details connected with it. 'How much I have sacrificed. Ah! What would I not given to have it even for a time?' She repented bitterly of her folly of running away. She was a woman who was moved by extreme emotions. Her knowledge of the world was great, and now that she had departed from the part of righteousness she realized the emptiness of the world and the people of the world. Her independence, once so attractive, now for a moment disgusted her. 'What would I not do to change my lot – to be virtuous and to be loved by one noble and really great? Ah! How I have been duped.' She sighed and held on to the railings convulsively (Sattianadhan, 124).

She believed that her suffering was the result of her escape from the toil of her widowhood. Pari in *Inside the Haveli* narrates her pitiable situation as a widow as,

As a young girl I could not understand why I was forbidden to wear jewelry and color saris like other women. A widow's presence on religious occasions was considered inauspicious. That hurt me most: I loved the gaiety that goes out with festivals. But later on I understood. No one was to blame for that, it was a custom of Udaipur. It was my fate to be a widow in this life. I had to learn to accept (Mehta, 116-117).

The patriarchal society forbids education for women in order to keep them under control. Women are expected to, "minister to men's physical pleasure and wants, they were considered incapable of developing any of those higher mental qualities which would make them more worthy of consideration and also more capable playing a useful part in life" (Dudois: 36). Educated women may oppose certain norms of the society and in order to prevent this damage, education for women was discouraged. In *Kamala*, when Kamala is taught by her husband Ganesh, his whole family turns against them and Kamala's friends begin to tease her. She is viewed as a threat to the society. Ganesh's brother-in-law advise him to stop teaching Kamala, because she may change as an evil to the society, "Your new learnings trains women to be free, but what does it do for the morals?" (Sattianadhan: 82). Slowly Ganesh stop to educate Kamala. Geetha too in *Inside the Haveli* is viewed with a suspicion throughout the novel because of her education.

The two writers, Krupabai and Rama Mehta use their novels to represent the condition of women from the society in which they lived. By portraying their protagonists as revolutionary in the patriarchal society, the writers fight for the rights of women. Through their

protagonists the writers try to portray women's subjectivity and how women are becoming powerful in the patriarchal society. *Kamala* and *Inside the Haveli* depict total shift in women's life after their marriage and its effect/change in the nature of women. In the Hindu society after marriage women should not visit their parents without in-laws permission. Moreover their parents do not have any rights over their daughters. In *Kamala*, when Bhagirathi, Kamala's friend, runs to her parents' home in order to get away from her husband, who has illicit relationship with another woman, the society condemns it. Bhagirathi's mother brings her back to her husband's home. "She was not allowed to remain in her mother's house even for a day, lest her husband should cast her off forever. So she was brought back disgraced, by her angry mother, who tried to act as peacemaker" (Sattianadhan: 59). The society is not bothered about Bhagirathi's husband's behavior instead condemns her for the decision of leaving him.

Both the protagonists Kamala and Geetha in many ways represent the condition of women of their societies. Even though they possess some revolutionary thinking, their society and culture changed them as passive in many incidents. They both accept many important incidents passively which changed their lives. Kamala, who is taught to read and write and who has tasted the wisdom of truth and false, accept whatever changes occurred in her life as her fate. From the time of her marriage, she accepts everything in a silent manner. Kamala's father-in-law's love and affection enables her to live in peace by neglecting her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law's poisonous talk. But very soon she loses favor of her father-in-law too. Due to it,

Kamala pined and shed silent tears, and often hid herself in corners and out-of-the way places. What could she do? People did not like her. She had done something wrong

something to displease the old man, for when she now and then ran to him with joy he would set her aside and give her some work to do. She would cast furtive glances at him and try to talk; but he would say: 'Girls are to keep silence when elders are busy.' This was a mild check but it suppressed the flow of innocence spirits, and damped the joy that arose in her heart (Sattianadhan, 44).

In spite of her education and knowledge, Kamala like other women of her society, has faith in superstitious beliefs like curse and fate. She fears that of sister-in-law's bitter words about her daughter may disturb the infant's life. "Her superstitious mind trembled at the thought that their wicked words might blight the infant as curses were said to do" (Sattianadhan: 131). Similarly when Ganesh dies, Kamala feels guilty for his death. She believes that she is the reason for his death. "She looked upon her husband's death as a mere punishment for having left his house." (Sattianadhan: 153). Likewise Geetha in *Inside the Haveli* changes according to the society to which she enters. Initially she was surprised to find separate place for men and women in the Haveli and women's custom of wearing purda. But later she changes her views and feels proud about the behaviors in the Haveli. Slowly she begins to identify herself with the Haveli women.

Women in the 20th century began to give importance for their self. They tried to search for their identity in the patriarchal society. Slowly through their education and economical development began to occupy an important place in the society. It enabled them to give importance for their self and made them to uplift their position/condition in the society. Before the 19th century, writers portrayed the stereotypical images which the society had about women. George Eliot, in her work, "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" uses harsh words to write about these women writers, who wrote in a stereotypical

fashion. These kinds of writings were the result of the oppression women faced in the patriarchal society. "In the majority of women's books you see that kind of facility which springs from the absence of any high standard; that fertility in imbecile combination or feeble imitation which a little self-criticism would check and reduce to barrenness" (<http://webscript.princeton.edu/~mnoble/eliot-texts/eliot-sillynovels.html>).

Many women writers from the 19th century began to give importance for self. When one reads those works, one can understand the importance given to the female subjectivity. The term subjectivity is defined by Regina Gagnier as,

First, the subject is a subject to itself, and "I", however difficult or even impossible it may be for others to understand this "I" from its own view point, within its own experience. Simultaneously, the subject is a subject to, and of, others; in fact, it is often an "Other" to others, which also affects its sense of its own subjectivity... Third, the subject is also a subject of knowledge, most familiarly perhaps of the dispose of social institutions that circumscribe its terms of being. Fourth, the subject is a body that is separate (except in the case of pregnant women) from other human bodies; and the body, therefore the subject is closely dependent upon its physical environment (8).

The term subjectivity resembles the term identity and at sometimes these two terms are used interchangeably. But there is considerable difference available between these two terms.

One's identity can be thought of as that particular set of trails, beliefs, and allegiances that, in short- or long-term ways, gives one a consistent personality and mood of social being, while subjectivity implies a degree of thought and self-consciousness

about identity, at the same time allowing a myriad of limitations and often unknowable, unavoidable constraints on our ability to fully comprehend identity. Subjectivity as a critical concept invites us to consider the question of how and often from where identity arises, to what extent it is understandable, and to what degree it is something over which we have any measure of influence of control (Hall, 3-4).

Before the 19th century women were looking at themselves as subordinate to men. Slowly through education women's condition began to improve. It enabled them to think about themselves. The first women reformer who thought and taught about the self was Mary Wollstonecraft. She believed that in order to gain self responsibility women should be, "asserting such power over the self is the need to expose and rectify biases inherent in language, education and underlying categories of thought" (Hall: 42). Later in the 19th century American transcendentalist Margaret Fuller in her work *Women in the nineteenth Century* advises that women, "must lead off asking (men) and being influenced by them, but retire within themselves, and explore the ground-work of life till they find their peculiar secret" (121). Such a kind of subjectivity can be traced from the writing of George Eliot. At present almost all the women writers' writing reveals their subjectivity in their society.

Krupabai can be considered as a pioneer to introduce an independent protagonist in her work. In *Kamala*, the writer, "attempts to release the protagonists from the traditional identities of child-wife and widow, and introduce her to western concepts of feminist individualism" (Sattianadhan: 3). Rama Mehta too portrays her protagonist Geetha, who is indifferent from the society where she lives after her marriage.

Kamala and Geetha are in several ways different to the women of their societies. They are looked with suspicion by the society to

which they enter after their marriage. After marriage Kamala and Geetha enter into a society where education for women was forbidden. Due to their education, the society to which they enter looked at them as different. In the case of Kamala, her in-laws found her as different from the rest. Ganesh too observed that,

There was a certain grace and refinement about her which together with her unique beauty marked her as distinct from other girls of her age. He found her, moreover, eager to get information about anything, and wonderfully quick of comprehension, and with the English idea he had imbibed regarding women's love and education he thought of striking of a new line and developing Kamala's mind and so training her to be a real companion to him (Sattinadhan, 73).

In *Inside the Haveli*, when Ajay marries Geetha, an outsider from the Haveli, the whole society of Udaipur looked at her indifferently. Even though she lived there for ten years after marriage, even that time too everyone looked at her sarcastically. She felt that she was not considered as one with them instead as an outsider from the place. "Geetha felt an outsider, an onlooker. She could never share their past" (Mehta: 114).

Some of the activities of Kamala and Geetha create threat to the practices of the society. Even though the society put several restrictions, Kamala and Geetha come out of some of it through education and because of economy. Among other women, they both are looked different because of their education and to be powerful in such a society is also possible for them due to their economical power. Slowly through their unconscious behavior, they distinguish themselves from other common women. Kamala is introduced by the writer as a living spirit who finds enjoyment in nature. She admires nature and unlike other girls feels energetic in solitude. When she visits her sick

father from her in-laws home, she finds solace from nature, which enables her to forget her repression.

So Kamala reasoned while she bore meekly all the taunts and harsh hard words of her sisters-in-law and wondered why she ever felt happy at all, as she did when she looked on the blue sky, the radiant sunset, or the swollen river – why she felt such longing to be lost in a great wild wilderness, where she might dream in silence and enjoy to her heart's content the glory and the magnificence of earth and sky (Sattianadhan, 59).

Kamala, during her marriage ceremony utters her husband's name and waits eagerly for the elder's appreciation for her rhyme. But she receives critical comment from the society. "She thought that she had successfully passed through the ordeal not knowing that she had added her husband's name unconsciously just as he had taken hers, and to her surprise she saw shocked faces all round her and loud hisses and laughter came from all sides" (Sattianadhan: 38). In the later part of the novel, Kamala while talking with Ramachandra unconsciously compares him with her husband. This kind of thought is forbidden in her society and it makes her to feel ashamed.

Once, but only once, a wish intruded itself in the deepest and most sacred chamber of her heart – a wish which made her blush at her boldness and cover her bosom with her hands as if to hide it from herself. Would, she said to herself, that Ganesh had been more like Ramchander. Such a wish, though natural it may seem, was shocking in the extreme to a Hindu girl, who must never allow herself to compare her husband with anybody else. (Sattianadhan, 126).

It presents Kamala as different from other member of her society. During her widowhood unlike her other widows of her time,

Kamala lives her life as she wishes. It is possible for her due to her economical condition.

In *Inside the Haveli*, Geetha due to her education bring several changes in the Haveli and her manners differentiated her from others. People think, "'Binniji is different,' said Pari. 'She is educated; she has other things to occupy. Gossip is for those like us who cannot read or write.' There was a slight trace of sarcasm in her voice" (Mehta: 88). Geetha wishes to bring changes at least in the lives of the children in the Haveli. She tries hard to teach the importance of education to the women folk and succeeds in her attempt. She makes the Haveli people to send Sita to school and teaches other women's to read and write. Even though she faces several sarcastic comments about it, she does not wish to stop it. Those, who scolded for sending Sita to school, later change their views and appreciate her for her wise decision. "I suppose Binniji was right in sending Sita to school. The girl so far has no fancy ideas. She is obedient and thus as she is told. Education has not done any harm,' said the mistress" (Mehta: 144). Later when the whole Haveli is in a desire to fix Geetha daughter Vijay's marriage, she protests against it and postpones elder's decision regarding it. These are possible for Geetha because of her education and economical condition.

When time moves, condition of women changes. Education made women to be powerful. It enabled them to grasp their subordinate position in the society and gave power to fight for their rights. Sai in *Kamala* is an educated woman and lives independently. She is, "a bold, clever women wielding such a dreadful power over others as this woman wields? Yet is education that has made her what she is." (Sattianadhan: 81-82). Kamala, at the end of the novel due to her educational and economical power decides her future independently. In *Inside the Haveli*, Geetha eradicates the people's idea about education. She fights against the servants in order to send Sita to

school. Slowly she begins to take classes in the Haveli for women. Due to her encouragement many women began to read. Even though she faces critical looks from the society, she is strong in her aim. It slowly changes the mentality of women in the Havelis.

Among Krupabai and Rama Mehta, Krupabai's writing seems to be more revolutionary than Rama Mehta's. Even though Kamala and Geetha emerge as revolutionaries in their societies, Kamala can be viewed as much more revolutionary than Geetha. Krupabai wrote her novel during the 19th century, where women were fully dominated by men. In such a society Krupabai portrays Kamala's character and presents her as a powerful woman in that society. Writing about education and independent women were forbidden during this 19th century. In such a society Krupabai planted a revolutionary seed through Kamala's character. Rama Mehta, who wrote her novel in the 20th century, portrays Geetha as submissive in the end. Even though she was revolutionary in the beginning slowly becomes submissive.

Geetha in *Inside the Haveli*, slowly changes herself according to the cultural practices of Udaipur. Even though she was born and brought up in the Mumbai city, the readers can find topsy-turvy changes in her character after her marriage. During her initial stage in Udaipur, she desires to leave that place soon and find its practices as totally alien to hers. Slowly she loses her confidence and always suspects her own decision. For example when she decides to send Sita to school, she faces several critical comments from the society. A few days later, she worries whether she had taken a wrong decision to disturb the society. When she realizes that her husband may not leave his parents and the Haveli, she does not rebel against his decision but slowly she understands that they cannot leave that place. So in the later part of her life she changes her decision of leaving the Haveli. Gradually Geetha adapts the practices of Udaipur and become the Mistress of the Haveli in the end of the novel.

Indian society follows the system of joint family. Krupabai by allowing Kamala and Ganesh to live independently broke the custom of the society. But even in the 20th century Rama Mehta made her character Geetha to live in a joint family. In the novel *Kamala* even though at some places, Kamala is portrayed with some superstitious beliefs, throughout the novel readers can find revolutionary behaviors in Kamala's characterization. In *Inside the Haveli*, Geetha in the beginning was introduced with revolutionary ideas but slowly she becomes conventional. Portraying women such as Sai and Kamala to be more subjective and empowered in their society proves Krupabai to be more revolutionary writer than Rama Mehta.

When women become empowered and know their subjectivity they come away from the society's restriction upon them. When Kamala becomes wealthier, her society's critical eye upon her was erased. It enabled her to live her widowhood in peace and also to decide about her future. Due to her economical power she slowly changed the condition of widows in her society by constructing a home for them. In the novels *Kamala* and *Inside the Haveli*, Kamala, Sai and Geetha gain power in the society where women themselves accept their subordination willingly. The present study proves that education and economical conditions made these women as independent.

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Shruti Bidwaikar

**Aurobindo's Intuitive Appreciation of Poetry:
A Synthesis of Indian and Western Literary Theories**

What is spirituality? Is it only meditation? Is it only to talk about the Supreme? Or remain silent and be in a trance-like state always? What is it? The word 'spirituality' itself is self-explanatory. It is the pursuit of the spirit. Now the question is, pursuit of the spirit in what and how is it to be pursued? Is it always an abstract expression or can it have a concrete form. These questions arise because the spirituality immediately stands against the ordinary, mundane and materialistic approach to the world. This notion of spirituality being opposite or even negation of material world, gives the former an elitist stature, to be pursued only by a select few. This narrow definition of spirituality has segregated the two worlds and there reconciliation seems difficult. Spirituality certainly is connected with the spirit and its manifestation in the world outside only can be the reconciliation. Sri Aurobindo gives a wide definition of spirituality in one of his letters:

The meaning of spirituality is a new and greater inner life of man founded in the consciousness of his true, his inmost, highest and largest self and spirit by which he receives the whole of existence as a progressive manifestation of the self in the universe and his own life as a field of a possible transformation in which its divine sense will be found, its potentialities highly

evolved, the now imperfect forms change into an image of divine perfection, and an effort not only to see but to live out these greater possibilities by his being. (SABCL 9, 251)

These dimensions of spirituality gives a large scope for human expression; the expression of the inmost, the highest and the largest self. In fact there is a constant expansion in the field of expression in art, poetry and even in science. The minute details and the subtleties are caught and expressed. The matter's connectivity with the waves has brought a revolution in the field of communication through telephones, television satellites, computer systems and mobile phones. There is a flexibility of expression in all the fields, dance, music, painting, poetry, technology etc. There is a "progressive manifestation" as Sri Aurobindo pointed out. New things are launched over an old foundation; the old and the new interact and undergo a change. There is a constant modification of the old by the new and the new also is influenced and guided by old. The old rigid forms have to break down to give way to the new, this may take place with mutation of the old or the new develops out of the old and stands with it. This has been the bane of literary theories, the old is modified and transformed, or a new theory stands up developing a new dimension. This molding of the old and the formation of new in its own colours too contributes to the manifestation of the self. Each theory has its own individuality and when it develops fully against another, the old and the new become complementary and cease to remain opponents. The present paper follows this rhythm to study literary criterion in Indian and Western Aesthetic theories and see its acme reaching in Sri Aurobindo.

The tradition of *alankarshastra* in India is such a varied expression of complementary theories. The tradition is formally traced to Bharatmuni's *Natyashastra* giving way to the formation of subsequent theories. Literary theories propound the ways in which a text is to be read. It also throws light on the process of creation of a

text, the role of technique, the aptness of the subject matter and importance of the reader. The *Natyashastra* is essentially credited to give way to the *rasa* school of poetic appreciation. According to Bharatmuni, there are eight essential emotions (*bhava*) in an individual and the presentation and recognition of these in a text is the job of the creator and the reader respectively. There were later additions to the number of emotions and today it varies from eight to twelve. However, the emotive presentation and response to the text gave only little importance to the style of presentation, the use of metaphors and other figures of speech. Therefore, another school of thought developed which emphasized the importance of the style (*riti*) developed and analyzed the importance and dimensions of the same. The mastery of technique according this school of thought was important in order to create good poetry. Vamana was the proponent of this thought and he developed it into a separate school defining various styles, techniques and their applicability to different subject matter. The importance of figures of speech was highlighted by Bhamaha in his *alankarshastra* and he differentiated between the *alankaras* in words and in meaning. He is credited with the organization of the figures of speech in poetry.

The emotive, the stylistic and the figurative aspects of a text were analyzed and described by the aestheticians mentioned above and their peers. Then there developed the theories and schools which promoted varied understanding of the text, a kind of plunge into the text to extract the meaning. *Vakrokti*, *dhvani*, *anumiti*, *tatparya*, *chamatkar* and *auchitya*, all these terms form the different shades of meaning a text can assume. Different aestheticians in India took one of them and again developed it in its own dimension. *Vakrokti* means deviant meaning. Usually a literary piece, especially poetry is believed to give a deviant meaning than the denotation conveys or at least the reader is expected to find a deviant meaning in the text. This thought was propagated by Kuntak in his *Vakroktijivita*. *Dhvani* is the

suggested, alluded or hidden meaning of the text. Acharya Anandavardhan and later the Kashmiri aesthete, Abhinavagupta was responsible to expand this idea. Similarly, *anumiti* means the inferential meaning and *tatparya* means the intended meaning and the final impact of all these meaning and figures and emotions is the *chamatkar*, which also is a parallel school of thought. It is interesting to note that these schools developed in opposition to each other, however, seen now they complement each other, for certainly a text is a complete package of emotion, style, technique, levels and shades of meaning and the magic and charm of the text.

Apart from the schools of literary theories or aesthetics another school on linguistics developed which dwelt on the *sphota*, the potential capacity of the Word to deliver meaning. Bhartrhari's *sphota* theory studies the importance and capacity of the Word in rendering meaning. He believed that the Word as an innate potential to put forth the meaning. He differentiates between different kinds of speech a loose translation of what is better known in Sanskrit as *vak*. The four kinds of *vak* described by Bhartrhari are *vaikhari*, *madhayama*, *pashyanti*, *para*. *Vaikhari* is the common day to day speech. *Madhayama* is the idea or thought which has not yet manifested as speech. *Pashyanti vak* however, falls under the *mantiric* effect. This speech is impregnated with meaning and force and has great potential to create and transform the state of the reader's consciousness. The Vedic hymns and utterances are known to be *pashyanti vak*, whereas, the *para vak* is beyond the verbal expression and belongs to the transcendental.

These complementary stands taken by different schools put together forms the poetics of our acharyas. Similarly, Western poetics of critical tradition too is gigantic and shows different facets of its developments in various dimensions. Starting with Aristotle, who like Bharatmuni, wrote for the purpose of theatre gives a systematic manner to judging a play. The Indian aesthete gave a complete account of

how to stage a play and what exact impacts should be elicited from the audience. Aristotle in his poetics, gave the definitions and explanations of what is a true tragedy, comedy, epic and history. He placed poetry among the highest of arts as it uses the instrumentation of music and draws images through words. He laid down strict rules as to what and how should be a tragedy etc. These rules were quite strictly followed until the Renaissance in England. Shakespeare broke away from the strict rules of tragedy and comedy and his plays exemplify, mixing of the two. Dr. Johnson commends Shakespeare for blending the tragic and the comic in the former's plays as life is a mixture of both. Debates then stated about the process of poetic creation and the role played by the text and the reader in finding the meaning. Wordsworth and other Romantic poets believed that the poet has an emotion, an idea to convey and the reception of the same emotion and idea by the reader completes the process. So, in the hands of the Romantic poets, poetry became a means to express their own emotion, feelings and ideas. These poets and critics stood against the earlier era which created poetry with lot of affectation and was pompous. However, the era that succeeded the Romantics did not agree complete with them and they assigned the poet, the role of a catalyst (Eliot). T.S. Eliot and Matthew Arnold saw the poets as instruments who have to develop their individuality by conscious labour and study in order to produce good poetry. The crowned status of the poet's intention thus came down. After T.S. Eliot however, there is a definition direction in which the literary theory seems to move. Till then, individual poets and critics voiced their opinions about specific topics as imagination, creativity, paradox, irony and the like. They dwelt on specific aspects of writing or reading poetry. Before the advent of the Romantic theories there was great emphasis of adherence to form and the content had to be moulded in order to suit the form. Therefore, not only the content was pompous but the style too was artificially decorated. The Romantic poets and critics broke away from

this artificiality and tired to speak in the language of men. However, this too assumed a rigid form which had to be broken. It has been a trend that the earlier critics are refuted or theories are modified to suit the need of the new era.

The beginning of the 20th century marked the coming of the school of formalism and New Criticism. Here, the reader and the poet both were subdued under the weight of text. The reader had to take into consideration the form of the text alone and interpret it without being concerned about the history and background of the poet. This facilitated a objective reading of the text. From this text centric approach emerged the theories for the texts, myth criticism, structuralism, post-structuralism, Marxist criticism etc. These theories tried to establish the autonomy and supremacy of the text over the poet and the reader. Once the importance of text of established it gave way to the Reader Response theory bringing the reader into focus. Roland Barthes emphasized that it is the reader who gives meaning to the text. Then the subsequent theories developed about the dominant cultural, political and social aspects in the text, in the poet and the reader. There is a gradual development of the schools emphasizing the importance of the poet, the text, and the reader. It was not a linear development although; many of thoughts and approaches co-existed simultaneously.

The amalgam, integration, heightening and deepening of the ways to appreciate and create poetry or literary texts reaches its acme in Sri Aurobindo. Certainly, post-structuralist and such other theories came into being after Sri Aurobindo wrote, but Sri Aurobindo's vision of poetry which he envisaged and exemplified has already integrated these fragments of thoughts and visions and the theory has already seen the day light before the dawn.

Sri Aurobindo does not undermine the importance of any – reader, writer/poet, text, technique, genius, style, imagery or the figures of speech. All these are important for the formation of poetry; they

have to have a harmonious interaction and manifestation in words. The breaking and making of form, the structural and cultural explorations of the text, the emphasis on the word, its semantic use, importance of sound and its impact all these studies are actually trying to bring out the inmost, the higher and the deeper essence of the text. The explorations in the field of literature and literary theory also bring out the potential of a text and its impact and relation to humanity. V.S. Seturaman, traces the whole corpus Indian and Western aesthetics and concludes his observation foreseeing the future of literary theory with the eyes of Sri Aurobindo –

The function of poetry is to make the soul of a man a reality, something that is palpable and substantial as substance itself. Now that human intelligence has reached its highest peak, it must have seen its limitations and has to grant the superiority of intuition. In the best poetry there will be the marriage of the word and the spirit; the word will be an appropriate instrument of the spirit itself. And that word is not and cannot simply be a sign or a counter (It is not surprising that the structuralists and the post structuralists examine any poem or utterance entirely on semantic and epistemic terms neglecting wholly other dimensions of poetry such as rhythm/imagery/sensuous components to which intuition alone can be responsive.) It is this possibility, shall we say, certainty, that is envisaged. . . [in] Sri Aurobindo's *The Future Poetry*.

These theories are different attempts of the critics and poets to excel and exceed in their own poetic and critical endeavor. They wanted to make the method of appreciating poetry or any text more and more scientific and objective. However, not all parameters other than the formal could prove to be objective. Even, when the form is analyzed, it might not yield the same meaning for all the readers and critics. Therefore, a new parameter has to be found. Sri Aurobindo

found this parameter in the source of inspiration. His letters on poetry reveal that poets seek inspiration they call the Muse to help them write good poetry. This Muse does not only belong to a particular realm, it comes from different realms and even in a mixed form. These are the levels of inspiration, which Sri Aurobindo calls the Overhead inspiration. They belong to the realm higher than the mind. He writes –

All poetry is an inspiration, a thing breathed into the thinking organ from above; it is recorded in the mind, but is born in the higher principle of direct knowledge or ideal vision which surpasses mind. It is in reality a revelation. The prophetic or revealing power sees the substance; the inspiration perceives the right expression. Neither is manufactured; nor is poetry really a poesis or composition, nor even a creation, but rather the revelation of something that eternally exists. The ancients knew this truth and used the same word for poet and prophet, creator and seer, sophos, vates, kavi. (*Vol 12: 28*)

The “higher principle of direct knowledge” to which Sri Aurobindo refers here is intuition. He envisages that the poetry in future will be born out of the direct knowledge through intuition and revelation unlike its make in the mental atmosphere. The mind would only be the receiver and the vital would breathe life into it, but poetry would descend onto the poet in its perfect mould for which the poet has to prepare himself.

It is noteworthy that Sri Aurobindo’s study and experience of the Vedic texts have percolated into his analysis of poetry. Vedas were received by intuition and revelation. They came down and were scribed in the same mould. They have a rhythm and a fixed meter. Sri Aurobindo does envisage a fixed and rigid form of poetry of poetics for the future. In this vision, poetry and poetics both would have ample flexibility of form, content and presentation. Fixity and rigid forms belongs to the

past when there was a need for the fixed forms, today the mind of humanity has grown to the extent that it can conceive of the abstract, intangible and subtle forms. Therefore, the poetry in the future will be more lucid and subtle. Even its appreciation would be more intuitive and would not be a mental gymnastics of finding forms and meaning. If the poetry comes from the revelatory or intuitive level, the appreciation too would come from there. Sri Aurobindo calls this appreciation - “aesthesis”. It would not only appreciation the beauty in poetry but also truth, delight, the power of life-force and the force of the spirit. These five – truth, beauty, delight, life and spirit, are the five suns of poetry according to him. The future aesthesis or the appreciation of poetry would dwell on these five essential elements. Sri Aurobindo’s letters and his analysis of the levels of inspiration in various poets have given us the glimpse of what the future of criticism can be. For it to develop in all its aspect we have to wait for the time to when the intuitive poetry would be produced and the intuitive appreciation would take place.

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Vandana Rajoriya

Figural Conceptualization of *Rasa* Theory

Rasa is a manner of interpreting every known and possible category that appears before the consciousness, experience, perception, imagination, thought and language. Bharatmuni, (5th c) came out with a theory, which he called *rasa*¹, and since then this concept or theory has become a part of artistic interpretation, comprehension, evaluation and realisation. It is also quite interesting to note the fact that the debate initiated by Bharatmuni on the ways to acquire a validity for concrete experience and an acknowledgement for the presence of same experience in the object or event that is being attended to, brought in a remarkably large number of commentators and interpreters. Of the most important of the commentators/interpreters were Bhatta Nayaka, Bhatta Lollata, Sri Sankuka, Abhinavagupta, Pandit Raj Jagannath, Mahimbhatta and Kshemendra. In each of these commentators the concept of *rasa* underwent a new meaning and new interpretation. In these six or seven thousand years the argumentative function of *rasa* and receptive effect of *rasa* created a sound base for the projection of a theory and because of this the ideational features involved in *rasa*, are merited through a process of interaction between the object and the subject and the medium and the content.

In the beginning it appears worth our while to consider how Bharatmuni proposes significance for content as well as medium

construction for otherwise ideal artistic situation. He observes: “*vibh³v³nubh³va-vyabhic³ri-saḍyog³t rasa-niṭpattih*” (*N³tyaī³stra*, Ch. VI.). In this observation there is a method to explain and interpret how meaning, content, medium, and the object constituting the core of an artistic situation and subsequently how they build up a concrete framework for their own functions and structure. Accordingly any ideal formation in artistry shall have to begin with the presentation of *bh³va* or universal disposition and for this *Bh³va* we will have the creation of *vibh³va*, *anubh³va* and *saḍc³r^obh³vas* simultaneously and separately. This would suggest that the realisable experience always enters into a correlation with sub-ordinate categories hence the highest function of this structure is to identify and define the inter-association between two immediate categories like *vibh³va* and *anubh³va* (external and internal objects of expression) are brought to a conjunction through the transformation of values underlying them.

Bharatmuni says that the development of *bh³va* as an assorted and concentrated effect is, in fact, the first value principle that could bring every other minor situation and turn them into wholesome aggregates. In an artistic creation, the poet willing to suggest a method for construction of an experience and transferring an experience shall have to accord a necessary commitment to the homogenous distribution of the contents of experience. It is also quite necessary to suggest that the experience, where it moves from one universal to the other and other to another and another to still another, it dislocates the denotative form of the content or category and Bharatmuni, because of this, speaks of ‘samyoga’ as a necessary conjunction to find out the medium for inter-association and in the present circumstance we can understand that earliest denotative significance occurring within the category is of most important comprehensive type because from this and this only the effect of inter-formation could take place. There can be no doubt as to why Bharatmuni begins with *vibh³va* and closes the terms on samyoga with an inclusion of *anubh³va* and *saḍc³r^obh³vas*. The answer to this question is very simple. One has to understand only the fact that concentrated universal beginning with the first term Vibhâva

revolved and rotated both horizontally and vertically through the effect of ideal function created at the instance of this movement.

In fact Bharatmuni probably means that the beginning of effect of bh^3va is primarily a displacement for the sake of a cyclical rotation or circular movement within the parameters of a hypothetical absolute. And this displacement that is issued at the instance of the formation of first real synthesis observed at the first term $vibh^3va$ becomes instrumental for the whole transformation.

The method of constructing a basis of association so far as the primary categories introduced by Bharatmuni are concerned, we can rely on the fact that bh^3va has a length of expansion and also stretch for the sake of measurement and for that matter where it is issued right at the creation of an intensity of realization of an external event, the observer is necessarily in a position to conduct nearly all the cohesive forms of perception. In this regard it would be necessary to examine the possibility of having an ability of denotation so far as bh^3va as an object of expression as well as model of reception is concerned. The appearance of bh^3va could be a logical re-structuring of external and internal sources of generation of artistic contents and when the perception is motivated, it activates a continuous series of displacement and from this the second important aspect of Bharata's observation is understood. $Vibh^3va$ by all means is a cohesive unit which reduces the figural margins obtained in other categories like $anubh^3va$ and $saòc^3r^ò bh^3va$ hence quite affirmatively brings about the various acts of association and conjunction.

This could be understood to be the beginning of wholeness in as much as $vibh^3va$ could easily dislocate a primary term of significance through both inception and reception. This is to prove the point that in an artistic situation the continuity of refinement is recorded and comprehended as a process of addition and for this reason Bharatmuni could easily conceive the situation to be primarily the matter of a succession of additions in which comprehensibility is established as a reliable and valid basis. While we look into this aspect of the conceptions we are reminded of the strength of formulation.

The activity of synthesis in which reception, inception and inversion and to an extent mutation of the transformation is apprehended, can be considered to be the greatest idea to deal with immediate as well as permanent forms of an artistic situation. The idea of *rasa* has an extensive plan and scheme of conceptualization and for that matter when the categories are intended for the sake of idealisation the intensity of synthesis within the contents is absolutely so powerful that it gives rise immediately to the following large and independent variables. Hence an ideal description of *rasa* must commit itself to the following system of figural conceptualization:

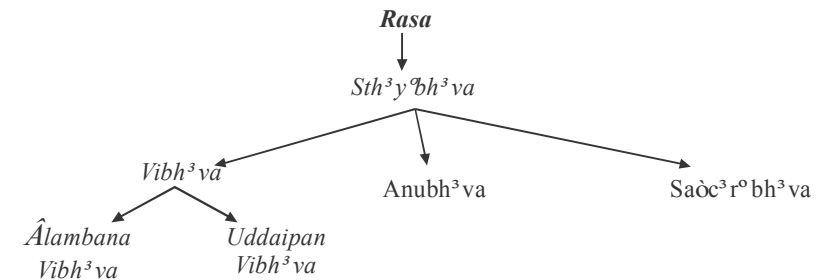


Fig 1.4 Figural Conceptualization of system of *Rasa* Description.

The first important requirement for the projection or application of *rasa* as a necessary method for the sake of reception and expression and as a concrete universal placed within either the observer or the reader is to understand the evolutionary assortment of primary and secondary universals and the determinants, which go a long way to shape the form and manner of the principles.

The mention of the term application, of necessity, includes a definition of all the constituents of *Rasa* and for that matter it is worth the while to begin with bh^3va as being principle constituents of *rasa*. Bh^3va is functional situation hence it systematizes both the active, non active and interactive shades of the disposition. In an environment in which artistic situation is being comprehended and conceived the division of a situation into three cohesive orders in the form of active, non active and interactive forms is quiet obvious. The perception of

an external event is open both to the prospect of synthesis and disintegration and when the event is synthesized it is purely based on a resolution of object into event performed by the various contents of the disposition and in that way it must be stated with clarity and conviction that the beginning of an acquisition of Bhâva is primarily based on the fact that that observer who is performing an activity conducive to the artistry is simultaneously encoding both the figural as well as non-figural dimension hence it opens up an infinite possibility of arriving at an intercepted meaning within and outside the given category. The motivation of an external sensation is required to be graduated into a sequence and would lead to the creation of independent Bhâvas capable of effecting the considerate forms of an artistic situation.

The apprehension of a bh^3va confirms the process of largest expansion and stretch of the content based and medium oriented figures hence Bh^3va is the first principle and merit of calling it the first principle is assuredly lies in the fact that it is the beginning and also for that matter middle and end. Bharatmuni could understand that the bh^3va shall be applicable to the typologies within the situation hence a bh^3va at any point of time, with the changes in external sensation, perception and realisation, changes in nature, form and function accordingly we can have $sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3vas$ and $sa\delta c^3r^{\circ}bh^3vas$.

In an event in which functional scale of bh^3va is imminent, the significance is to look at the observer who happens to imbibe an observation from a external source and in consequence of which he would sustain the perception of a necessary logical form and the Bh^3va with its segmental graduations will definitely enter into the makings of the codes preferentially obtained by the observer. The term for such figuration may be absolutely varying and differential yet the resolution is always near at the hand. It is in this way that three elementary conjunctions would be seen to be at work in this connection:

- I. Formation of an object
- II. Creation on an event and
- III. The resolution of an object into event.

The effort to offer an inscribed form of this logical expansion of the perception the notation of bh^3va normally builds up concentrated centers of generated meaning. For example, the effect of goodness must be observed in the adequate perception of beauty and would only be in addition to the already existing form and manner of content distribution within and outside the medium. Observer's ability to perceive the beauty is by all means the facility created by the dominant bh^3va of $\ddot{i} \bullet \delta g^3ra$ in him and hence the necessity of principle function is assumed and accordingly bh^3va is fundamentally established now. In an act of consciousness bh^3va is the primordial necessity and its consequence in an artistic formation is its total and complete validity in obtaining a method and procedure for conceptualization.

In $sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3va$ the scale of perception and observation and for that matter of consciousness is fixed to a never changing scale of graduation and evolution. Viúvanâtha understands exactly the method involved in the interpretive consequence and accordingly proposes a definition for $sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3va$ in the following manner:

अविरूद्धा विरूद्धा वा यं तिरोधातुमत्त्माः
आस्वादाङ्करकन्दोऽसौ भावः स्थायिति संमतः ॥१७४॥

[*Sahitya Darpan*, 104-105]

[That which is not to be changed by positive and negative assertions is called $sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3va$.]

Obviously Viúvan³tha is insisting on an origin of an experience earlier than the primordial times and consequence of the same beyond the posterior times. For that matter the eternal or permanently inscribed forms of the $Sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3va$ are abundantly clear.

The $vibh^3va$ precisely the genuine receptors of those experiential forms which are logically and realistically defined by the $sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3vas$. In fact, for a $sth^3y^{\circ}bh^3va$, we can say that the next appropriate and receiving objects would be the $vibh^3vas$ only. In $vibh^3vas$ the actual assortment of various communicable forms underlying the universal disposition takes place and in each the

composite functionality appears to have been formatively introduced. The whole preposition could be understood in the following four important ways:

- I. Identification of the aspect of communication.
- II. The interpretation of the method of communication.
- III. Resolution of communication.
- IV. Distribution of the length of communication.

It is certainly an aspect of understanding both the external and internal configuration of an artistic situation and accordingly presenting the contents for the enrichment of the medium. In *vibh³va* the constructs which are to interpret a particular *sth³y^obh³va* are exposed in the form of contents precisely on account of the best and highest suitability determined by the performance and function. Once this stage is carried out the figurative reception is done by the medium participating in a conceived situation. It is, therefore, the segmentation of the whole artistry into the fixed principles and as it can be understood the *vibh³vas* become the primary instruments in accepting the principle of communication for certain formative preparations made and accorded to the artistic event.

The prospects of functionality are remarkably concrete in the case of *vibh³vas*. They not only explain the actual and exact configuration of the given artistry yet they could manifest the terms through exposition. In this nativity, the distinction in the *vibh³vas* is grounded through the change of the context and medium nevertheless there are two changes in the context and situation generally brought about by context and situation and they are recreated into following two objective:

1. Stimulus (*³lambana*)
2. Stimulant (*udd^opan*)

In the sensory formation in which the whole effect is felt through the bodily constitution we have these two variants *¹lambana* and *uddipan* as two measure constituting factors. It would be a part

examination to show as to how *³lambana* and *udd^opan* go on to make out primary sensory responses.

Anubh³vas are the internal situations, aspects or events which, through various gestures, postures and the like, manifest the reception *Vibh³va* to the external world and in that way they not only functionalize but homogenize the whole artistic situation. It is finally at the instance of *anubh³va* that we can understand that the value of external artistry is equal to the value of internal artistic formation nevertheless the figurative resolution might otherwise be homogenous or heterogeneous depending upon the nature of content, medium and the context. It would be purely apparent from this that *anubh³vas* construct a system in which relational, cumulative and relative values of the contents become correspondingly the measure of events of transformation and change hence when internal experience is communicated to the external world, the effect is felt both horizontally and vertically. The association of reader for that matter with the communicable events in the text will have a form and method through the amount of value and figure encoded in the *anubh³vas*

As a matter of fact *sa^odc³r^o bh³vas* appear to be the last great and perfect model of the reception of continuous transformation. In as much as they suggest an equal and equivalent fixation of different functional states of experience under different content, different medium and different texts. In this regard, it would be worth our while to understand that the scale of functionality proved and activated by having marginal yet constant shift in the artistic situation is always synthesized through the reception of a deviant sensory attitude that has both perceptivity and imperceptibility.

The principle of organization composes the method of classification through various means as we have seen earlier the creation of *Rasa* bears upon the evolution through *bh³va*, *sth³y^obh³va*, *vibh³va*, *anubh³va* and the *sa^odc³r^o bh³vas*. The term of resolution of these categories into coherent harmonious and synthesized forms obviously leads to designated and noteworthy concretization of the

universals so as to explicate and illustrate every possible range of human experience.

The following figure displaying the nine *rasas* and *sth³y^obh³vas*, *vibh³vas*, *anubh³vas* and *saôc³r^obh³vas* corresponding to them will show how the comprehensibility of artistry could be as various, as rich and as universal as it should require to be:

<i>Rasas and Sth³y^obh³vas</i>	<i>Vibh³vas</i>	<i>Anubh³vas</i>	<i>Saôc³r^obh³vas</i>
Ī•ôg³ra (amorous) <i>Rati</i>	Seasons, garlands, aromatics, jewelery, company of dear ones, music, palaces, paintings, aquatic games, gardens, imitating the lofty etc.	Union: delicate movements of eyebrows, glances, pleasant words, soft and delicate movements of the limbs etc. Separation: aversion, depression, doubt, envy, weariness, sorrow, passion, inquisitiveness, sleep, dream, awakening, sickness, insanity, epilepsy, stupor etc.	All the emotions with the exception of indolence, ferocity and repugnance.
H³sya (humorous) <i>Hâsa</i>	Hearing about or looking at improper costumes and jewellery, impudence, indulgence, tickling, prattle, the disabled, unwarranted fear, uncalled for action etc.	Quick movements of the cheeks and the nostrils, narrow or wide looks, seat, change of color of the face, holding the sides.	Envy, waywardness, dream, sleep, concealment, awakening etc.

<i>Rasas and Sth³y^obh³vas</i>	<i>Vibh³vas</i>	<i>Anubh³vas</i>	<i>Saôc³r^obh³vas</i>
Karuna (Pathetic) <i>Īoka</i>	Affliction under curse, separation from near ones, loss of wealth, killing, bondage, extradition, suffering and death due to fire etc.	Lamentation, dryness of mouth, shedding of tears, discoloration of body, loose limbs, rapid breath, forgetfulness, etc.	Aversion, depression, sorrow, inquisitiveness, agitation, passion, weariness, fear, despair, piteousness, sickness, stupor, insanity, epilepsy, death, torpidity, trembling, discoloration, tears, change in tone etc.
Raudra (furious) <i>Krodha</i>	Battle, anger, threat, insult, abuse, lies, injury, harsh words, cheating, jealousy etc.	Breaking, pounding, cutting, beating, taking up and use of arms, bloodshot eyes, perspiration, knitting of eyebrows, grinding the teeth, biting the nether lip, rubbing palms etc.	Arrogance, envy, intoxication, waywardness, ferocity, passion, change in tone, horripilation etc.
Vôra (valorous) <i>Uts³ha</i>	Presence of mind, perseverance, strength, valor, power, excitement etc.	Steadiness, courage, valour, sacrifice, knowledge, ability etc.	Courage, knowledge, arrogance, ferocity, indignation, recollection, horripilation, awakening etc.

<i>Rasas and Sth³y^obh³vas</i>	<i>Vibh³vas</i>	<i>Anubh³vas</i>	<i>Saḍc³r^obh³vas</i>
<i>Bhay³naka</i> (horrific) <i>Bhaya</i>	Hideous noises, devils, reflex actions, vacant buildings, forests, capture and death of near ones etc.	Blank looks, loose limbs, dry mouth, palpitation of heart, horripilation, change in voice, face & glances etc. Infectious horror, the action should be delicate	Torpidity, perspiration, trembling, change in tone and colour, doubt, passion, piteousness, agitation, waywardness, stupor, fright, epilepsy, death etc.
<i>B^obhatsa</i> (repugnant) <i>Jugups³</i>	Seeing, hearing or discussing about distasteful, unpropitious, unpleasant, disagreeable and contaminated objects, bad odours, harsh sounds etc.	Convulsive contraction of the body, narrow face, vomiting, spitting, closing the nostril, disgusting movement of the teeth	Epilepsy, insanity, despair, intoxication, death, sickness, fear etc.
<i>Adbhuta</i> (wondrous) <i>Viḥmaya</i>	Seeing celestials, attainment of desired objective, entry into temples, palaces and the like, witnessing magic, illusion etc.	Wide eyes, fixed gaze, horripilation, tears of joy, sweat, exhilaration, approbation, generosity, exclamation, movement of hands.	Torpidity, perspiration, horripilation, change in tone, agitation, joy, waywardness, exuberance, epilepsy, courage, stupor, swoon etc.
<i>S³nta</i> (blissful) <i>Sama</i>	Philosophic outlook, placidity, purity of thought etc.	Self control, devotion to duty, meditation, worship, self realisation, compassion, placidity	Aversion, recollection, courage, torpidity, cleanliness, horripilation etc.

[Table 1.4 *Rasas and Sth³y^obh³vas, Vibh³vas, Anubh³vas and sañcāribhāvas* corresponding to them.

The performance of a situation attending any of these absolute forms would depend upon the comprehension of equivalent content, context and the medium. In fact, it is quite appropriate at this stage to remark that *Rasa* has an effective meaningfulness both in terms of reception and communication of the absolute in as much as the contents which create the *Rasas* are at the same time, also those which communicate the *Rasa* to the external world. For this reason *Rasa* presupposes the creation of absolute on both of the sides as -an object and also as a subject. This remarkable and exceptional circumstance in which we understand the function of a term on the level of reception as well as on the side of communication is a situation in which the realisation of truth becomes equal to the figuration of reality along the structure of the object. In assessing the suitability of the observations which we have made, there is a success in interpretation through the following logical consequents of interpretation and, in the first place, we will take up the primary concrete universal obtained through *i•ḍg³ra*.

This guest of summer,

The temple-haunting martlet, does approve

By his lov'd mansionry that the heaven's breath

Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,

Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird

Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:

Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd

The air is delicate.

[Scene VI – The same: Before the Castle, (Act I *Macbeth*)]

In these verses the object of comprehension has a lengthened formation in the subject of expression hence the sensuous perception in the birds, building up the nest by weaving the nest through elements and particles. Through this preliminary groundwork the observer proceeds to synthesize wider sensation hence he could think of the higher intensity of signifiers. For example, the environment being heavenly and because of that perception of breathing creates a

fragrance in as much as god is there to bless. The immediate perception of the beautiful passes around visual and auditory perceptions hence the birds singing the song of life are transmuting and implanting the music played by the god himself and thereby the environment is substantiated as pure, blessed and truthful. This geometrical formation presenting the graphics of beauty, beautiful and the idealised create a harmony for the sake of the senses in that way we can understand how $\dot{i} \cdot \delta g^3 ra$ is borne through the $sth^3 y^\circ bh^3 va$ in sensuous embodiment of the fragrance, $vibh^3 va$ in the bird and $anubh^3 va$ in the evocation and perception of fragrance and soothing smell and finally $sa\delta c^3 r^\circ bh^3 va$ in the changing length, span, duration and period of perception of this experience. Anybody who reads the opening words at once, he is reminded of the fact that 'this guest of summer' is a pure synthesis of beautiful architectural form accorded to speech and movement 'spreading of the wings' suggests the love and warmth. In this ideational projection of beauty the condition of realisation is felt imminently hence the bird is now temple, haunting martlet and from this the concept evolves into heaven's breath and finally into 'the air is delicate'. It appears our worth the while to say that the sensation that is evoked inside for an embodiment and affiliation to this spirit of freedom, joy and liberation is none other than the one that causes the $\dot{i} \cdot \delta g^3 ra$ or $sa\delta yoga$ and the interpretive sequence acquires a larger suggestive framework in that we could understand, in the verses, the $sth^3 y^\circ bh^3 va$ of keenness for beautiful, $vibh^3 va$ in object granting beauty, $anubh^3 va$ is object evoking the beauty and $sa\delta c^3 r^\circ bh^3 vas$ in sustaining this new mood of beautiful all around.

The method of interpretation of the artistic form would include the quantitative significance of the sensation. When the speaker says this guest of summer he not only idealizes it but resolves it into further open ended-forms although speaker's perception acquires genitive configuration. In the next line, the idea that the bird is one that is temple haunting Martlet makes the reception and communication of comprehensible situation possible just for the reason that the ideational figure is now quiet compulsorily available. By the time we move on to

the next line, the primary objects creating the medium of comprehension become very perceptible. You cannot just look at the bird rather you have to appreciate the bird and, at that, not only bird but the nest that has come up and still at that not only the nest but divine association that it carries. It is for this reason that the observer finally substantiates by saying that "heavens breath smells wooingly ..." suggesting thereby that in the beginning it was beautiful and in the end it will continue to be beautiful. It is with this that we could understand the real meaning of $\dot{i} \cdot \delta g^3 ra$ in as much as if infinity could be connected to infinity it would surely lead to Parmananda, $ahl'd$ and that is so obvious in the present context. The conclusion that has come up is very significant. The observer enlarges the perception and evolves it into the new structural order of sensation in which infinity is suggested on account of infinity or infinity is become truth and eternity is a reality hence the observer could say that ' I have observed the air is delicate. '

In the presentation of $\dot{i} \cdot \delta g^3 ra$ the attention is brought to the purity of sensations. It must be emphasized that sensory perception enters into a state of addition. For this reason qualitative function of the bird enlarges the comprehensibility of the season. The season on that accounts bears the contours of the coordinates so precisely fine and embosses along the sharp and figural lines that pass between the compasses of the visual formation. In that way $k'nti$, $anur'ga$, $vir'ga$ and the like, and at the same time, the position of the sequence of visual perception is established as a method of comprehension. Two situations are important. In the first place, the object of comprehension is immediately felt and for that matter the reliability of truth that determines the universal sensation is established. Secondly the explanation that has been accorded to the sensation evolves through graduation along the fixed coordinates. On the whole qualitative goodness fixing/living a case for $\dot{i} \cdot \delta g^3 ra$ is quite conveniently established.

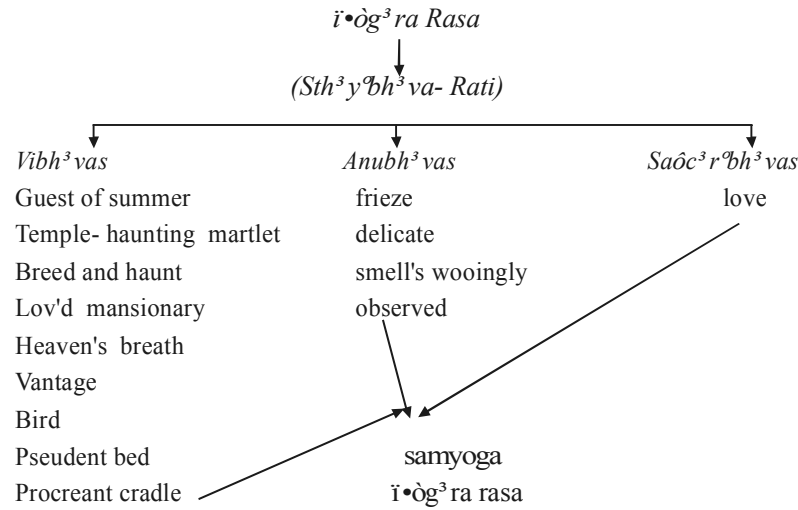


Fig 1.9 $\ddot{i}\cdot\ddot{o}g^3ra\ Rasa$ in Macbeth Act I, Scene IV]

The precision of methodology and excellence of theoretical framework contained in the idea of *rasa* have proved to be real, truthful, commonplace, practical and very effective in understanding the organization, construction, configuration and the function of an artistic situation. For that matter the merit of building up a constructive and functional methodology for *rasa* are of great significance and the point must be remembered that the situations expressed or contained in *rasa*, deal with the reception as well as communication of both the formal and non-formal figures contained within it. The strength of any genuine and ideal artistry could successfully respond to the effects produced in *rasa*, by the virtue of following perceptible formation. First the creation of synthesis in an artistic formation is absolute and based on the totality that could arrive at in any context, construct or category.

It is now possible to state with conviction that *rasa* is an appropriate theoretical and applicable model of comprehension and assessment of the configuration of the content, constructs, and of the categories involved in the resolution of an object into the event or event into the universal form of significant organization and for this

reason the suitability and applicability of *rasa*, are of necessity, be accepted and approved in as much as an artistic situation survives only through the idealisation of adequate reception and authentic communication and to this extent *rasa* invariably is the best principle of both the reception and communication.

Notes

¹The idea of *Rasa* is primarily a notion to advance the argument that the artistic situation could be grown and developed to the extent of universality in such a way that truth, precision and absolute are recurrent and basic to the achievement of such a situation. See for example *S³hityadarpañā* of Viivan³th Kavir³ja:

‘धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु वैचक्षण्यं कलासु च ।
करोति कीर्तिं प्रीतिं च साधुकाव्यनिवेणम् ॥

[*S³hityadarpañā* of Viivan³th Kavir³ja with Vimla (Hindi commentary) by Īr° Īlgramshastri, Varanasi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1956.

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Vandana Sharma

Blinding Wrath and Repenting Tranquility :
A Study of Ajax in the Light of Rasa-Aucitya

Though Aristotle provides a secondary importance to the treatment of epic in his 'Poetics' yet it cannot be denied that the epic, with its grandeur and tradition provides the tragedian with the raw material of a play. Greek poetry dealing with Trojan war, especially Homer's *Illiad* presents the wrath of Achilles, as the central theme of the epic and Sophocles also does more or less the same in presenting the wrath of Ajax. Homer and Sophocles differ from each other in that Achilles seldom repents or pays the sacrifice of his life on the altar of self slaughter by running over the sword, while Ajax does so. This indicates that in the case of Sophocles the treatment of the sentiment of wrath undergoes a sort of *Rasa-aucitya*.

The concept of *rasa-aucitya* in Ksemendra's *Aucityavicarcara* occurs in the context of *guna-alamkara-rasa aucitya*. Out of all the nine sentiments the *raudra* (wrath) and *bhayanka* (terror) are more akin to Greek tragedy as they are the constituent elements of fear. Acarya Ksemendra in *sloka* xiv of his *Aucityavicarcara* presents his aphorism of *rasa aucitya* in the following way: "The sentiment, fascinating on account of its properity, and pervading the entire sense, makes the mind grow, as does the spring the Asoka tree" (Ksemendra, *sloka* xiv).

When the sentiment of wrath becomes the *pradhana-rasa* and the other sentiments become the *sahyogi-rasa* (subsidiary sentiments), it assumes its relevance to war poetry whether auricular or spectacular. The famous Sanskrit poet Bharvi in his *Kiratarjuniyan* says: "One whose anger is implacable, becomes himself captivated; for a person without anger, there is neither fear nor affection, whether he is foe or friend" (Bharvi 25). Even in the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Lord Krishna, having shown his mighty appearance or *virata roop*, said: "I am inflamed Kala (the eternal Time-spirit), the destroyer of the worlds. I am out to exterminate these people; Even without you all those warriors arrayed in the enemy's camp must die" (*Srimadbhagvadgita*, Chapter II, sloka 32).

All this shows that the sentiment of wrath is the essential keystone for the existence of this world; and to keep the eternal cycle of birth and death moving on, In normal life also a mother becomes wrathful to her child, (filial sentiment), a beloved becomes wrathful to the lover (erotic sentiment) and a chiding patriarch makes the children weep (pathetic sentiment) etc. In this way the sentiment of wrath covers all the sentiments on account of its properity.

So far as Ajax is concerned, it demonstrates how the sentiment of wrath is based upon the maxim that 'Anger makes a person blind'. Ajax thinks that he is killing Ulysses and his army, whereas he is killing innocent beasts. Such a mental blindness is caused by Athena. Similarly in the *Mahabharata*, Ashwatthama thinks that he is killing the Pandavas, whereas he is killing the innocent sons of Draupadi. The wrath is a short-lived emotion, when it disappears, the man is left but to repent.

Ajax does so and the best way to repentance according to him is to pay the price of this life. Ashwatthama was cursed with immortality but with consumptive leprosy. In Ajax the tears of the

pathetic sentiment extinguish the fire of wrath and assume a kind of *rasa-aucitya* for extinction of wrath is for the welfare of general mankind.

The sentimental of wrath asserts its existence in what happens in the play and makes Sophocles assert through the deeds of Ajax, how it blinds a person externally and internally. It is a medical fact that the image of a visible object is at first printed on the retina of the eye and then it is counter reflected in the brain, which through its association transmit it again before the vision. Thus a tree will appear to be the chest of man to be embraced if a women's mind is governed by the erotic sentiment. This concept of called 'phantasmagoria'. Sometimes there is such a verisimilitude that the names are also given in connection with the sentiment being around, for instance the dog's flower, for the petals open like the mouth of dog, a certain flower botanically named as Clytoria, for its appearance, to such poetesses like Kamala Das, the cleavages in the stem of a tree becomes suggestive of erotic cleavages; all this has been mentioned for it creates a certain type of willing suspension of disbelief. It is not so that Ajax does not know that he is killing beasts, but his phantasmagoria is so much obsessed with an instinct of obliterating the Greek warriors and their bestial instinct that he thought that he was slaughtering the warriors, not the innocent beasts.

It is the privilege of a literary artist that he invents some divinity as responsible for creating such situations. In India context, when Manthara, the maid servant was instigating Kakeyi, against Ram's coronation, it has been mentioned that the goddess Saraswati had changed her mind. How identical it is that in Sophoclean hands Athena is held responsible for making Ajax suffering from irrational blindness which becomes Hamartia also. Athena syas:

It was I who baulked him
Of that fell triumph, darkening his vision
With a veil of phantasy, which overpowered him
So what he turned his wrath upon the cattle,
The sheep, and all the unasserted spoil
That the drovers had in charge.

(Sophocles 19)

This was an error of judgment or hamartia on the part of Ajax, but it also true that 'what is done cannot be undone'. The killed beasts cannot be brought back to life. Yet for a human conscience one way is always left; it is of realization of guilt and repentance. Wisdom dawns upon Ajax and he is seen lamenting inside his tent, about which Tecmessa his wife informs the Chorus. In Indian context the divinity presiding over wrath is *raudra* or the destructive power of Lord Shiva, that is why, it is called *raudra rasa*. In *Ajax* the *raudra rasa* attains its *sattvik* (benevolent) propriety when Ajax makes himself an object of his own wrath.

As he has taken away the lives of several innocent beasts, he determines to put an end to his own life as compensation for all he has done. The remarkable thing is that in killing the beasts the Hector's sword was instrumental and the protagonist also decides to put an end to his life by running over the same sword. With his bowels bulging out as if greater beast he has swallowed the animals. It is said that gifts should prove their own use, but it is not always so. Teucer the brother of Ajax has learnt from the catastrophe that one should not keep with oneself the gift of one's enemy, it always proves detrimental to one's own life. He explains his point by saying that Ajax had gifted a girdle to Hector which became an entangling rope to the chariot which dragged Hector to death. Similarly Hector had gifted a sword to Ajax, the same sword becomes instrumental with Ajax in committing the

action, even though “God himself had fixed his cannon against self–slaughter”.

Such an unheroic hero gets honorable burial though opposed by Menelaus but vehemently supported by Odysseus. Thus a foe has committed a friendly deed, Odysseus says to Teucer:”And I am ready to help you bury your dead/ And share in every office that we mortals/ Owe to the noblest of our kind” (Sophocles65). Thus *raudra-rasa* (the sentiments of wrath) has been used, analysed and realized in all its *aucitya* by Sophocles in *Ajax* on psychological and mythological grounds.

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Pallavi Yadav

Reifungsroman and the Dialogues of Aging in May Sarton’s Kinds of Love

“The meaning or the lack of meaning that old age takes on in any given society puts that whole society to test, since it is this that reveals the meaning or the lack of meaning or the entirety of the life leaving to old age”

Simone de Beauvoir, 1972

De Beauvoir conceives of a utopian society where old age does not hinder a person from being an active and useful social being instead of being treated like material or machines, discarded when no longer sufficiently productive or efficient. This is the change she advocates for, a radical shift in the western mindset that has literally discarded the old as ‘burdensome’ baggage, The grim plight of the elderly has indeed now become a growing concern of fiction writers, especially women. They have created a whole new genre of fiction that rejects the negative cultural stereotypes of aging and seek to create a new space for such that have crossed the threshold of maturity. Like the *Bildungsroman* this new genre-*Reifungsroman* is a novel of ripening, the name being inspired by May Sarton the septuagenarian writer herself. It seems logical that de Beauvoir would come to her study of aging after her work on women, for the two topics are closely

related. Statistically, elderly women survive men by eight years, only to live in greater isolation and poverty. Moreover, and more importantly, both feminism and ageism demand an analysis of the distribution of social power. But an understanding of the position of women or the elderly-or elderly women – requires more than theory or analysis. It requires imaginative identification, which literature can provide. As de Beauvoir counsels, if we project ourselves imaginatively into old age, if we recognize ourselves in this old woman or that old man, our commitment to the elderly will deepen: “we will no longer be indifferent, because we shall feel concerned”.

Edward Said (1983) has very rightly pointed out that all texts are “worldly, to some degree, they are events,... they are... a part of the social world, human life, and... the historical moment in which they are located and interpreted.” The movement ‘now’ reveals that in America alone the number of 65 plus has doubled in the last couple of decades, of 85 plus has quadrupled and the baby boom of the ‘young-old age’ (60-75) will swell enormously as the country moves further into the twenty first century. A conservative sociological consensus predicts one-fifths or one quarter of America will be 65 plus or older by 2035 and that there will be a simultaneous decline in children under 16. It is not America alone but most of western Europe is aging and this social reality has such immense repercussions that it has seeped into literary discourse creating a seminal, significant genre that is the need of the hour as well. Haunted by fears of the escalating numbers, recent feminist scholarship too has started addressing itself to this disturbing dichotomy between youth age. This has led to a rethinking of the experience of aging, a rethinking of culture from a gendered perspective. Myra Jehlen (2002) makes explicit the need when she says that all ‘feminist thinking is rethinking, an examination of the way certain assumptions about women and the female character enter into the fundamental assumptions that organize all our thinking’ (189). May

Sarton calls age a “foreign country”, that needs to be explored since a journey into it is inevitable. Just as “purgation” had taken up so much ‘thinking’ during Renaissance, a rethinking is needed to drive the fears associated with this present day “inferno” away this uncharted territory which seems an antagonistic enemy to the already troubled site of the female landscape of being, which young women xenophobically avoid.

Gender and age together are examples of what Paula A. Treichler (1985) calls “interlocking oppressions”, which feminist theory is committed to examine in order to envision “possible futures” (59), and thereafter to try to eliminate them. Treichler further says that there is a need to reject dichotomization “in favour of the possibility of genetic, physiological and psychological continuums” (61). This would help to dissolve polarities and prompt the needed “rethinking”.

What feminist critics have to say about patriarchal and bipolar power constructs applies equally to ageing since it shares the stigma of “otherness”. For example Julia Kristiva (1981) in her essay “Women’s Time” questions the whole notion of identity based on gender by positing a new generation or signifying space” where male and female differences disintegrate or become purely metaphysical. This very conceptualization can be extended to ‘ageing’ as well and encourage the neutralization of tensions between youth and age. Jean Bethke Elshtain (1992) too argues in favour of a “philosophy of mind that repudiates the old brutalism... (of) mind and body, reason and passion into a compelling account of human subjectivity and identity. (142)

It is not surprising that most *reifungsroman* writers are women considering that the seminal polemics of feminism and ageing are so closely related and added to this is the fact that most elderly over 75 are female and perhaps they are worse victims of ageism. Women

also, more sensitive as they are, make a different sense of experiences based on their knowledge of human relationships. As Coral Gilligan says *In a Different Voice* (1982) that women not only define themselves through their relationship but also judge their own maturity “in terms of their ability to care” (17). Also, women reach mid-life with a psychological history different from that of men and face at that time a different social reality having different possibilities for love and for work (172). Once their family commitments are over and their maternal roles accomplished they grow into a feeling of uselessness, worthlessness and concomitant depression but men on the other hand are at the peak of their careers and acquire a feeling of worth and fulfillment. Thus, just as in life so for the protagonist, the sex of the narrator, his/her age of narration make a visible difference in the shape the writing takes. When older women start to write their tone is more often than not confessional, the structure rambling, the disclosures more candid. Along with a sense of opening up of life, there is a sense of loneliness, physical and psychic pain, of self doubt and loss; the structure is usually of a journey, a meandering one in quest of self-knowledge and self-development; the point of view is usually the first person accompanied by a stream of consciousness narrative.

Whether or not they are literally travelling, these protagonists usually make an internal journey to their past through dreams and frequent flashback, essential features of the *reifungsroman* narrative structure. As they travel, they gradually come to terms with crucial decisions they made as youths, with past experiences, often sexual, that influenced their lives. Usually they have become revitalized, newly self-knowledgeable, self-confident, and independent before they move forward. If the protagonist of the *reifungsroman* dies at the end of the story, it is commonly after she has grown in a significant way.

Thus intimate narrations, realistic characterizations, strongly evocative descriptions of the mental and physical attitudes carried by

the old, and interior views of their treatment of younger character all blur the boundaries between young and old, reality and fantasy, belonging and ‘otherness’ integrity and fragmentation, rationality and senility. These *reifungsroman* insistently draw readers into the world of senescence, enabling them to identify with their female protagonists to experience elders’ passion, joys, and hopes, often mingled with a frustrating sense of helplessness.

Helene Cixous (1976) in her essay “The Laugh of the Medusa” characterizes as the essence of woman writing: “flying in language and making it fly, ... jumbling the order of space ... emptying structures, and turning propriety upside down” (887). *Reifungsroman* have this kind of disorienting and radicalizing effect on readers, temporarily transforming their identities, dissolving barriers between real and imagined, remembered and experienced, young and old, and hence disburdening readers of many negative expectations about old age the otherness of elders.

From Sarton’s first novel *The Single Hound* (1938), whose heroine is an elderly Belgian poet, to *Kinds of Love* (1970), a passionate encomium to old age, her literary world has been populated with ideal portraits of aging characters and allusions to elderly persons especially women, and often single women – whom she admires. Aging with grace and dignity has been a persistent, even obsessive theme in her work. It is as if over the years Sarton has been collecting up evidence against the possible ruins of old age by imagining positive models of aging. And indeed, such models can be transformative, shaping one’s future. She argues that the beliefs are cultivated which remain with us, for good or ill, into old age. With Sarton, it has been a long and careful rehearsal for the future which, as we will see, has not prepared her completely for the experience of old age.

Implicit in Sarton’s view is a developmental theory of age, time and work. The later years, she believes, can be a culmination of

the life cycle, distinguished from the middle years by a unique quality of time. In middle age one's conception of time is basically linear. One's concern is with where one had been and where one is going. Time is understood in historical terms, and the promises of the past are weighed apprehensively against the potentialities of the future. As Sarton writes in *Plant Dreaming Deep*. "The crisis of middle age has to do as much as anything with a catastrophic anxiety about time itself. How has one managed to come to the meridian and still be so far from the real achievement one had dreamed possible at twenty? And I mean achievement as a human being as well as within a career."

Although Sarton does not speculate on the extent to which this anxiety is fostered by the expectations of one's culture, self imposed personal demand biological changes, her insight is sound and perhaps unexpected. For a person to whom achievement is crucial, the fear of time running out is characteristic of middle age, not old age. In middle age, choice is still possible, but drastically narrowed. One simply cannot begin again at the beginning. But in old age worries about linear time, about ambition and worldly success can vanish because for most elderly people, career has been left behind. And since meaningful work is no longer defined economically, or in worldly terms, it can be construed freely without social pressures, as "real achievement as a human being," to use Sarton's phrase.

We see this most clearly in the novel *Kinds of Love*, which is set in a comfortable rural New England village inhabited chiefly by the elderly. The other residents are involved in preparations for the bicentennial celebration. The example of one major character should suffice to illustrate this point. Cornelius, the elderly husband of Christina, the central character, marvels that he can live so happily without the support of his profession (banking) or institutionalized friendship (his men's club); "I am a better man than I was a year ago, a richer man, a ... happier man", he exclaims to his wife.

Thus old age does not merely bring compensation for what is lost. It offers the possibility of special growth. Sarton believes that the shortening of linear time in old age can be accompanied by the deepening and opening out of time. Indeed, depth is made possible by the very narrowing of one's world. Cutting one's life back to the quick, as one cuts back plants in the fall (a common metaphor in Sarton's work), is a necessary condition for further development. In *Plant Dreaming Deep*, for instance, Sarton writes admiringly of a seventy year old woman: "Out of nothing, Jean was still making everything." Dominique was still making everything (134). And in *Kinds of Love*, there are moments privileged to the elderly when clock time disappears altogether, to be replaced by a time of pure presence. "The past and the present flow together," "an elderly man remarks wonderingly (115-16). Time is stilled, and yet growth continues hidden. In old age, the transparency of perception is possible. "Perhaps one of the gifts of old age," Christina muses to herself in *Kinds of Love*, "is that nothing stands between us and what we see" (401).

Sarton also believes that the threshold of old age is marked by the welcome passage from eros to agape. In *Kinds of Love*, she extols love between the old as superior to young love. Only between longtime mates and friends are such deep psychological unions possible. Why is this so? In *Kinds of Love*, Sarton assumes a deep continuity in relationship between people; there are not irrevocable, violent breaks in personal histories. Not only do the seventy year old Christina and her husband embark on a second honeymoon, but Christina reestablishes a vital connection with Eben, a man who has long loved her. In fact, it is because of their relationship to her not to their work, or to other men that both Cornelius and Eben can regard old age as an "adventure," as they both call it. "What is young love compared to this this incomparable truth of old age that nothing dies, all is

transformed' (452), declares Eben to Christina. Forgiving, caring, understanding these are the ends of lives shared over a long period of time in *Kinds of Love*. Like Sarton's notion of time in old age, this too is a sweet vision based on a faith in a gentle evolutionary curve which characterizes life. Even weakness Sarton turns to advantage. Recently crippled by a stroke, Cornelius must be cared for by Christina, but it is in fact his illness that unlocks barriers between himself and his wife. In their seventies, they both realize that "acknowledging weakness, dependency ... has finally opened all doors between us" (250). Thus the most meaningful intimacy between husband and wife is fostered by dependency in old age. Tragedy too is idealized in old age. Learning that an elderly couple have perished together in a fire outside of town, a character (herself elderly) in *Kinds of Love* observes that "there's something to be said for dying together in a big blaze when you're near ninety" (28).

To Sarton, the last phase of life is ideally devoted to the composing of the self. This is the most important creative act of one's life, and it requires "conscious work," as Christina calls it (32). Wholeness is the goal, the result, wisdom. Christina muses that "maybe the old make a strong impresssion because they have become themselves. "We're always, it seems to me, younger than the world we live in. And it is the old that give a place its atmosphere, make it what it is" (351).

The pages of the autobiographical *Plant Dreaming Deep* are filled with vigorous old people who give the village of Nelson its atmosphere, "make it what it is." Especially important to Sarton is her gardener Perley Cole, seventy-seven, "An untamed old man" who "has learned his own patience and his own rhythm through a long life" (108, 111). And Sarton herself meditates on the "adventure" that old age promises to be, confiding that although she had recognized this to be true many years before, she had not experienced it. "Now" she

writes, "the adventure before me seizes me in the night and keeps me awake sometimes" (179). *Kinds of Love* is the fictional counterpart of *Plant Dreaming Deep*. In the novel Sarton's theme that real maturity is achieved in old age reaches its fictional expression.

Sarton does qualify her presentation of old age as the culmination of the life cycle. Old age is not equated with an untroubled serenity. In *Kinds of Love*, Jana Tuttle, a ninety-year-old woman who has never married, is the psychological center of the town of Willard, but she also serves to remind us of the miseries of old age: "consciousness without power, the cruel truth about life, that we suffer most from seeing without being able to do, carried to the highest magnitude" (256). Many characters suffer from loneliness. And Christina confesses in her Journal: "I used to envy the old; I always imagined old age as a kind of heaven. It never occurred to me that my knee would ache all the time or that I would fight a daily battle against being slowed down, that memory would begin to fail, and all the rest" (71). But these instances are few, and the suffering of these characters is not felt as real. In the closing pages of *Kinds of Love*, Christina weighs the advantages of old age against its disadvantages:

This is the year when we have learned to grow old, Cornelius and I. How have dreaded it all my life the giving up, the "not being able" to do this or that. But now that we are here, and truly settled in, it is like a whole new era, a new world, and I have moments of pure joy such a I never experienced before. It has to be set against pain, fatigue, exasperation at being caught in a dying body. But when I see the tears shining in Cornelius's eyes when he is moved, I feel as if every day the naked soul comes closer to the surface. He is so beautiful now. I said to Eben that I hate growing old it is true? I suppose I said it because at that moment

life seemed so perilous and love so frail a breath, and we shall be gone. But now, this morning, I feel that life flows through me in a way it never did before. I can accept Eben's love now. It used to frighten me, and I had to put barriers up against it to protect myself and Cornelius. Now there is no danger, the current is not short circuited and I feel lit up by it. (462-63)

Newness, pure joy, beauty, and the love of two men these are the gifts reserved for her old age.

Thus, Sarton's view of aging up to and through kinds of love is essentially romantic. This does not mean that in some cases it might not act as in Sartons version of the pleasures of old age. Yet while Sarton may have imagined a graceful old age in a hope that it would be a self-fulfilling prophecy, there may be other reasons as well. Although she does not speak directly of the issue of how her social and historical context conditions her attitudes toward aging, this is a question we must ask of her work. She welcomes the movement beyond the public arena into a smaller, more personal world in the later years. But this is in fact institutionalized in the United States. Retirement forces release from the demands of work, and the "golden years" are celebrated in the mass media as a time of travel, leisure, and the gratuitous cultivation of the self. As we know, these cultural practices are based on the slide rule of economics: mandatory retirement was instituted during the depression, and the myth of the golden years helps to sustain that corporate practice.

What has influenced Sarton's presentation of old age? Sarton is female, homosexual, a writer whose reputation has only recently been lifted out of private spheres into larger public circles. She has lived her life as an artist and as a woman on the margins. The theory of aging to which she subscribes is primarily Jungian, based on a belief in

permanent structures of the psyche and archetypes which guide psychological growth. Can Sarton not be drawn to this model of aging because it refuses a rootedness in a socio-historical context that she would deny? Perhaps her attraction to Jungian psychology is a way of setting herself apart from mainstream, male-dominated America. If so, her idealism of old age masks a criticism of the dominant values of youth-oriented, success-gear American culture. Sarton, in other words, projects into old age the way of life that she has in fact been leading in her middle years, thereby sanctioning it and at the same time constructing a safe place to live, out of sight, in the imagination.

We have now arrived at a stage in life so rich in new perceptions that cannot be transmitted to those at another stage. One feels at the same time full of so much gentleness and so much despair. The enigma of this life grows, grows, drowns one and crushes one, then all of a sudden in a supreme moment of life one becomes aware of this 'sacred' (117).

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Saed Jamil Said Shahwan

Exclusive Inclusivity : Naylor's Assertions of Selfhood

Black Women's Writing has grown into an empowering force within gendered narratives. Of the many potent and strident voices reclaiming selfhood and identity Gloria Naylor's is one which now needs to be explored. She has most ably articulated her own place within the cannon by critically examining her location and expanding her 'self', both exclusively and inchoatively. The paper installs Naylor within the grid of black feminists and through her own voice reasserts her pathways into forging a communally shared self.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will not be content will have a rude awakening if the Nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges. (Martin Luther King Jr., "I Have a Dream" speech).

And said Gloria Naylor, another Black affirming voice, in the PBS series on African-American culture “I’ll Make Me a World” :

I am a black female writer and I have no qualms whatsoever with people saying that I’m a black female writer. What I take umbrage with is the fact that some might try to use that identity—that which is me—as a way to ghettoize my material and my output. I am female and black and American. No buts are in the identity. Now you go off and do the work to somehow broaden yourself so you understand what America is really about. Because it’s about me. (Keizer, 2004)

To be black in America, according to Naylor, is a political construct. Just as it took time to feel she had a voice, she says, we have yet to feel within this country that we are home.

Gloria Naylor was born in 1950 in New York City. Although she grew up in the largest urban center of the US, her roots were in the South where her parents had been sharecroppers in Mississippi. Quiet, shy, Naylor gradually learned self-validation and independence from her mother, Alberta Mc Alpin, who joined ‘Jehovah’s Witnesses’ in 1968. Naylor followed in her footsteps and her awareness grew that things weren’t getting better, but worse, especially for Black American women.

Naylor gradually discovered feminism and African-American literature which revitalized her and gave her new ways to think about and define herself as a black woman. In 1977 Naylor read her first novel by an African-American woman, Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*, which gave her the courage to write. She began writing fiction in 1979 and submitted a story to *Essence* whose editor advised her to continue writing. She began graduate work in Afro-American Studies at Yale in 1981. Her novel *The Women of Brewster Place* 1983 won the National Book Award for first fiction.

The Women of Brewster Place, is noted for its portrayal of black women’s relationships and search for identity. Its female characters reappear but take a back seat in *The Men of Brewster Place*, written fifteen years later, in which Naylor examines the particular challenges to black men in their families and communities. Her other novels include *Linden Hills* 1985, *Mama Day* 1988, *Bailey’s Cafe* 1992.

Gloria Naylor is woman with a formidable intellect and a deeply ingrained sense of personhood. Naylor’s views on the use of memory as a writer and about identity assert her political dynamics : “You think about the process itself, within the artist, what you are doing is trying to somehow give cohesion to the chaos that is all of you. You are taking the memory of your personal self, your historical self, your familial self [because] your writing filters through all of those things.” (1999, 125) For most females, she said, your “identity comes through connecting yourself to nurturing of some sort, to your body, and ... when you write, the writing flow(s) through that identity. That goes back to the nineteenth century. ... What has change somewhat is the way women see themselves in relationship to female as *body*, the female as *nurturer*, the female as *mother of family*” (*Conversations*, 7).

“You get literature that will sometimes rail against that” and that tries “to broaden the horizons of what [being a female] means. As long as we have woman defined [in the usual ways] in our society, as long as that must be my identity,” she explained, “I can either accept it or somehow define myself against [it, because]. . . my art will indeed come through what it means to be a woman. And, what it means to be a woman, unfortunately, is a political definition, is a personal definition, and it ties me to my body and to what society has told me in my fate, whether I choose to see it this way or not” (*Conversations*, 8).

Further, Naylor expresses her viewpoint on the concept of self as it “depends on where you are placed within a society because of gender, because of race, because of class, and I think that’s fine because great literature come out of that.” But the concept of self is closely related to women’s perception of space, and both the physical as well as psychological spaces have been discussed in *The Women of Brewster Place* which seem to grow smaller and more confining as the novel progresses. In each case the seven women in Brewster Place move from larger, more viable spaces to more limited ones. The novel ends when the Black women in Brewster Place revolt against their environment and with the help of their neighbours, tear down the walls of the dead-end street on which they are trapped!

But Naylor believes that closed spaces originate from “a whole web of circumstances.” A women’s sense of space grows out of “the society in which you are born, and the way in which you are socialized to move through that society,” and that movement, or the lack of it “determines who you are, how you see the big *you* when you look into mirror.” That is why space has been used “intentionally in *Linden Hills*. [It] was to be a metaphor for the middle-class woman’s married existence [as] she was shoved into that basement.” Naylor says that she “saw women having been shoved, historically,” and that this woman does “uncover our history, and she does it the way that women have made history, and that is in a confined place She is able to break out and to claim herself” after her husband locks her in the basement for giving birth to a light-skinned child, “Not the way I, Gloria Naylor, the feminist, would have liked her to claim herself”. But she at least says, “Yes, this is me, I can affirm myself, and I can celebrate me, if you call that a celebration.” Celebration she said, “is not quite the right word”, but yes, she claimed herself and the repercussions were whatever they were.

There is much to be learned from Gloria Naylor. She is an extraordinary woman of conscience and vigor who understands the writer’s commitment to her work and to herself. She says passionately that when she writes:

I want to be good, and *each time* I want to be good. I have ever created myself... What would I come here as? I would come here just the way I came by happenstance; I truly would. Because I celebrate myself. I see so many strengths in being a Black Woman, so many strengths in being from a working-class family with a rural southern background, so many negatives too, for all of the those things! But it gives me *Me*.

In an interview with Virginia Fowler (1998) Naylor very strongly aspires to do what James Baldwin did with his career that is to leave behind a moral vision, right or wrong, and a very long and prolific career, and a courageous one. “I aspire to do just that. It’ll be a different set of politics, because indeed it’s a different era.”

In recent years, literary and cultural studies on African American forms have combined an ongoing theoretical discussion of black identity with critiques of the human subject that question the possibility of a fixed, unitary identity. Morrison encourages readers to undertake the task of “attempt[ing] to put oneself in the other’s position without taking the other’s place (“Projected Memory” 16). Gayl Jones in *Mosquito* (1999) says:

I gots to drive my truck. I gots to. Even if he don’t think that’s the essence of who I am or who I could be. ‘Cause that’s something I know I gots to do. It always makes we wonder why people, and ain’t just mens, that always wants to try to make you stop doing the very thing you gots to do. . . . I don’t know why you gots to do it. May be it’s the closest thing you come to to [*sic*] what freedom mean. Your own idea of freedom. And don’t nobody want freedom

for you. Not the true thing. And I ain't talking about license or decadence. I'm talking about freedom, the true thing. (112).

Stuart Hall 1994 rightly believes that identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and positioned ourselves within the narratives of the past," (394).

In "Women, Race and Class", Angela Y. Davis (1999) celebrates the spirit of those enslaved black women who were never subdued:"[T]hose women . . . passed on to their nominally free female descendants a legacy of hard work, perseverance and self-reliance, a legacy of tenacity, resistance and insistence on sexual equality." Their contribution, she maintains, established "standards for a new womanhood" (29).

Douglass in his autobiography (1845) asserts that "I now understood what had been to me most perplexing, difficult – to wit, the white man's power to enslave the black man. . . . From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom" (*Narrative*, 1982, 78). The "pathway" he understands is literacy, and he determines to obtain it at any cost. Literacy becomes, indeed, his key both to identity and to freedom. James L. Gray, in an article entitled "Culture, Gender, and the Slave Narrative," discusses Douglass' goal in creating himself is the establishment of a public persona. Learning to read and to write were crucial steps for Douglass is the process of learning to control his own story and, by extension, in conforming his existence and self-worth by telling that story.

Helene Cixous (1980) says, "Women must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing . . . [w]oman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement" (245). Each African American woman writer who has taken as her project the creation of a neo-slave narrative discovers paradox, ambiguity, and contradiction as she probes the implications

of enslaved motherhood; each brings alive the woman who is her enslaved ancestor and the woman who is herself. The result is literature that is personally driven and socially charged, literature that simultaneously honors tradition and creates it.

Toni Morrison (1971) has very firmly said that black woman "had nothing to fall back on: not maleness, not whiteness, not ladyhood, not anything. And out of the profound isolation of her reality she may very well have invented herself." (63) And in "Trajectories of Self-Definition: Placing Contemporary Afro-American Women's Fiction," Barbara Christian (1985) reconfirms that,"The extent to which Afro-American women writers in the seventies and eighties have been able to make a commitment to an exploration of self, as central rather than marginal, is a tribute to the insights they have culled in a century or so of literary activity" (172).

As writers began to explore the themes of self-definition and female empowerment they targeted black-perpetuated racism and sexism, suggesting that reform must begin from within the community, and that that reform would have a direct impact upon the quality of life black women were experiencing. Novels such as *The Bluest Eye* (Toni Morrison, 1970), *Corregidora* (Gayl Jones, 1975), *The Salt Eaters* (Toni Cade Bambara, 1980) and *The Women of Brewster Place* (Gloria Naylor, 1983) illustrate black women writers' increasing concern with self-love, survival, and women's community, all themes that were previously unexplored but that beckoned invitingly, for they appeared to hold forth the promise of both personal and political change. Naylor's novels share a direct connection between this awareness of and connectedness with the past and self-knowledge, that which invests everyday life with meaning. According to Patricia Hill Collins (1991) "Reclaiming the Black women's intellectual tradition involves examining the everyday ideas of Black women not previously

considered intellectuals” (15). By focusing on black women in her narratives Naylor not only celebrates the black woman as she is today but articulates for their readers her rich and varied heritage deserving of recognition and proud acknowledgement.

In *Risking Difference : Identification, Race and Community in Contemporary Fiction and Feminism* Jean Wyatt (2005) makes an important contribution to the study of the process and effects of identification. Basing her theory primarily on Lacan’s psychoanalytic conception of identification, Wyatt explores the central question of what it means to want to be or to *have* the ‘Other’. Essential to her analysis is the distinction between real, imaginary, and symbolic modes of identification. Wyatt firstly, centers her attention on envy and what she calls primary or real identification. This fundamental mode of identity and identification represents a primal merging of the self and the other. Wyatt also concentrates, on the visual or imaginary mode of identification. Here, Wyatt examines the roles of idealization and interpellation in the visual appropriation of the other’s image. Finally, Wyatt articulates the social and symbolical mode of identification as it relates to the psychological and cultural dynamics structuring multiethnic feminist communities. Central to this part is an analysis of the problematic unconscious desire to possess or to embody the racialized other. Wyatt posits that we must develop models and practices on the employment of partial and temporary identifications.

When Naylor was asked by Charles H. Rowell (2004) what “a good strong sense of self” is? she replied

... meaning that there is an ego. Here’s the irony of it, one of the many ironies of life: in order to be a writer you need a tremendous ego – you really do. As I said, just to feel that someone wants to hear what you have to say is a great deal of ego. But in order to write memorably you have to suppress

your ego. That’s just like *The Handmaid’s Tale* – I live that book – in which one becomes a filter for those other lives that pass through. So how is that tied up with being a black woman? They’re passing through a sieve that contains Gloria Naylor, the black woman who came from parents, who migrated to New York City; and they came from parents who were tenant farmers and myriad things which make me. All of this goes into that filter, and I can’t tear it apart or snip it apart and ask: how much of this is a black woman, how much of this is a personal history, how much of this is a racial history? There is no way to know that – there isn’t. That’s why you have a job, and that’s why other critics have jobs: to simply take apart that which I think can never truly be taken apart and explained. (Carabi 1992, 30).

Like others who are labeled multicultural writers, Naylor is working to make a space for her own visions, while couching those visions in terms of ethnicity and gender, as well as to indicate the richness of her insights. In fact, today, black women are often perceived as the most successful American group in conveying one community’s particular visions in new and compelling ways. Naylor attributes this success both to the black women’s entrance into the publishing industry itself and to the richness of black women’s lives as subject matter: “the black woman brings both her history as a black person and her living reality as a female . . . [which means that] their portrayal of what it has been like to have a dual existence in this country becomes a celebration of the self, a transcendence”(Carabi, 1992, 37).

Moreover, the attention to both race and gender allows black women to respond to the historical privileging of not only white, but also male versions of the American experience. Such attention is especially important now, for, as Henry Louis Gates, Jr., observed in

Loose Canons, "we might well argue that the problem of the twenty-first century will be the problem of ethnic difference, as these conspire with complex difference in color, gender, and class" (Carabi, 1992, xii).

Think about it: ain't nobody really talking to you. We're sitting here in Willow Springs, and you're God-knows-where. It's August 1999 – ain't but a slim chance it's the same season where you are. Uh, huh, listen. Really listen this time: the only voice is your own. (10) This passage foregrounds Naylor's persistent concern throughout her literary career – establishing her individual voice. In her famous interview with Toni Morrison, Naylor candidly discloses her anxiety about writing outside established traditions:

I wrote because I had no choice, but that was a long road from gathering the authority within myself to believe that I could actually be a writer. The writers I had been taught to love were either male or white. And who was I to argue that Ellison, Austen, Dickens, the Brontes, Baldwin and Faulkner weren't masters? They were and are. But inside there was still the faintest whisper: Was there no one telling my story? And since it appeared there was not, how could I presume to? [Reading] *The Bluest Eye* [was] the beginning [of the ability to conceive myself as a writer]...." (Carabi, 102)

Further the problems associated with "difference" have made the literary theoretical concerns about multiculturalism and identity politics significant and available to a wider population than is usually concerned with literary theory. Nevertheless, this concern has not made the complex negotiations that a woman literary writer must make any more straight forward as she strives to highlight previous silences within the canon and to offer her own write. The task still involves defining a metaphorical space to speak from, a site that is contiguous

with existing spaces without being subsumed by or entirely predefined by them. A persistent awareness of this need to carve a niche, to make a space, may be one of the reasons that the novels of Gloria Naylor (along with those of Toni Morrison and other black American women) routinely offer highly particular accounts of space—be they architectural spaces, geographical spaces, psychic spaces, or communal spaces.

The Women of Brewster Place, her first novel, chronicles the communal strength of seven black women living in a decrepit rented house on a walled-off street in an urban neighborhood. Mattie Michael, the matriarch of the group is a source of comfort and strength for the other women. Etta Mae Johnson is a free spirit who repeatedly gets involved with men who disappointment her. Kiswana Browne gloats in her racial pride but eventually accepts her mother's middle-class values. Lorraine and Theresa are lovers and when Lorraine is gang-raped, she is deeply troubled by the attack and murders Ben who is one of her few supporters and the janitor of Brewster Place Cora Lee loves her babies, while Liel is on a path of self-destruction, having suffered a series of personal disasters. *The Women of Brewster Place* is a moving portrait of the strengths, struggles and hopes of black women. At the end of the novel, the women demolish the wall that separates them from the rest of the city. Gloria Naylor weaves together the truths and myths of the women's lives, creating characters who are free to determine the course of their lives, embodying the self actualization tradition of the Harlem Renaissance.

The Linden Hills (1985) : Naylor's second novel is a story of resistance and rebirth. Set in an affluent suburb, this novel deals with two poets who support themselves by doing odd jobs in a black middle-class neighbourhood which has lost touch with its roots. Naylor is noted for her searing portraits of abusive black males and the struggle of black women to surmount the double oppression perpetuated by

their own male partners and the white majority. It portrays a world in which black Americans have achieved status and some measure of power, but in the process they have forfeited their hearts and souls. It follows Dante's *Inferno* by employing Dante's moral geography, adapting his narrative strategy as the journey through hell as her main organizing principle and offering an allegory intended to warn and instruct her intended audience – black Americans.

The Mama Day (1988) shows the beauty of Naylor's prose, its plainness, and the secret power of her third novel is that she does not simply tell a story but brings you face to face with human beings living through the complexity, pain and mystery of real life. However, *Mama Day* is not only a back story but a human story as well which is paradoxically, what makes it such an all encompassing experience. Set in an all-black island community founded by a slave off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia, is one of her most ambitious works, evoking comparisons with Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) showing the haunted past of a family and community. Its strongest elements are the bonds shared within the female community and between the generations of women. It is about the fact that the real basic magic is the unfolding of the human potential and that if we reach outside ourselves we can create miracles, according to Naylor.

The Bailey's Cafe (1992) explores female sexuality, female sexual identity and male sexual identity. It is a novel about a woman who runs Brooklyn Cafe frequented by an all-black cast of characters, including Eve (a brothel owner) Sadie (an alcoholic and prostitute), Miss Maple (a transvestite), Jesse Bell (a lesbian), and of course, Baily herself, who provides asylum to these characters. The core of the work is indeed the way in which the world 'whore' has been used against women or to manipulate female sexual identity. Naylor has also employed the blues and jazz into novels structure by using lyrical

language. The characters tell their own stories and sing their own songs which empower them to generate the hope for necessary living.

In *The Men of Brewster Place* (1998), the other side of the story of the residents of this decaying urban housing project is told with the same rich grace, humor and compassion that Naylor brought to *The Women of Brewster Place*. Naylor has once again cast her passionate and knowing eye on a world she made her own, a world of sadness and glory, richly crafted and deeply satisfying.

The four novels that Gloria Naylor has published so far have generated considerable, often very favourable, critical response. *The Women of Brewster Place* elicited enthusiastic reviews and subsequently was made into a mini series for television by Oprah Winfrey's production company. Michael Awkward in *Inspiriting Influences: Tradition, Revision, and Afro-American Novels* situates Naylor in the company of Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and Zora Neale Hurston and engagingly comments on the intertextual links among their works. Though *Linden Hills* received slightly less enthusiastic reception than Naylor's first novel, it has recently gained in importance. Naylor's third novels, *Mama Day*, was reviewed widely and praised extravagantly. Her fourth novel, *Bailey's Cafe*, too, has met with a similar response both in the popular press and in academic circles. Gay Wilentz calls *Bailey's Cafe* "Naylor's finest novel to date," which establishes "a context for the mutilations women have suffered and a space for curing their (our) souls" (15).

Naylor has made her desire to talk to her precursors a prominent element in her novels. Thus, in *The Women of Brewster Place*, Naylor invokes Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as Ann Perry's *The Street*, among other works. In *Linden Hills*, she conspicuously creates a community whose construction and spirit recall Dante *The Inferno*. In *Mama Day* she again emphasizes

Shakespearean plays – most obviously *Romeo and Juliet*. And in *Bailey's Cafe*, she rewrites five biblical stories and reminds us of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. Through this process of allusion and response, Naylor is able to articulate her own place within the canon, critically examine her precursors, and remind readers that diverse literary texts can represent the multiple truths of our lives in ways that can fruitfully, mutually exist.

Gloria Naylor's novels are empowered by her ability to carry readers into the bittersweet conditions of contemporary life. By depicting the complex and paradoxical mixtures of tragedy and joy in African-American characters' lives, Naylor leads her characters and readers into the ambiguous but strangely satisfying realm of *difference*, into life not in avoidance of the abyss but at its edge. In Naylor's fiction we can find wells and well-like images such as basements, alleys, and walls. These physical images suggest both the psychological dead ends into which characters are driven and the social and psychological forces that pressure them into such conditions. Naylor's quest for her own "voice" is, of course, a central concern for most African American writers, discovered in "the tension between the oral and the written modes of narration that is represented as finding a voice in writing" (Gates 21).

During a 1993 talk in St. Louis, poet Nikki Giovanni asserted, "Black love is Black wealth." Almost nowhere has Black love, manifesting itself in care of others, been better presented than in the novels of Gloria Naylor. In particular, Naylor has celebrated the power of love as a force that heals, bringing peace and wholeness. Her characters share their wealth: some through literal doctoring, others through psychic healing, still others through inspirational documents that they have left behind, and finally some through providing a haven for the needy.

Naylor's depiction of unusual women – women with the power to heal – appears first in *The Women of Brewster Place* in the character Mattie Michael, who demonstrates an almost magical ability to slave other, and it continues through her next three works: *Linden Hills* (1985), *Mama Day* (198), and *Bailey's Cafe* (1992). In the first of these Willa restores her sense of self by examining the letters, lists, and photographs of three generations of wives in the Luther family. In the second "magical powers" appear in the title character Miranda "Mama" Day. In *Bailey's Cafe* the allegorical cafe as well as Eve's garden restore life and hope to women on the edge. Naylor's four novels reinforce the theme that one can overcome with the guidance of others, usually a female other.

There is no doubt that Naylor's novels have earned her a secure place in contemporary American writing. Along with many other gifted African American women writers of her generation, she has helped redefine the directions of American literature in the past two decades. There is more than some irony in this impressive phenomenon: that the voices of African American women, once ignored and repressed, should emerge with such vengeful eloquence on the international literary scene. Naylor's voice strikes a singularly graceful note in that chorus. Naylor says in *Conversations* :

People have told me that I am a moral writer, that I take moral positions in my work. I believe that my work is saying that the African American community is a diverse people. But there has been this objectification of our identity and objectification is often a denigration of those qualities that compose your culture, be it your skin color, the way you dance, or raise your children, or whatever. So I think that my work presents to you, the reader, a community of people who are both saints and sinners, who have beauty and blemishes.

I don't glorify the African American and say we're all perfect. We are all human beings and that means complexity, that means light and shadow. (*Conversations* ,xii)

But when we talk in present day context about blacks, the very first thing which comes to mind is the racial discrimination they are still undergoing. It is evident that Naylor is still struggling hard to bear witness to this in writing. She is working to make a space for her own visions, while couching those visions in terms of ethnicity and gender, as well as to indicate the richness of her insights. In fact, as this century opens up, black women are often perceived as the most successful American group in conveying one community's particular visions in new and compelling ways. Further, when she was questioned in an interview by Charles H. Rowell that: you said "If there had been no black women there would be no American literature. What do you mean?" She said "I don't think there'd be American literature without black women. What is America? What is America now that we're moving into the twenty-first century? It is said that the majority of the Americans in six years will be non-white."

Thus Naylor attends to the importance of multiple truths, of moving past unduly simplified notions of what constitutes the truth, the right way. She connects this need to challenge received truths to her childhood search for literature that acknowledges her existence as a racialized and gendered being, as a black woman who could be a writer. She was told that black people did not write books." Even though she read "to the tune of a book a day . . . there was nothing about black Americans or by black Americans . . . on the shelves in the public libraries in New York City, and they definitely weren't on my standard junior high school or high school curriculum" (Naylor 1995, 172). Discovering that it was not "true" that black Americans did not write books was a catalyzing experience, one that proved her with an image in the mirror, acknowledgement that she existed. This

confirmation of herself and of her possibilities for artistry "reverberated enough to give me the courage to pick up the pen" (*Conversations* 173).

So in writing, Naylor participates quite deliberately in the widespread efforts occurring during the 1980s and 1990s to address and redress the limited representations of women and people of color within the literature that is regularly published and taught in the United States. Like others who are labeled multicultural writers, Naylor is working to make a space for her own visions, while couching those visions in terms of ethnicity and gender, as well as to indicate the richness of her insights. Naylor sees herself as a filter through which her characters come to life. She has clearly stated in an interview that: "I believe that as I, Gloria Naylor, the real Naylor, the real person, live, I definitely do have responsibility to my family and my community. Personally, I do not feel that I have that responsibility in my work. I know that these stories do filter through who I am and what I think and believe. They ultimately reflect my sensibilities".

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Deepak Kaushik

Sindi as a 'Saint-Sinner' in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner*

Arun Joshi deserves to be eulogized for suggesting concrete and convincing solutions to myriad problems besetting mankind today. With an incisive and perspicacious insight into human conditions he penetratively discovers that the malady the modern man is constantly haunted by is anxiety which is attributable to his spiritual barrenness, scepticism and cynicism which have led him away from his spiritual moorings, leaving him gasping for apt-orientation and direction in life. He impresses upon the readers unequivocally that till their spiritual proclivities and leanings are nurtured in an enlightened and positive ethos, his conscience will keep gnawing at him and will make him realize the futility of material pursuits which are nothing but a sordid boon. Time and again he asserts that worldly acquisitions can't lead him to lasting and ethereal peace and equanimity.

Nourishing the vision of his creator, Sindi Oberoi, the protagonist of Arun Joshi's first novel *The Foreigner* (1968) embarks on his voyage purporting to learning "how to live" (132). However, his quest is thwarted by the inadequacy of his theory of detachment. S. Rangachari aptly observes : "Detachment which he clings to with perverse obstinacy, misconstruing the lofty concept in a manner suiting

his awareness, is a euphemism for self isolation, callous indifference, gross selfishness and inhuman passivity”(2). A truly detached person is one “whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire amid pleasures, he from whom passion, fear, and rage have passed away, he is called a sage of settled intelligence.” (Radhakrishnan 123). However, all these signs of spiritual upliftment are conspicuously absent in the personality of Sindi. This “prophet of detachment and the champion of procrastination” (Ghosh 55) when fails to confront the reality with its squalid, repellant and pain-racked conditions misconstrues the lofty philosophy of *The Bhagavadgita* as a defence- mechanism. “His reluctance for involvement is, thus, not the outcome of any spiritual development. It is the product of ignorance and selfishness ... he is spiritually detached from the world but awesomely engrossed with himself” (Ghosh 47). “He seeks to be a saint without mastering the pre-requisites of becoming one” (Ghosh 50).

In the third Chapter of *The Bhagavadgita* when Arjuna asks, “My Lord! Tell me, what is it that drives a man to sin, even against his will and as if by compulsion?” (Swami 29), Lord Krishna replies, “It is desire, it is aversion, born of passion. Desire consumes and corrupts everything. It is man’s greatest enemy” (Swami 29).

Desire is the sin that the protagonist, Sindi Oberoi, often falls a prey to. The burning fire of sex rages inside him to lecherously possess the body of each girl he comes in contact with. He at this stage does not know that he has to continuously strive to suppress this natural, essential but negatively oriented pull. He does not know how to transform this all scorching energy into generous warmth that creates a sense of egolessness. He is an inveterate slave to the fiery sex and is filled with anxiety. But, ironically enough, he wishes to remain detached. He himself confesses that “I wanted to take that head in my hands and cover it with kisses. I felt uncomfortable. I told myself that I did not

want to get involved” (62). Later, this decision costs him heavily when he gets involved with June, an attractive American girl. Though he loves her passionately he wishes to remain uninvolved. His cynical detachment drives June into the arms of Babu Rao Khemka, a doomed Indian student, who fails to cope with life, with society in America. The Babu-June marriage fails to come off. Babu comes to know that June had been sleeping with Sindi and in a mad rage drives himself to death. Even after Babu’s sudden demise when he is expected to be by her side to give anchorage to her bereaved soul, cocooned in his so called detachment like ‘a patient etherized upon a table’ he dithers over the next move. Consequently, before his reaching in Boston, June leaves for heavenly abode leaving Sindi to brood over the futility of his philosophy of detachment.

The small fortification of detachment that Sindi had built around himself during his stay in U.S. and which started showing cracks at the time of death of Babu and June, keeps widening even after his coming to India, the land of *The Bhagavadgita* whose lofty term of detachment he misconstrued. Crumbling business of Khemka, Babu’s father, and the “accumulated despair” of “weary lives” (189) provide him yet another “chance to redeem the past” (185). His visit to Muthu’s one roomed ramshackle house in a slum where he lives with his large family motivates Sindi to reorient himself. Muthu, an illiterate labourer teaches Sindi Oberoi, a Ph.D in Mechanical Engineering from the prestigious University of America, the distinction between detachment and involvement. “Sometimes detachment lies in actually getting involved” (188). Inspired by Muthu’s way of waging war against odds, Sindi resolves to act in the right direction which is to serve the humanity selflessly, as pursuing inwardly as Lord Krishna advises Arjuna. “Thou shouldst do works also with a view to the maintenance of the world” (Radhakrishnan 139). The intellectuals and the sages have affirmed this creed all along the ages to vouchsafe its truth and relevance. Dr.

S. Radhakrishnan neatly clarifies “We have to act in the world as it is while doing our best to improve it. We should not be defiled by disgust even when we look at the worst that life can do to us, even when we are plunged in every wind of loss, bereavement and humiliation” (Radhakrishnan 69). Transformed Sindi ultimately takes up the responsibility of steering Mr. Khemka’s bankrupt business ashore. Thus, in *The Foreigner*, we find a deep influence of *The Bhagavadgita* in the formulation and the resolution of the problem according to the Karmic principle propounded by Lord Krishna. H.M. Prasad succinctly observes: “The central message of the novel comes from *The Gita*” (Prasad 43).

Notably, despite the volley of slanders that Sindi has ruthlessly been subjected to by different critics, he, in ultimate analysis, is found to be a real quester. To know the meaning of life Sindi subjects himself to varied experiences. His main motive for joining London University was to explore the meaning of life but “classrooms didn’t tell a thing about it” (142). For the sake of this exploration he did not desist from doing even a menial “job as a dish-washer in a night club in Soho” (142). The same irrepressible quest pushed him to have a word with a Catholic Priest and yet again the attempt fails to yield any desirable result. His viva-voce for Ph.D degree serves another instance to peep into his psyche to substantiate the genuineness of his spiritual quest.

After the examination was over . . . the Chairman asked me if there was anything else I wished I had learnt at the college.
 “I wish I had been taught how to live, Professor.” I said tiredly.
 (132)

His persistent inquisitiveness becomes evident during one of his chats with June during which Sindi shares. “According to Hindu mystics there is a reality beyond all this. But I don’t know. I would like to know some day” (145).

His coming in contact with a number of women on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean is a sort of experiment in the same direction. But trapped into sensual pleasures Sindi goes astray and helplessly watches himself being dragged deeper into the mire. Shouting hoarsely over his misfortune and distrusted innocence he indulges in monologue. “I don’t want to get involved, I repeated to myself. Everywhere I turned I saw involvement” (62-63). No doubt, Sindi fails miserably in resisting the temptation to carnal pleasures, the tug-of-war raging in him between his better self that wants him to rise and move towards true detachment and the bitter self which keeps seething with desire for physical pleasures however, undeniably testifies to his unyielding spirit which keeps cautioning him.

On one occasion he reveals “When she kissed me . . . “Get up”, a voice cried within me” (71). Amidst this chaotic condition he is not ignorant about his pathetic position. “I live in a strange world of intense pleasure and almost equally intense pain.” (72) Without mincing words he candidly confesses “I had exchanged the steady tranquility of my being for excruciating moments of ecstasy in a woman’s body” (101).

Frustrated at the futility of every other attempt to get away from worldly entanglements Sindi starts gliding towards non-involvement. He desperately wants his lost equanimity back so as to pursue his spiritual end which, he knows, will remain a far cry in the presence of saucy June. He does not want to be “pushed once again on the giant wheel, going round and round, waiting for the fall” and desperately desires to be like “others on the wheel who apparently never fell” (75). So, keeping in view his ultimate goal of attaining detachment and the welfare of June, he wants her to get married with someone else and start life afresh. About himself he confesses “I was not the man who could love; I had learnt that long ago” (34). Nobody could fill the vacant slot better than Babu. In their marriage Sindi has

hoped June to settle down and he himself would be left alone to grow. But the cruel fate had something else in store for Sindi. Babu dies and his death means the situation back to square one.

Thus, what appears to be an act of selfishness, infact, is an act of sacrifice, which Sindi makes for the welfare of June. But to his misfortune the visitant dead past is there to kill the present. Perplexed and pulled down Sindi weeps over the outcome of his well intended act. "The whole thing had left me baffled. All along I had acted out of lust and greed and selfishness, and they had applauded my wisdom. When I had sought only detachment I had driven a man to his death." (8) After Babu's departure Sindi is well conscious of his responsibilities towards June but bewildered by the working of the cruel fate he takes time to reconcile himself to the changed scenario, which again proves fatal. Death of June shatters him completely. Irreparable damage done by his detachment leaves him crying "I had wanted detachment but I didn't know what kind of resolutions was necessary to achieve it" (66).

Sindi, no doubt, is indirectly responsible for the death of two innocent lives but it is said that God is concerned not with the act itself but with the frame of mind behind the act. From that angle Sindi deserves to be exonerated from being considered a hypocrite.

The role of Sindi as 'saint-sinner' instantly flashes to readers' mind Raju, the protagonist of one of the most celebrated novels in Indo-Anglican fiction, *The Guide*, written by R.K. Narayan. Like Sindi Raju also turns out to be a drifter and shirker which he is not ignorant about and even candidly confesses "I am no saint" (*The Guide* 112), as is done by Sindi "It is difficult to be a saint" (*The Foreigner* 71). During famine a misinterpreted version of Raju's views as conveyed to the credulous villagers by a village urchin forces him into 'Swamihood'. Incompetent as he finds himself to grace that lofty status

Raju attempts many a time to "run away from the whole thing." (*The Guide* 111) However, unable to ignore the merciful appeal of the starved glances of the affected villagers, he at last, resolves to live upto the expectations of his devotees who look upto him as their lone saviour.

Sindi also finds himself caught amidst the similar circumstances. The role of a redeemer that he comes to play towards the end of the novel does not come to him as an automatic choice. After Mr. Khemka is put behind the bars for his misdeeds and the company appears to be heading towards disaster, Sindi is approached to hold its reign and thus saving the factory workers and their families from starvation, he instantly refuses "to be dragged into the mess." (168) He feels as if he has been "dropped on a sinking ship and charged with impossible task of taking it ashore" (189) and hence declines the earnest appeal made even by Sheila, Babu's sister in this regard. However, the heroic struggle of Muthu to keep his family alive in those wretched conditions shakes him to the core. Transformed Sindi decides not only to play the expected role but also to play it without expecting anything in return. He seems to have learnt intuitively and introspectively that even in business if one adheres to ethics, to character, to virtuosity, one could strengthen one's virtue, one could prolong the moments of joy and peace, and one could rise. Earlier he mentions "it is difficult to be a saint" (*The Foreigner* 71) but by lending a helping hand to those poverty-stricken factory workers he proves himself to be one. If ethics is linked to spirituality, which it is, and *The Bhagvadgita* affirms it, when Lord Krishna tells Arjuna in Chapter III, verses 37 & 38, that one can attain peace even in business by controlling lust and greed, then Sindi has realized this spirituality by being compassionate. His newer self seems to echo the words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

"Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!"

Act, - act in the living present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!"
(A Psalm of Life)

In the end, Sindi also feels emboldened by such a spiritual awakening as the lines above inhere. Putting behind his inglorious past and unmindful of unpredictable future, he dedicates himself to the suffering humanity. "The fruit of it was really not my concern" (191) are the words of wisdom that reflect his newly gained enlightenment. This attachment to action and detachment from the fruit of action indicates that the wasteland of his heart after a freezing winter has started thawing revealing the signs of spiritual sprouts. Ethereal peace and equanimity make him realize that the attainment of spiritual wisdom does not make the individual shun the world, but he lives in the world more authentically and fully.

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Gunjan Agarwal

Theme of Death in Ramanujan's Poetry

A.K. Ramanujan is an acute observer of things around and he has a penetrating insight into the things of the world. He always tries to go deep into the things, but he doesn't avoid an apparent reality-common trivial things of day to day life. The reminiscences of his country, family, relatives, his nostalgic vision find place in his poetry. At the time of presenting these aspects, he never forgets the harsh and unavoidable reality of life. Through this paper I have endeavoured to highlight the broad outlook of A.K. Ramanujan toward the ultimate truth of life i. e. death.

Generally we take the meaning of this term only in physical aspect but Ramanujan has interpreted this term on various grounds-emotional, physical, moral and spiritual. This is my humble effort to establish this view point by presenting illustrations from Ramanujan's poetry. Ramanujan has used the term death in a wider sense by presenting a picture of modern man who is emotionally dead and sterile. He delineates all the harshness and suffering, death and destruction, the common fate of mankind in his poetry while maintaining a peculiar distance from these sufferers. He never tried to redeem the sufferers and the doomed. Kritika M. Ramanujan writes :

The poems are metaphysical and full of frightening darkness. There is a sense of both a pressure towards this darkness and a simultaneous revulsion from it. The poems begin to seem denser and fuller than anything the poet had done before, the culmination of forty seven years of writing poetry. It is almost impossible to avoid the idea that the poems seem to press towards death and disintegration and ever beyond to transmutation, like lines drawn from different angles which converge on a single point, without apparent intention, and yet inevitably (*CP 15-16*).

A highly reverential and life-giving river becomes an agent of death and destruction for him in “A River”. Simultaneously sensation-loving poets are satirized because they are unmindful of the havoc and suffering which is created by nature. Ramanujan writes :

The poets sang only of the floods...
 the new poets still quoted
 the old poets, but no one spoke in verse of the pregnant woman
 drowned, with perhaps twins in her,
 kicking at blank walls
 even before birth.

(*CP 39*)

“Breaded Fish” evokes the poet’s horrifying memories when he is invited to eat a breaded fish but he cannot do so even though it is thrust into his mouth because the fish is connected with certain memories of the poet. He is so much obsessed with the idea of death and destruction that a fish in bread reminds him of the dead body of a woman.

... a dark half-naked
 length of woman, dead
 on the beach in the yard of cloth,

dry, rolled by the ebb, breaded
 by the grained indifference of sand.

(*CP 7*)

The poem, “The Last of the Princes” presents the tragedy of Moghuls and the reason of the decline of the Moghul dynasty, with the depiction of the poverty and suffering of the royal family after the death of Aurangzeb. Their moral decay and life of debauchery made them indifferent to the fate of the country which was stealthily but steadily acquired or conquered by the foreign rulers. In History, Ramanujan describes that a modern man is morally decayed as he wants to get the benefits through the sufferings of others. “... all the kith and kin/milling in the kitchen, wet faggot smoke,/and rumours about the will, ...” (*CP 108*) Ramanujan’s highly analytical mind prevents him from romanticizing his past or observing the western paradigms blindly. According to Ramesh K. Srivastava:

Ramanujan exposes the hard-heartedness of those people who in the myths or in history have been considered great for a long time. Having encountered two cultures, one ancient and the other modern, each illuminating and enriching the other, Ramanujan doesn’t accept the mythological and historical characters through the coloured eyes of several generations, but scrutinises them afresh after removing the cobweb of traditional impressions. He interprets the ancient from a modern perspective and the modern by correlating the past’ (*Srivastava 55*).

A horrible picture of death and starvation is given in “Epitaph on a street Dog”, an elegy on the sudden death of a stray dog. In the darkness of night, bitch has attracted to herself all her ‘mangy suitors’ who desperately fight with one another to get into her. The result of this misadventure is the birth of score of pups but the bitch is unable to

give her love to all of them and some pups die for want of proper food and nutrition.

She spawned in a hurry a score of pups,
all bald, blind and growing old at her paps;
some of them alive
enough to die in the cold of her love.

(CP 43)

Through animal imagery Ramanujan succeeds in evoking the horrible picture of degradation in human beings. The poem “Compensations” gives an account of the later engagement of the surviving world-war men. After the war society is filled with men, with wooden legs, wounded, dumb and colour blind, fingerless etc.

The list of persons thus given goes on swelling until a reference is made to the miraculous dance of Lord Shiva heralding the deluges of the entire creation. The Lord is unsurpassed in his destructive dance known generally as Tandava Nritya, but he leaves out the technicalities of war, famine, riot and the rest to the care of the two-legged human beings as though in a smooth periodic transfer of powers (*Dwivedi* 45).

Through the picture of post-war society Ramanujan draws the attention of his readers towards the degradation of humanity. The idea of death and disintegration is further enhanced in the poem “Looking and Finding”. It throws light on the picture of a modern man who feels dissatisfied, uncomfortable and starved in the midst of plenty. He is so much emotionally dead and has lost clear conscience that the pitiable condition of hunger and death in Assam and in Punjab does not find way to his heart yet later he finds himself guilty of it. Ramanujan writes:

Dreams are full of enemies, bruises ; his wife scrubs his chest
with rough compassion and Iysol. That evening he beats up

his three-year old son for laughing at him. . . . , Having no clear conscience, he looks for one in the morning News. Assam then, finds him guilty of an early Breakfast of two whole poached eggs. Attacked and defended by dying armies, the wounds find no blood on him ,his bathroom cupboard is full of unused band-aids.

(CP 179)

“Elements of Composition” presents the deformed picture of lepers look like pillars. Their trouble-some movement reduces them to a skeleton. The poet is unable to control his feelings of sadness and he calls gods and goddesses “Stone-eyed.” He writes:

add the lepers of Madurai,
male, female, married,
with children,
lion faces, crabs for claws,
clotted on their shadows
under the Stone-eyed
goddesses of dance, mere pillars,
Moving as nothing on earth
Can move

(CP 122)

S.S Dulai expressively says : “Ramanujan observes closely and often laments poignantly the human misery resulting from material want and moral corruption in contemporary India.” (*Dulai* 160) “Looking for a cousin on a Swing” presents a picture of death on moral grounds. A premature girl of four or five, and a little old boy of six or seven feel a peculiar sensation on a village swing. Later when that girl grows into a full-blooded mature woman, lives in a city and goes on hunting for companions of her passion.

Now she looks for the swing

in cities with fifteen suburbs
and tries to be innocent
about it.

(CP 19)

The element of nostalgia takes Ramanujan back to his native land i.e. India and he shows his ultimate wish in the poem “Death and the Good Citizen” that he wants to die in his own native land. Death, presented here as a medium of connecting the poet to his soil or his real self. The idea of death has been extended to the level of spiritual degradation or death, the cause of disintegration in the life of modern man. Now Lord Murugan, an ancient Dravidian god of fertility, joy, youth, beauty, war and love, has lost significance in a spiritually dead world. The poet feels regret over the loss of faith.

O where are the cocks-combs and where
the beaks glinting with new knives
at cross-roads
when will orange banners burn
among blue trumpet flowers & the shade
of trees
waiting for lightnings?

(CP 113)

The idea of spiritual degradation brings Ramanujan closer to T.S. Eliot who has depicted the same theme in the opening lines of “What the Thunder Said”, a segment of *The Wasteland*. Eliot writes: “He who was living is now dead/ We who were living are now dying”. (*The Wasteland* 67) ‘He’ indicates Jesus Christ. His crucifixion was not his real death for Christ lived on through his religion and in the hearts of his disciples. But the people in the 20th century have killed him in reality by our indifference. We are dying a slow death, suffering patiently the consequences of our own spiritual indifference. The

concept of spiritual death is further enhanced in one poem after another. The true spirit of religion does not lie in formal observance and mechanical worship. The rigidity, harshness and inhumanity in religion produces distortion in one’s personality e.g. a Jain monk in the poem “Pleasure”, should suppress his physical passions & his sensuality but this suppression does not give him spiritual pleasure or connects him with God, but results in ‘spring fever.’ He is now given to pleasure only and is spiritually dead.

... self touching self,
all philosophy slimed
by its own saliva,
cool Ganges turning
sensual on him.

(CP 139)

The poem “Salamanders” reveals an affinity between a modern man and salamander who eats fire but are born in the shushes in the woods after the rain. Man is very much like the lizards in their habitat and living. “. . . we, we burn/and eat fire no less than salamanders/but live in the wet, crawl in the slush”. (*CP 202-03*) Nothing is permanent and now in the modern era love has lost its true meaning is the life of human beings. “Two Styles in Love” illustrates this idea:

Love, you are green only to grow yellow.
Circling sickles in the wind will reap
Your ghost from the branching gallows.
You will need to help to get to the heap.

(CP 11)

Dr. A.N. Dwivedi writes “No love on earth can avoid the ‘circling sickles’ of death and destruction under the circumstances, men manage to love only in fairy tales, but in reality love burns inescapably with ‘dragon-breaths’. So growth and youth are

undesirable things. The face of love is bound to be lost sooner or later (*Dwivedi 21*).

Ramanujan is a realist who has always given a balanced approach in poetry. After delineating different facets of death and disintegration on moral, spiritual and physical grounds, he tries to establish a new facet of death in an ironic vein. In the poem "Obituary" death becomes a source of relief for a poor man like his father. Now he observes his mother who is changed into a widow, and also changed by grief at the loss of her husband. He reads old newspapers in hope of finding in them two lines about his father, which he has been told, were published in the columns of a Madras Newspaper. He writes:

that I usually read
for fun, and lately
in the hope of finding
these obituary lines.

(*CP 112*)

Snake, an agent of death becomes a source of earning money and playing with death is fun for common man who does not pay attention to the tough job of a snake-charmer. Thus the touching truth of insensibility and indifference of the modern society is presented in "Snakes".

The snakeman wreathes their writhing round his neck for
father's smiling money.

(*CP 5*)

The poetic genius of Ramanujan lies in generating a double-edged poetic discourse. The comic is more serious than the serious in the poetic world of Ramanujan. Thus by presenting the multi-dimensional aspects of death, Ramanujan has presented a realistic attitude towards life. He is not a romancer who takes his reader far

away land of fairies and romances but presents a glimpse of human life with its oddities. Spiritual and moral degradation is rampant in society where everything is temporary due to the callousness and cruelty of modern materialistic men and loss of faith. Death is universal, everything changes and reaches its end, necessary for the emergence of new things. In brief, Ramanujan a theist provides the concept of nemesis through the destructivity and fury of Nature, and the idea of Perpetual Day presented through the *tandava nritya* of Lord Shiva.

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Sunita Agarwal

**Rewriting History:
A Study of Karnad's *Tughlaq***

Rewriting history is an exercise which the historians are constantly engaged in. It means revising, re-interpreting and re-visiting the areas of one's research interests as a historian, or refining one's methodology of historical analysis and seeking answers from the sources to different sets of questions and problems that confront the historian. "Day by day and almost minute by minute" wrote George Orwell in 1984 "the past was brought up to date."

In literature the writers, novelist, poets and dramatists have used history to comment, observe and view the contemporary situation. Greg Denning in the history of the mutiny in the *Bounty*, *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language* writes "History is not past; it is a consciousness of the past used for the present purposes (170). Denning attempts to demonstrate the ways in which history entails an ongoing reassessment of the past used for the present purposes. Girish Karnad's *Tughlaq* is an attempt to reinterpret history in the present socio-political scenario. Rupalee Burke finds Karnad a playwright with a difference whose motive behind playwriting is to catch the "pulse of the socio-cultural-historical-political facets of India and Indian life. . . his plays have always aimed at providing messages in the contemporary context . . . in *Tughlaq* and *Tale Dannda* Karnad employs history to comment on

the pathetic and corroded state of Indian modern day politics, and through which he engages in a intellectual debate of our time." Not only Karnad strives to make the past relevant, he also incorporates certain traditional dramatic techniques. The play published in the year 1964 had a great appeal to Indian audience as it is a play of the sixties and reflects the spirit of the contemporary age and political disillusionment of many Indians with the idealistic politics of early Independent India. Karnad himself has commented on the "contemporaneity" of the play's history:

What struck me absolutely about *Tughlaq's* history was that it was contemporary. The fact that there was the most idealistic, the most intelligent king ever to come on the throne of Delhi . . . and one of the greatest failures also. And within a span of twenty years this tremendously capable man had gone to pieces. This seemed to be both due to his idealism as well as the shortcoming within him such as his impatience, his cruelty, his feeling that he had the only correct answer. And I felt in the early sixties India had come very far in the same direction_ the twenty year period seemed to me very much a striking parallel (Enact, June 1971)

Yet the play was not meant to be either an "obvious comment on Nehru" or an "exact parallel of the present". *Tughlaq*, a historical play is about the life of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughlaq of 14th century of India. Karnad's primary historical source is the *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* (1357), a chronicle history by Zia-ud-din Barani who spent seventeen years at Tughlaq's court but died in self imposed poverty the year the work was published.

The present paper proposes to look at a few of the similarities and parallels between two ages from three angles (1) History (2) Religion (3) Statesmanship. An attempt is being made to observe these

parallels and find over their implications and relevance in the present socio-political scenario.

According to Nietzsche (1957), “history is necessary to the living man in three ways: in relation to his action and struggle, his conservatism and reverence, his suffering and his desire for deliverance. These three relations answer to the three kinds of history- as far as they can be distinguished- the monumental, the antiquarian and the critical.”Karnad uses the third way, the critical way to look upon the historical character of Tughlaq, the man who suffers and yearn for deliverance.

Karnad’s play *Tughlaq* is a very imaginative reconstruction of some of the very significant events in the life of great Sultan who is seen not only in India but also in contemporary world. No character in our medieval history had aroused so much interest and controversy as that of Muhammad-bin- Tughlaq. According to noted historian Ishawari Prasad, “Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was unquestionably the ablest man among the crowded heads of middle ages of all kings who sat upon the throne of Delhi since the Muhammadan conquest; he was undoubtedly the most accomplished and learned.” His age was distinguished for his far-sighted and advanced policies but which in their days earned him the title ‘Muhammad the mad’. Karnad focuses the last five years of Tughlaq’s reign. The action begins first of all in Delhi in the year 1327, then on the road from Delhi to Daultabad and lastly in and around the fort in Daultabad five years later. The opening scene of the play reveals the marked change in attitude and outlook of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughlaq from that of his predecessor. Tughlaq invites his subjects to enjoy equality of religion and celebrate a new system of justice, which works “without any consideration of might or weakness, religion or creed” (3). The change of attitude indicates a shifting of center to periphery. Though the only beneficiary of this utopian move is a low- caste Muslim washer man, Aziz, who assumes the

identity of a poor Hindu Brahmin to win a false judgment against the sultan. In independent India people will have their voice and say in government policies, which were denied to them earlier in the British Raj. In a 1989 essay on Indian Theatre, Karnad observes again in the context of Tughlaq, that the most interesting feature of the politics of the 1960s was ‘the way the newly enfranchised electorate was slowly becoming aware of the power placed in its hands for the first time in history. The other equally visible movement was the gradual displacement of pre-independence idealism by hard-nosed political cynicism.’(Theatre”342)

Sultan’s openness and humanity and secularism create a feeling of mistrust both between Hindus and Muslims. He was the first Muslim king to abolish jiziya tax (a tax levied on Hindus and sanctioned by Koran). But this earns displeasure of Hindus on one hand and criticism of Muslim on the other. In one of the conversation between Hindu and young Muslim:

Hindu: Look, When a Sultan kicks me in teeth and says, ‘Pay up, you Hindu dog; I am happy, I know I am safe. But the moment a man comes along and says, I know you are a Hindu but you are also a human being’ _ Well, that makes me nervous.

Young Man: Ungrateful Wretch!

Old Man: But this wretch is our best friend, Jamal. Beware of the Hindu who embraces you (20)”.

The same kind of atmosphere of mistrust and religious bigotry pervaded during the time of independence . The culmination of this religious faction, friction and communalism was the partition of our country. Sunil Khilani in his book *Ideas of India* calls the partition “It was a supposedly a rational slicing of the land on the basis of religion (199)”. Even in this age of science and technology, after 60 years of the independence issues like Ramjanambhoomi and Babri masjid rear

their head and make one rethink in the terms of religion. The political leaders also want a solidarity specified in terms of common religion, language, culture, race and history. Every citizen body is itself divided by religious, class, gender, ethnic and other interests. The conflict between the secular and fundamental ideologies have put a challenge to the nationalist thinking that emerged during the leadership of Gandhi, Nehru, Abdul Kalam Azad, and others during the 1920s and 1930s. An analysis and assessment of current Indian political scenario also does not present a very optimistic and bright picture. The suspension of democratic processes during the state of emergency from June 1975 to March 1977, the violent Sikh & Muslim separatist movements in the northern states of Punjab and Kashmir (which peaked during the 1980s and 1990s, respectively), the assassinations of Indira Gandhi (October 1984) and her son Rajiv Gandhi (May 1991), and the relentless confrontations over religious and communal issues (which reached a horrific climax in Gujarat in 2002), are key stages in the sociopolitical decline that has brought about India's current "crisis of govern ability" (Kohli, democracy). All these events are a serious indicator that cultural plurality had become a very problematic in Indian society and give one a feeling that secularism is an "unattainable utopia" (47).

Tughlaq's shifting of capital from Delhi to Daultabad was one another step to encourage the feeling of unity and brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims. In the first scene he declares: "But for me the most important factor is that Daultabad is a city of the Hindus and as the capital it will symbolize the bond between Muslims and Hindus which I want to develop and strength in my kingdom" (4).

Sultan vision of secular India where Hindus and Muslims would live in perpetual amity and brother-hood was indeed a noble vision especially for a monarch of 14th century. He placed humanism above religion. Barani in his book wrote that Sultan ignored Islamic Shari' at,

or canon of law and attempted to rule and to administer justices along the secular humanistic lines. Following the example of Ala-d-Din before him he based his political conduct on reason whenever he thought it necessary and desired so. But his opponents apparently believed that religion should have a hand in the affairs of the state. In scene third, Sheik Immam-Ud-Din, a severe critic and opponent of sultan, who accuses sultan of parricide and fratricide, comes to Delhi to address a public meeting. The clever sultan so manipulates the things that not a single person turns up for the meeting. Sheik charges sultan of transgressing the religion and also questions him for putting all the ulemas behind the bar. Sultan's reply, "They tried to indulge in politics. I could not allow that". He further says, "My kingdom has millions Muslims, Hindus, Jains (28)."

Karnad poses a very significant question here about the role of religion in politics. Whether religion should play any role in politics and if yes, what kind of role? The question may be put the other way round whether political leader should use religion for their selfish interest. Religion and Politics are two opposite and contradictory concepts. Gandhi defined religion as an ethical framework for the conduct of everyday life. While politics is defined in *Oxford Dictionary* as activities concerned with gaining or using power. Power, it is said, corrupts man. Politics based on religion cannot work for long. B.R. Nanda in the introduction of his book *The Making of Nation* writes that

Mahatma Gandhi often talked of mixing religion with politics. But when Gandhi talked of spiritualizing politics, he echoed the sentiments of his political mentor. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who wanted to enlist the spirit of dedication and sacrifice normally reserved for religious, renunciation for secular ends that is for social and political regeneration of India.(xxv)

In the play religion is used not as an end itself but a means to achieve an end. Prayer is vitiated from the very beginning, as it is

rumored that Tughlaq killed his father and brother during prayer time. Even amirs and noblemen who were dissatisfied with Tughlaq's rule, they also conspired to murder Tughlaq during prayer time. Karnad has exposed the double-faced ness of these politicians whose word and action does not have any coherence .H.S.Mahle in his book "*History and Contemporary Reality*" *Indo-Anglian Fiction: Some Perspectives* writes "It is dualism between idea and action- between conception and execution, between illusion and reality. Idealism does not pay in politics. It is bound to fail especially when the idealist is impulsive."(140)

Both Tughlaq and his enemies initially appear to be idealist, yet in the pursuit of the ideal they perpetrate its opposite. U.R. AnanthaMurthy in his Introduction to the play *Tughlaq* writes: "The whole play is structured on these opposites: The ideals and the real; the divine inspiration and the deft intrigue, Tughlaq is what he is in spite of his self knowledge and an intense desire for divine grace (*ix*)"

Tughlaq exploits Shiek Imam-Ud-Din's resemblance to his favour and so maneuvers the whole situation that he gets both Ain- Ul -Mulk and Sheik killed. Sheik becomes an easy victim of Tughlaq's crafty and clever intrigue. Today we have similar political situation. Politicians want to crush the opposition by any means and they exert to all means to gain power. The longing to rule by all means is as true as it was during the reign of Tughlaq. Politics is like a game of 'chess' in which moves and counter-moves are used to beat and defeat the opponent. How is the India of today different from that of Tughlaq's days? Only the people and personage have changed the forces and the causes haven't. The struggle to gain power and perpetuate it is the basic that remains unaltered.

We get a vision of Tughlaq's higher aspirations and utopian scheme when he talks to his step-mother for transforming the nation

with the co-operation of his subject. He expresses his inherent desire in these rhetorical words, he says

Muhammad: Come my people, I am waiting for you. Confide in me your worries. Let me share your joys. Let's laugh and cry together and then, let's pray. Let's pray till our blood turns into air. History is our to play with our now! Let's be the light and cover the earth with greenery. Lets be the darkness and cover up the boundaries of the nations. Come! I am waiting to embrace you all (50).

Tughlaq, like an ideal king, wished to make history. He wanted to establish himself as an unprecedented example in chronicles of the world. Nehru also visualized, dreamt of and conceived of a system with which he wanted to build our nation. His first speech on the eve of Independence Day "India's tryst with destiny" and 'when the world is asleep India wakes to freedom,' reveals his unending enthusiasms with which he wanted to reconstruct and rebuild the nation. Nehru said 'we end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again.' Tughlaq similarly announced that he had to mend his subjects "ignorant minds before he can think of their souls (22)" he also described to the courtier Shaibh-ud-din his "hopes of building a new future for India". (40) Even our president Prasad said, "To all we give the assurance that it will be our endeavors to end poverty and squalor and its companions hunger and disease, to abolish distinctions and exploitations and to ensure decent condition of living." Nehru wished to modernize India, to insert it into what he understood as the movement of history. For this he concentrated attention projecting his ideology at home and abroad. Internally he declared war on feudalism, capitalism and communalism and take India into modern age. Nehru was an attempt to engage in a large -scale exercise in what he called 'nation building', essentially through a combination of economic development and democratic process. Following independence "Nehru

talked boldly about becoming self sufficient in food two years. But both he and his colleagues failed to fathom the magnitude of the food problem. He wanted to build nation on heavy industries as he thought “a country’s military strength depended on its industrial sinews”. He described them as “modern temples” and held them up as a proof of India’s progress. Whatever the reasons were Nehru’s personal vision and Nehruvian political system stopped short realizing the same. Like Tughlaq Nehru believed that somehow his preaching would make the people do what he wanted. Much of the charisma had worn thin towards the closing years of his life. The Chinese attack rudely awakened the people of the harsh reality that they have been living in the world of make believe. Yet Nehru was always guided by the welfare of the nation. When he died a very famous quotation adorned his table, which clearly reveals his spirit for India.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
I have promises to keep.
Miles to go before I sleep,
Miles to go before I sleep.

The purpose of introduction of Aziz and Aazam’s story parallel to Tughlaq is to heighten the effect of the whole play. Aziz the crafty dhobi masks his identity, engages in role- playing and misuses Sultan’s each and every scheme. He is an actor, a performer who plays various roles- that of Brahmin, a Hindu officer and the most significantly that of Khalif Ghiyas-ud-din. He is Muhammad’s ‘shadow’, his ‘other’. In the character of Aziz, we find insatiable hunger for power without any moral scrupulousness and psychological complexity. Sultan himself is a clever performer, an actor, and his dialogues more often are dramatic and rhetorical. He is like any politician who makes big promises, shows big dreams and never fulfills them. Aziz mocks each and every scheme of Sultan. The height of mockery is when he presents himself as the great grandson of His imperial Holiness Abbasid the

Khalif Ghiyas-ud-din in the palace with the protagonist Sultan. The margins between ruler and ruled is once again broken. It is subversion of power when we find Sultan falling at the feet of a scoundrel like Aziz. Karnad himself In Search of Theatre wrote that

The spatial division was ideal to show the gulf between the rulers and the ruled, between the mysterious inner chambers of power politics and the open, public areas of those affected by it. But as I wrote *Tughlaq*, I found it increasingly difficult to maintain the accepted balance between these two regions. Writing in an unprecedented situation where the mass populace was exercising political Franchise, in however clumsy a fashion, for the first time in its history, I found the shallow scenes bulging with an energy hard to control.(185)

Karnad propounds his idea on politics through Aziz, a very crafty and cunning intriguer. He is a very befitting character to speak on politics and political affairs. Aziz’s sharp and pungent satiric comment on the politics and political leaders reveals the hollowness and decline of ethics in this field and a very appropriate in the present political scenario.

“He says only a few months in Delhi and I have discovered a whole new world. . . politics! My Dear fellow, that’s where our future is. . . politics! It’s a beautiful world . . . wealth, success, position, power. . . and yet it’s full of brainless people, people with not an idea in their head (50)”. He tells Aazam that you are a brainless so you’ll make a good nobleman- an amir Power for Aziz is also a kind of licensed evil that need not be naturalized through discourse. To rape a woman only out of lust is a pointless game in his view “: First you must have power - the authority to rape. Than everything takes on meaning.”(57).

Yet this power-politics has led the protagonist of the play to nothing but loneliness, insomnia, a honeycomb of diseases, uprising and revolts in Bengal, Deccan, Doab and the consequent frustration. We can find similar problems facing India today such as Kashmir issue where we find unabated terrorism which ultimately ended in Kargil War, ULFA in Assam, and so many other problems. At the end of the play we find Sultan disillusioned and disenchanted. He is found dazed and frightened, as though he can't comprehend where he is. Karnad, thus present the political failure of Tughlaq as an outcome of his complex and dual personality and the non co-operation and 'ungovernableness' of the people.

Sultan wanted to reform the entire revenue and coinage system. For this he fixed the relative values of precious metals and issued various types of coins. His most notable experiment was the introduction of token currency but this scheme of copper currency collapsed drastically due to his short sightedness and improper planning. Similarly today many big projects and schemes, announced by government fail to meet their goal and objectives because of mismanagement and improper planning. In fact a strong planning is needed for the success of any policy and project.

Taxes are the main source of revenue for government and this money is used in building roads, hospitals and other welfare activities. But ironically whenever a new tax is introduced, it is always resented and people always try to evade it as it was done when Sultan increased tax in Doab. Recently when government introduced VAT, it was also opposed vehemently and could be implemented with great difficulty. It is said human nature never changes. Corruption and misappropriation of money was as much prevalent today as it was in 14th century.

Tughlaq evokes Nehru, Gandhi, and their political heirs, but he does not have any one contemporary figure consistently, and sometimes he evokes himself only. Aparna Dharwadkar has written that "Tughlaq is resonant as a historical play because it incorporates the problem of historical discontinuity and meditation, yet creates a

convincing synchrony between pre-modern and contemporary India". But on the other hand we cannot ignore John M. Wallace's statement about seventeenth century English historical writing that an audience can always reduce history to a topical allegory, but it is important to reiterate the "analogical structure" of historical fictions, since "past examples and present predicament is never identical, and one character can never substitute completely for another" (273). In fact, if I can say so, that we all are Tughlaqs to some extent at some point of time or other. We are idealists, visionary and utopian. We also dream big. But how far these dreams materialize that is a separate issue. We are all engaged in writing and rewriting history without being in Delhi or Daultabad

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Book Review

Rao, Malathi. *Disorderly Women*. Bangalore: Dronequill Fiction, 2007, pp. 273, Rs. 250.

Malathi Rao has taught English at Miranda House in New Delhi. She has written several novels and short stories. *Disorderly Women* has won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2007. As the cover page claims, the novel is about, “A past full of women, in generation after generation, caught between the pain of tradition and the fear of change”. The story begins when, Ila, the narrator tells her reason to narrate her family story of three generations, “For I believe, that’s what stories are for. To be endlessly repeated, so that there is no forgetting who you are and where you come from”. The novel runs around the women folks of Himalaya, the name of the house they lived and the title indicates that the novel deals with the women who are moving away from their traditional codes.

The first generation woman of Himalaya, Venku Bai, undergoes the sufferings under her sado-masochist husband Seshagiri Rao. Seshagiri Rao controls over her wife and children and he himself takes decisions on behalf of them. Krishna, the eldest son, tries to break such barrier to women, though he could not directly oppose his father, yet tries his level best to protest, “Father, let me tell you that you do not treat Mother properly and you do not know her worth. She has become the sacrificial animal on every occasion” (42). His voice never reaches his father, and he expresses his wishes to his mother Venku Bai as, “There’s no escape at all for you or for anyone. It is like being

in a trap. Oh Mother, I wish I could do something to lessen the burden for you. Toiling away from morning to night, you don’t go out, you have no friends. What’s the use of such a life?” (46). After his mother’s death, Krishna does not want the same trauma to be continued for his wife Rukmani, so he tries to give certain liberty to her.

The second generation women in the novel, thus, get a sort of liberty with the help of Krishna. Krishna’s sister, Kamala, settles in Himalaya, after she walks away from her sadomasochist husband, who often accuses of Kamala’s barrenness. Kamala continues her studies with her brother, Krishna’s help and support. Kamala tries to quench her thirst of love through some men, when she gets chances. However, all her attempts go in haste and she suffers in solitude throughout her life, even after when she is provoked by her childhood-lover, Vasudevan, “Is it right, tell me, to deny yourself the natural instincts of your heart and spirit and your truest self?” (206).

The third generation woman, Ila, is revolutionary and dares to stand against anybody, who goes against her wishes. Ila has decided to remain unmarried throughout her life, which is unconventional, and she thinks she would lead a peaceful life. She is very much devoted to the place, Himalaya and is attached to her aunt Kamala, even though Kaala is talked ill of her perverted ideas. Kamala has given Ila, the authority of using her personal diary to write the story of Himalaya. Ila recollects Himalaya’s memory as, “Himalaya was more than mere brick and stone, it was a living presence by itself, breathing the silent prayers of dead ancestors, continuing and nourishing the hopes and dreams of the family in subtle and mysterious ways” (222). Pradi, Ila’s brother, is money-minded and has no value for the past memories as Ila has. Ila decides to claim her share of Himalayas and stays there by preventing Pradi, to not to sell it. Then she boldly questions, “What can Pradi do now?” (273). Of all these three generations women, Ila

sounds revolutionary and courageous. The novel portrays the tug of war between modernity and tradition and the changes occur in the cases of women, during time passes by. Ila, though, loves past, is a modern woman with radical thinking, which male-chauvinistic brother Pradi could not stand with.

Apart from Kamala and Ila, other characters also have attempted to break some traditional concepts which Himalaya cannot accept under Seshagiri Rao, the man of Himalaya. One is Govinda, the second son of Seshagiri Rao, who refuses to come back to India, Himalaya after his studies in Germany. Thus, Seshagiri Rao, in his old age has lost his power to take decisions for others. He has to digest when his youngest daughter's details appear in matrimonial column, when her marriage gets delayed. He has to accept when she is married to a groom, who does not belong to his caste, but to another sub-caste. This shows that the male-biased traditional codes decline towards the end of the novel.

A strain of caste issue is also depicted, when Brahmins feels that youngsters are withering their old conventions, and that too is the depiction of adopting modern ways of living, "...this is Kaliyuga, when Brahmins will degenerate to the level of Sudras, and a day will come when there is going to be no difference between a Brahmin and a Sudra" (140)

A Marxist touch is given when Ila thinks that there is a right for the servant's family who works in Himalaya for more than three generations. As a whole Malathi Rao tries to bring a Utopian world in her novel by erasing traditional Brahminical-capitalist-inhumanist-male chauvinistic ideas through her narrator Ila.

Chandra N.

Book Review

Pashupati Jha. *All in One*. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers, 2011, Pp.vi+ 64, Price Rs 125.

All in One is the third collection of poems by Prof. Pashupati Jha, preceded by two other collections, *Cross and Creation* (Prestige Books, New Delhi, 2003) and *Mother and Other Poems* (Creative Books, New Delhi, 2005). Unlike the previous volumes, Dr. Jha, a brilliant poet as well as a scholar of excellence, is quite keen on analyzing his inner self, busy in bridging the gap between his existence and essence and creating a pact between the soul and the body, the dream and the reality. Though the image of 'bearing the Cross alone' is an obvious one in all his volumes, he is again dispassionately critical of the tortuousness of the modern-day city life. On the one hand, he analyses his day-to-day experiences and feelings and on the other hand, he is the Adam who is still wandering in the realm of his 'lost innocence'.

In all the forty-eight poems contained in this volume, he lays his heart bare to the readers, shares the inmost feelings with them, and goes down to make a secret alliance with his inner self, to which he has to remain candid in all possible types of moments. He even registers the trouble he faces while interacting with the people of society, with the camouflaged humanity, with the ignoble scholars who are merely scholars-in-guise: "This is how/ erudition is transferred/ from generation to (de)generation/ within the fortified walls of academia/ full of flapping bats and butterflies" (56). He tries to examine his internal basic instincts, which trouble him sometimes, though he knows quite well that his companion is a life-long one, who is a friend in need, in trials and tribulations, sprucing him up to face all sorts of untoward situations. He takes stock of his day-to-day activities like Arun Kolatkar

or R.Parthasarathy, and comes back to the truth that he is nothing but a ‘fool’, who falls far short of keeping pace with the materialistic society, where grabbing and self-aggrandizement stand to be the watch-word: “I am a confirmed fool/they say/because I feel/ and do not do/as others do—to snatch everything/from everyone around/after digging my dagger/deep into their entrails/and then never looking back.” (53)

Family is the primary as well as the ultimate bond in one’s life. The poet is no exception to this fact. Like Charles Lamb of *Essays of Elia*, he keeps on moving around with an eye watching everything, from the little chimney-sweeper boy to the vendor who cries his wares and the man with the coffee-brazier to serve all. Yet, he talks passionately, affectionately about the people around him—his father, mother, wife, and children, friends and colleagues. He hates to grab and own; rather, he tries to remain contented with whatever God, the Almighty apportions to him. He is a staunch believer in God, who is the all-embracing Supreme Being: All in One!

The Poet simplifies philosophical notion of *Charaiveti* (move on) in the very first poem of this collection. In the subsequent poems, he preaches life’s philosophy as life itself teaches him in sundry ways and styles. He talks about his dream of writing a great poem for which he lives (*A Great Poem, Making of a Poem, A Poet’s Desire*), his paean for love, an honest, and the noblest emotion (*History will not Repeat*), sense of God’s presence as the *summum bonum* of all feelings (*Dream and Reality*). He philosophizes on the different facets of existences, different phases of living a meaningful life in *Snapshots, Happiness, Loss and Gain, Absence and Essence, Undying Faith, With You, Survival*, and so forth. He expatiates on the interactions between man and woman, between individuals in the modern day-to-day careworn, stress-torn life, quite exquisitely, quite aptly.

Jha deals with the basic truths of the world, like the innocence/experience conflict, the reverence towards Nature, the present-day mundane attitude of people of the metropolis, the desire to hold on to the pristine immaculateness, the day-to-day family life in poems like *Taming the Tiger, God Made the Country, Man Made the Town, Options, In the Midnight Silence, Stone Age, Each Eve*, and so forth.

He talks about deeper understanding of life through passive resignation and renunciation in *Death and Life*, Upanishadic notions of *Tattvamasi* and *Soham* get manifested in *I am I* and *All in One* respectively, through *A Big Scholar*, *A Symbol, Name-Game, Insensitive Age* criticize ruthlessly the rotten society, where man is a separate entity, cocooned within his own self, where the senile old populace cry for some sensitive soul who can warn us against a possible apocalypse:

But you cannot take
things for granted, for long;
the rot has to stop soon
before the inevitable deluge
overtakes us, unaware. (43)

Adam and Lost Innocence are Jha’s favourite images, through which he can disseminate the ultimate message of the deterioration of values. For him, a journey back to the childhood is not retracing the steps back to the pristine times, but, ‘to ferret out.. his nursery books,’ which we always long for; but those books are off our stacks now, where scholarly volumes rule the roost instead. In *Pebbles and Pearls* again he refers to the age-old maxim: “Be contented always” [*sada santushta bhava*], which is manifested by the image of Lord Shiva. In *Ma* and *Autobiography: Short and Simple*, he sings the saga of a family-life, where the Mother-figure is the supreme binding-force, as “For these innocents /have no world/ to live in without/that two-lettered word.” In *Autobiography...* he assures us of rebirth, which enlivens us to join the bandwagon of *living and enjoying* life in the truest, holiest and fullest sense of the term. Nothing would have been possible if Jha would not sign a secret pact with his own rebellious self!

No doubt, with his wide world-view, lucid language, intense emotion and powerful turns of phrase, Pashupati Jha keeps us enchanted in our journey through these forty eight poems of *All in One*.

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