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Editor: Prof. Shrawan K Sharma

www.thevedicpath.in
thevedicpath@kv.ac.in
+91-9412074666

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S.K. Agrawal

Re/thinking of the Images of Women in the *Mahabharata*

Probing into the nature of woman's problems, one is confronted with a question "What is it to be a woman?" The answer to this question is not simple, for the feminist theory is mainly concerned with the question of defining femininity though it is not precisely formulated by the feminists. Therefore, there are different ways of answering the question, a part of the answer is given in terms of images of woman.

Images of woman in Indian culture emerge mainly from the ancient epics such as the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. These epics exert a powerful impact on our modes of thoughts and feelings. A woman is depicted in a variety of ways in the *Mahabharata*. All these depictions have such an impelling force that in the later period they have been coloured and couched in literary elegance and have been used as images. However, it cannot be said that the *Mahabharata* represents, all the women of that period, it certainly hints at the human goals and values that were lived in that particular phase of human life. The *Mahabharata* describes womanhood in all its complexity.

It is necessary here to make a distinction between what may be called a representation, an image, a fantasy and a concept. A representation is more or less a portrait. It pictures the facts as they are. A fantasy, on the other hand, does not correspond to anything real. It is an expression of the subjective play of imagination and to that extent is independent of facts. An image is different from both of these- it is not a photograph. Neither is it oriented towards the values that are perceived and internalized by human beings in

the real world. Thus, there are both the components-the fact and the value, the natural and the normative. The narrations in history are records of events and happenings as they occurred. The fantasises are probing into the unseen events and happenings. Images on the other hand are crystallizations of the patterns of perception that are rooted in the lived situations. Concepts have definite precise meaning which is more or less objectively accepted. Images do not have such definite boundaries of meaning. Their meaning changes in accordance with subjective understanding. Images are relevant from one more point of view. The specific illustrations of images also bring out the failure in concretizing these images into real life. In the light of the dominant images, one can assess the present day attitudes towards women.

The *Mahabharata* described womanhood in all its complexity. I have not considered all the images of woman but selected only four-Draupadi, Sulabha, Amba and Hidimba. This selection is not arbitrary-the women chosen are not stereotyped; they exhibit womanhood in different roles and situations and try to reach perfection in their own way.

Draupadi, one of the exemplifications of womanhood, reaches the heights as a *dharampatni*. A *dharampatni* is not only a house wife but also an intimate friend who shares all the commitments and dedications of her husband. No other woman can surpass her i.e. Draupadi, in the role of *dharampatni*. There is another extreme-that of an image of woman who exemplifies total detachment and disinterest towards sensuality. She is an intellectual who refuses herself the joys and sorrows of the mundane world. She is a *Sanyasini* called Sulabha. The third one is Amba who wants to compete with men and is willing to reject her femininity. She wants to become a man, she represents the intellectual wife. She does not want to reject her femininity and compete with men as Amba does. Hidimba, a *Rakshashi*, a Dalit in post modernist political terminology, breaks

the code of her genealogy and tries to improve the genetics when she agrees with the proposal of Kunti and Bhima about the birth of an issue/a son by her association with him as a wife. Draupadi is seen in different roles in the *Mahabharata*. In the Adiparva of the *Mahabharata* she figures as Drapada's daughter. *Pativarta* is the feature that characterises her. Though *Mahabharata* describes Draupadi's beauty in the most alluring manner, she is not a showpiece. She is a queen and she talks and acts with that stateliness. Draupadi is an ideal dharmapatni and it is this role that gives her a place in the *Mahabharata*. A *dharampatni* is not just a wife who shares the joys and sorrows of the mundane world but also participates in the achievement of higher goals of *dharma* and *moksha*. In the *Vanaparva* Draupadi tells Satyabhama that she controls her husbands, i.e. Pandavas through Pativrata-dharma. Draupadi's real nature comes to the foreground when she has to face the situation of crisis. After Yudhishthira loses Draupadi in the game of dice and Dushasan sends a servant to bring Draupadi, she sends back whether it is right to stake one's own wife like this in the game. She adds that only a mad person bets like this. Her second question is whether Yudhishthir has any right to stake her. She says "Ask that gambler who lost and was enslaved first? Let me know this, then only I shall come" (*Mahabharata: Sabhaparva*). Yudhishthira could not answer these questions. She sends the servant back to ask the senior people in the gathering who know morality or dharma. But in answer she is forcibly brought into the *Sabha* (assembly). Bhishma after a long pause answers her question. He says that one who has become a *dasa* or slave has no right to stake and sell his wife like this but women are under the control of their husbands (*Mahabharat: Sabhaparva*). Draupadi sides with her husband because she wants to free them from the slavery.

Draupadi, a dignified and sensitive woman, takes pride in her being a *dharampani* and playing the different roles of a house wife, friend and adviser. She tells everyone in the *Sabha* that she does not

deserve what is happening to her because she is the daughter –in-law of Kurus and wife of the Pandavas. She is praised by Bhim for she followed the *dharma* of Pativrata. Draupadi's questions carry an imprint of the deep understanding of morality. Draupadi revolts against the passivity and indifference on the part of the wise men. She revolts against the immoral conduct, deceitful action and malice exhibited by the Kauravas. Draupadi feels sorry for the downfall of morality and for the fact that no man performed his obligations in his respective role.

Draupadi has to follow her husbands in the forest during the twelve years of exile. She is seen burning with anger, sorrow and insult in the *Vanavasa* (Banishment). She tries to convince and encourage Yudhishthira to recapture the Kingdom. There is a long dialogue between Draupadi and Yudhishthira in the *Vanaparva*-she tries to revive the spirit of her husband by telling him the philosophy of a warrior's duty. Draupadi advocates *Ksatradharma* because she identifies herself with the image of a *ksatriya* woman.

Despite Draupadi being an ideal of *dharmapatni*, her characterization carries inner contradictions. A dutiful housewife Draupadi has to fight for her rights as a *dharmapatni*. She has to demand her rights and has to remind her husbands of their duties towards her. *Pativartayam* is a moral duty of women. The creation of an ideal like *Pativratadharma* was necessary to transact the duties of a *grihstha* which made both man and woman chaste and faithful to each other.

Pativratadharampala is idealized as a necessity for a successful *grihstha jivan*. It exercised a restraint on the libertine behaviour and liberty of both man and woman. It empowered woman with privileges as *Jaya* and *grihini*. A married man had to adhere to her wife's suggestion as the mistress of the house.

Sulabha's character represents the image of an independent woman. The character of Sulabha is described in the *Santiparva*

of the *Mahabharata*. She is mentioned as *bhiksuni* or *sanayasini* (a woman who has abandoned everything). Sulabha has chosen to be a *brahmavadini*. It seems that she is influenced by the *Sramana* tradition. Sulabha is neither a carnal woman, nor a wife. She is an independent person seeking knowledge. She remained unmarried because she could not get a proper match. She refused to marry someone for her livelihood. Sulabha represents the image of an intelligent, strong-willed, noble woman which the feminists assert is in contradiction with the image of woman in the traditional patriarchal society. The king Janaka blames her for the misuse of the yogic powers she has and tells her that the real strength of a woman is her beauty, youthfulness and her status as a married woman. Janak wonders at her beauty and charm and says that her appearance is contradictory to her life style (i.e. of a Yogini). He says “beauty, youthfulness do not go with yoga. How come that you are having both? I have doubts about you.” (*Mahabharat*: Shantiparva). Quite contrary to the feminists’ view, the fact is that Sulabha could deliberate and have a discourse with Janak because Indian intellectual traditions have accorded a respectable place to woman, in no way inferior to man.

The fact is that Sulabha never rejected her femininity and she regarded herself as equal to men like Janaka. Before answering his doubts and questions Sulabha first told Janaka what is meant by a ‘proposition’ because proper talk consists of true propositions. She tells him “I shall utter a sentence which is meaningful. This sentence will not have ambiguous words. I shall use excellent words and propositions. I shall utter sentences which are true enough though they may be unpleasant. I shall not use a sentence which has no intention, which will require further explanation” (*Mahabharata* : Shantiparva). Here the assertion and empowerment of Sulabha is evident.

Sulabha’s self confidence is exhibited in her rhetoric. Rather than telling Janak that he does not talk properly, she tells him “I never talk out of anger, lust, fear or greed. I never talk indecently. I never talk out of contempt or pride.” She further tells him “A person who neglects the listeners, looks down upon the listener is not a good orator. A good orator is one whose speech percolates into the heart of the listeners.”

Sulabha proves that a woman cannot only be equal to man but can excel him also if the societal structure permits. Sulabha symbolises an independent character, for a woman can be as learned and scholarly as man. She is a self-confident woman and is able to enter Janak’s *Buddhi* to convince him of her point of view on intellectual grounds.

Amba is an abandoned woman, a *Pratiyakta*. She is the possession of her father, the king Kasiraja. Kasiraja arranged a *svayamvara* of his three daughters-Amba, Ambika and Ambalika. Bhishma, though he had vowed never to marry, went to the *svayamvara* and abducted the three sisters for his invalid brothers. Bhishma says “Understanding that the price of these daughters is bravery, I placed them in my chariot after defeating all the kings.” And “I bought them by paying their price” (*Mahabharata*: Udyogparva). Amba refused to marry Bhishma’s brother. She wanted to marry king Salva whom she loved. King Salva, however, refused to accept her as a wife. She said that Bhishma deprived her of *Patilok*. She states very boldly “I blame my father because he fixed my price and made me stand in the market of marriage like a prostitute and Bhishma is solely responsible for the injustice done to me” (*Mahabharata*: Udyogparva). This feminist view does not pay heed to the contemporary social fabric. *Varna* and *Ashrama* were the two social institutions, and every individual as an integrated and balanced person, not as a separate being, was supposed to be a

part of it. Such a procedure follows the logic of 'I' and 'we' where the emphasis is on similarity rather than difference.

Amba does not blame her fate as other women would. She says "I feel dejected with my existence as a woman." and ends her life by entering into the fire. Now the question is "Why does Amba end her life?" Amba finds herself in a dilemma when she tries to overthrow the male-power. She denies femininity and has to accept the disapproval of man and society. Amba is caught in the man-woman dilemma. This outward struggle becomes her internal struggle. The society expects that in such a situation a woman should end the struggle by accepting the traditional role. Amba, emerges a rebel-accepting femininity as typically illustrated by the patriarchal society or becoming man by abandoning femininity.

Hidimba, a *Rakshashi*, a Dalit in postmodernist political terminology lives in the forest of *Shalbriksha* with her brother Hidimb (In the Adiparva of *Mahabharata* is described the brutal killing of Hidimb). Hidimb is a man-eater. He senses the presence of human beings of sleeping Pandavas-who were sleeping near his staying place in the forest. The entire narrative of Hidimba can be classified into four figurative segments; the arrival of Hidimba through the instructions of his brother to the camp of sleeping Pandavas; the arrival of Hidimb to the same place; the killing of the demon Hidimb by Bhima and finally the consent of Kunti and Yudhishtira for the marriage of Hidimba with Bhima. The first stage brings forth the metamorphoses of Hidimba's character. She sees Bhima and is enamoured by his handsome body, she begins to love Bhima by her inner core. The verses 1 and 20 of Hidimb Badha Prava brings the metamorphoses in her body and mind. As a woman, she is filled with love and happiness if she gets the association of Bhima as her husband. She thinks that she shouldn't kill Bhima to have a sense of eternal pleasure (modase siswati samaha). She candidly acknowledges her love

stricken and spellbound inferiority and raises a question before Bhima. "Believe me I have been in the possession of *Kamdeva* (the god of passion). O Great warrior if you reject me I will die" (Paul Richman; p 178)

The second phase of this *Upakhyana* shows the meeting of Hidimb and Bhima. The arrival of Hidimb makes her sister Hidimba fearful and she requests Bhima to run away along with the members of his family. As *Rakshashi* she possesses supernatural powers and promises him that she would fly with all his family members to a secure place, but Bhima does not follow her advice. Hidimb comes there and finds the reality about the infatuation of his sister for the love of Bhima. Hidimb is almost to kill her sister for this deception but Bhima saves Hidimba. Bhima fights with Hidimb and finally kills the demon wretchedly. After her brother's death, Hidimba appears before Kunti. Kunti smelling the contextual reality raises some definitive questions about Hidimba's identity. Hidimba answers Kunti that the forest in which she along with Pandavas keeps out of sight of Kauravas is of Hidimb, who is her brother too. Here she also wishes to consummate her love and longs to have a son by Bhima. As an honest, sincere lady with a strong will power, Hidimba analyses before Kunti the anthropological points of human race and she thus creates the diachronic cyclicality of history for Indian civilization. The civilizational attributes of Bharat tolerate and assimilate differences and diversities; and this is perhaps the need of our country at present in our democratic and plural system of governance for emotional and religious/social integration. The *Mahabharata* (as a vulgate text) unlike other *Puranic* texts unites the heterodox and orthodox issues together and thus creates the unifying elements between castes and tribes, between Aryans and non-Aryans and between the folk and the elite.

Like a *Rishi* Hidimba lets Kunti know about her knowledge of all times (Past, Present and Future) and she thus proves her

wisdom, intelligence and presence. Hidimba wishes to have a son by the union of Bhima and on such conditions, she has sought the permission of Kunti and Yudhishtira. Yudhishtira conditions their union when he reminds her about the power to move more speedily anywhere than the speed of wind itself, and ask her to stay with Bhima till sunset and send him back to them after sunset. Hidimba agrees to the proposal and gives birth to a child, ghattotkachha.

The relationship between Hidimba and Bhima can be analysed on the inner properties of Hidimba myth, because inside the layer of the myth there remains the seeds of history and its dialectics:

The myth symbolises a conflict in the inner world of spirits between the ideas of truth and goodness and their opposites, the *Devas*, (gods) and the *Asuras* (demons) and the myth narrates the ultimate triumph of good over evil, as if it has already happened. Therefore, what happens in the myth will happen in history provided man makes the effort. This is the moral of the myth. (Nikam 12)

The Hidimba myth breaks the code of her genealogy. And she tries to improve the genetics when she agrees with the proposal of Kunti and Bhima about the birth of an issue/a son by her association with him as a wife. Generally the various tribes of the society met with violence and destructiveness when there came a clash between their internalised modes of culture. Hidimba becomes a synthesis between two civilizations. She voluntarily resigns the signs and signifiers of her class to have Bhima as her husband. The episode proves the cyclicity of time with the triumph of good over evil. Hidimba gives birth to Ghattotkachha and he proves the inheritance of new genetics when he attacks his uncle and arch foe *Karna* in the battle of Mahabharata. It is ghattotkachha who nullifies fearsome *Vajayanti Shakti* given to Karna by Indra.

The *Mahabharata* and the other texts such as *Puranas* have idealized women as wife, as mother and they have rejected carnal

women and witches. These characters project the images of Woman as Dharampatni, Bhiksuni, Parityakta, Rakshashi respectively. The question that is very often forwarded is—"how is it that out of these images, only the image of *Dharampatni* gets perpetuated. On the other hand, the images of *Bhiksuni*, *Parityapta* or *Rakshi* (despite her noble efforts to improve the genetics) are, however, not? The most important factor which has contributed to perpetuate a particular type of woman image is the moral standard cherished by the contemporary society. The images give the message that if a woman refuses to accept the traditional roles, she will be destroyed or she will have to sacrifice the pleasure of marriage and family life or she will be thrown into oblivion.

As a matter of fact, the ancient Indian society consisted of individuals who shared already set customs, traditions and a value frame work. It was the question of maintaining the social system or the identity of society through *Varna* and *Ashrama Vyavastha*. At the micro level, every individual was supposed to be an individual not in the sense of being an independent free person, but as an integrated and balanced person. As a consequence, an individual as a separate free being not befitting or contributing to the system does not get perpetuated. The Indian intellectual traditions do not encourage the understanding of Indian society in terms of binaries, nor does it approve the Assertion/Dependency Model which inherently constitute the part of the western matrix.

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A K Chaturvedi

Surat Shabd Yoga : Stress Alleviation and Spiritual Elevation

The term ‘yoga’ is derived from Sanskrit word ‘*yuj*’ which means meeting or union of the soul with the Over Soul. Unfortunately, the concept of yoga primarily as a system of *asanas* and physical exercises has got prominence in India as well as abroad with the result that the mode of spiritual elevation has been reduced to a system of physical culture. Patanjali, the reputed father of the yoga system, defines yoga as controlling of *vritis* or modulations that keep surging in the mind or *chit*. He calls it *chit vriti nirodha* or the suppression of the *vritis*. According to Yajnavalkya, yoga means effecting or bringing about merger of the individual soul with the universal soul. Of various yogas such as Mantra Yoga, Hat Yoga, Laya Yoga, Raja Yoga, Kriya Yoga, Jyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga, the easiest, the most ancient and the most natural way to gain the fruits of yoga, as taught by Kabir, Nanak, Ravidas, Tukaram, Dadu, and other spiritual adepts, is the SuratShabd Yoga or Sehaj Yoga. Surat means the attention which is the external form of the spirit and Shabd means God. Returning of surat to Shabd is what constitutes the base of spirituality. When, after prolonged spiritual practice under the guidance of a perfect guru, the spirit develops capability to cast off various coverings one by one, it becomes a pure spirit and a conscious entity. According to saints, the communion of this entity with the cosmic consciousness which is referred to as Naam Power in the *Ram Charit Manas*, Holy Word in the *Bible*, *Kalma* in Muslim scriptures, *Sarosa* in Zoroastrian scriptures and *Tao* in Chinese scriptures. Because of the simplicity of approach coupled with the economy of effort this form of yoga is also known as *Sehaj* Yoga. The paper aims to investigate the benefits that later or sooner accrue

to the one who aspires and untiringly tries to find out the way to redemption from stress and is constantly in search of spiritual elevation.

Patanjali's Ashtang Yoga is the first major attempt to develop a system meant for physical fitness, stress alleviation and spiritual elevation. Although the *rishis* and yoga teachers after Patanjali derived guidance from his yogic system, they realized that the Ashtang Yoga is too cumbersome and as such tends to deny spiritual elevation to an average man. While Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Hata Yoga and Raja Yoga carried on Patanjali's tradition in modified forms, there emerged three other major forms viz. Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga which don't require the spiritual aspirants to retire from the world or undergo cumbersome practices. One thing that emerged from an examination of Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga is that the soul can rise above physical consciousness without recourse to the arduous control of Pranas. The Jnana Yoga requires extraordinary concentration power; the Karma Yoga, likewise, requires a sense of non-attachment to the result of action. The Bhakti Yoga has also its limitations resulting from the tentacles of mind and senses. Thus, Patanjali's Ashtang Yoga and yogas evolved after Patanjali make special demands which an average seeker can't fulfill. The yogas that are discriminating in the selection of practitioners and too hard to be practiced by an householder can't be natural. The problem that arises before an average seeker is to discover a means which can enable his spirit to transcend the boundary of physical consciousness and merge into the ocean of Super consciousness. This, according to Shankara, is the end of all yogas.

It is in the context of this problem that Surat Shabd Yoga or Sehaj Yoga assumes immense significance. The adepts of this yoga teach that the Absolute though free of all attributes in its primal state, manifests itself in Light and Sound. Both Light and Sound combined together are known as Word or Shabd and various scriptures contain frequent references to the all- pervasive power of Word or Shabd. In the Gospels we have:

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by Him; and without Him was

Not anything made that was made. Kirpal 142

In ancient Indian scriptures we repeatedly read about *Aum* the sacred Word pervading the three realms of *bhur*, *bhuva* and *swah* (the physical, astral and causal). In *Jap Ji* Guru Nanak says,

The earth and sky are of naught but from Shabd(Word).

From Shabd alone the light was born.

From Shabd alone creation came.

Shabd is the essential core in all.

Shabd is the directive agent of God, the cause of all creation.

Kirpal 143

Satguru, Sadachar and Sadhana constitute the base of Surat Shabd Yoga. Satguru means the one who having scaled the spiritual heights under the guidance of a perfect guru possesses the ability to grant the first- hand experience of the presence of God within. Sadachar includes the observance of the virtues such as truth, non-violence, humility, purity and selfless service. Sadhana requires the practitioner to focus his attention on *shiva netra* or *divya chakshu*. To assist him in this process he needs to mentally repeat God's name (*mantra*) especially the one given by Satguru. The *mantra* when repeated slowly and lovingly with the tongue of thought helps him to collect his scattered surat or attention at a single point whence his journey into the inner regions begins. Gradually under the divine protection of his Guru he reaches the journey's end and merges into the Word or Shabd. In *Jap Ji*, Guru Nanak Dev sings of the glory of such disciples:

Those who have communed with the word,

Their toils shall end.

And their faces shall flame

Not only shall they have salvation with glory
 O Nanak, but many more shall find freedom with them.
 Kirpal159

The Surat Shabd Yoga is comparatively easy to practice and accessible to all. Those following this path reach the ultimate end with greater economy of efforts than is possible by the other methods. This is possible because it adopts a more scientific and natural approach to man's spiritual problems. If the spiritual currents reach all chakras from above, it should not be necessary to master each of these chakras. It is from the point of the third eye that the spiritual current spreads itself into the body. All that is needed is to check its downward flow at this point by controlling one's senses and it will, of its own accord, collect itself and flow back towards its source. As Hafiz says:

Shutter your lip, your ear, your eye
 And if you do not truth descry,
 Then let your scorn upon me fly. Kirpal163

It is because of this simplicity of approach coupled with economy of efforts that SuratShabd Yoga is called the *SehajMarg* or the natural way. It begins at the point where other yogas normally tend to end. By refusing to disturb the pranic energies this path greatly reduces the strain of physical transcendence. By contacting the sound currents at sixth chakra the process of entry into the state of Samadhi is considerably simplified. The follower of this path achieves concentration through mental repetition of God' names without any external support. As no rigorous and extensive disciplines of food, physical exercises etc. are required, it does not necessitate the *sanyas* or complete renunciation of the world. Since the emphasis in this yoga is always on the inner growth, no path could in a way be easier and more natural for the general run of men.

To succeed in this yoga, the aspirant does not have to undergo any of the rigorous disciplines characteristic of other yogas. All that is initially needed is to have a sincere and ceaseless yearning for the

end of all ends, the goal of all goals. When the yearning becomes too much intense, sooner or later he will find an adept to put him in touch with the divine life current within and this current will draw him out of the mess. This is the reason why this path is natural and can be practiced with equal ease by a child as well as by an old man, by a woman as well as a man, by the literate as well as illiterate, by the sanyasin as well as the householder.

II

There is no denying the fact that stress plays a major role in a majority of diseases today and its recognition and treatment will be a major challenge in the 21st century. As mammals we are hard wired to have a maximal stress reaction physically. While the short term stress leads to accidents, infections, and poor concentration, the long term stress causes a long list of disorders which includes, alcoholism, allergy, anxiety, asthma, cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, chronic pain, constipation, depression, headaches including migraine, heart disease, herpes flare up, high blood pressure, impotence, irritable bowel, peptic ulcer, sleep disorders and even Alzheimer's. We become stressed by events in life that we feel as unfavorable and beyond our control. For example, when our baby cries, we are stressed to think what is wrong with him or her. If our child gets a bad grade in school, we worry how he or she is going to get into a good college. Multi- tasking stresses each one of us. As a result of short term stresses, the, cortisol levels flowing through our body are elevated. Large amounts of adrenaline and other hormones pour out from our adrenal gland and put us in a mood of fight or flight. We are often subject to less than life threatening stresses every week and probably every day. The elevated levels of cortisol, adrenaline and other hormones do damage to our organs insidiously over months, years and decades.

The spiritual practice taught by the teachers of Surat Shabd Yoga is known as meditation, "a process whereby an individual focuses attention at a single point in an attempt to exclude distracting

thoughts and outside stimuli” (Singh 18). Spending regular and accurate time in meditation is the surest way to stress alleviation. One meditation study conducted by Dr. John C. Craven published in the *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* states, “Controlled studies have found consistent reductions in anxiety in meditators” (Craven 648). Several stress related conditions have demonstrated improvement during clinical trials of meditation. In another study, Dr. Ilan Kutz states, “As the ability to meditate develops, a hierarchy of sensations develops, ranging from deep relaxation to marked emotional and cognitive alterations which have proven to be of value as primary treatment for a variety of medical disorders such as hypertension as well as in relieving anxiety and pain” (Kurtz 1-8).

Meditation is a way to eliminate the lack of balance caused by mental stresses. Through it we create a calm haven and restore our equilibrium. Researchers have found that our brain waves measure from 13-20 per second when we are stressed. Those who spend time in meditation register brain waves at 5-8 per second, a state of deep relaxation. Their mind becomes calm and they feel happiness all around even during the moments of turmoil & strife. A recent study by Dr. R.H. Schneider published in the highly regarded *American Journal of Cardiology* found that meditation practice decreased the overall death ratio by 23% in older persons with high blood pressure. Meditation leads us to realize that, in the words of Teilhard de Chardin, “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience, we are spiritual beings having a human experience” (Singh 66).

The teachers of Surat Shabd Yoga teach us that one reason of our stress is that we have all of our hopes pinned on the worldly life & illusive realities. So long as things are favorable, we are happy, if they are not, we are unhappy. Thus, our happiness is dependent on the whim of fate. The adept of Surat Shabd Yoga serves as a living example of how to remain unaffected by the ups & downs of life and teaches that it is possible to remain stress-free most of the time if we pin all our hopes on God & not on the world. This cherishes in us the

attitude of “Let go & let God” which leads to confidence & freedom from worry.

Hans Selye, the physician whose book *The Stress of Life* (1956) introduced the term ‘stress’ into medical use, recognized stress as a part of life. In the book he says that most stress comes from mind and some comes from the dysfunction of the physical body. Since in meditation we relax and rest the physical body while simultaneously controlling and re-focusing our mental processes, it naturally relieves stress and anxiety. Thus, it can be argued that stress is self-inflicted. By considering whether stress is a cause or an effect, it should become apparent that stress is a result of our psychological reaction to the events of the outside world. These events which can be called challenges are in fact neutral experiences. In other words, it is we who determine, by our internal reactions, whether an event is stressful.

Stress related diseases had long been on the rise in the West and meditation had been thought of primarily as an Eastern tradition. Only recently has the Western world embraced its importance and benefits for preventive as well as curative purposes. For thousands of years, sages and philosophers in India had left accounts of their meditation experiences and recommended the process to the seekers after truth. The earliest recorded writings about the meditation process and personal experiences occurred in India about 5000 years ago in the sacred scriptures known as Vedas. The sages of those times evolved from performing rituals to elementary stages of meditation, and thence to deeper and deeper states of conscious realization. During the 6th century B.C. Prince Siddhartha looked inward to calm his mind and find out the secret of happiness for himself. After forty nine days of deep meditation, Siddhartha arose with new found knowledge and became famous as the Buddha, the Enlightened One, who later on spread the tradition of meditation from India to Indonesia, China and Japan. On account of its widespread acceptability as a time tested preventive and curative measure, the technique of

meditation taught by the teachers of Surat Shabd Yoga is being adopted by people of the East as well as the West as a passport to peace and happiness.

III

Through the practice of meditation we begin to experience ourselves as something beyond our likes and dislikes. We become more attached to our self and less attached to the winds of time and their ever changing panorama. Meditation strengthens our attention or *surat* which in turn gives our soul more control over our thoughts and feelings; we are less overwhelmed by unfavorable circumstances and unpleasant experiences. We begin to realize that our life in the world is a sojourn in the long journey and its challenges are as fleeting as clouds in the sky or waves in the water. As Dr. James Harris says, "Meditation is a way to connect with our deeper self and the higher power. The deeper we are able to connect, the more we gain a powerful source of strength within" (Singh 204).

In meditation we come in contact with the love of God hidden within us. We may not have got love of our elders during childhood and we may still be suffering from the deprivation of love, but contact with Godly love fills that void with more love that we never imagined. The saints and seers who travelled into higher spiritual regions have described in their writings the overwhelming love they got from the Angels. Indian mystics speak of union with God as mystic marriage with their eternal Beloved. Being drenched in divine love during meditation, the meditator feels relaxed and de-stressed.

No matter how comfortable we make our physical body and how comfortable we make our mind, we can't find peace until we attain spiritual elevation. Within each of us, there is a deep seated fear of death that can't be removed by physical and mental comfort. Our scriptures tell us that we have a soul that doesn't die, but as we are living in the scientific age we doubt this fact unless we get the authentic proof with regard to the existence of soul. To address this

doubt, when we analyze the path shown by the teachers of Surat Shabd Yoga, we reach the conclusion that the way lies within and we can reach our soul and experience its immortality only through meditation.

Spiritual elevation involves the realization that we are not the body and the mind, but in reality we are soul. If we develop the ability to turn our attention from the external to the internal, we realize that soul is our real identity and God realization is the goal of our life on this earth. The teachers of Surat Shabd Yoga suggest a technique of meditation in which the attention, which is the outer form of soul, is focused on the seat of the soul which is located behind and between the two eyebrows. To assist the aspirant in this process, the authorized yoga teacher gives a *mantra* or God's names to be repeated mentally so as to calm the mind which is a pre-requisite for full concentration. Once the attention or spiritual currents are withdrawn from the body and collected at the seat of the soul, we feel de-stressed and our spiritual elevation begins with the result that we feel connected to Shabd and start enjoying bliss and equanimity that we never dreamt of in the world of strain and stress, problems and challenges, trials and tribulations, angst and anxiety, tears and fears.

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Navjot Khosla

Variegated Patterns of Kinship in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Drawing inspiration from a real-life incident and a clipping in *The Black Book*, Toni Morrison authored *Beloved* in 1987. She was an editor working at Random House in 1974, when Morrison chanced upon a piece relating the episode of a runaway slave, Margaret Garner. Garner etched her name in the annals of African-American history when she attempted to kill all of her four children rather than returning with them to the white slave owner's plantation. Morrison wanted to build on this untold story. And since she found the historical figure of Garner a trifle limiting, Morrison chose to blend fact with fiction. The result was the creation of the protagonist, Sethe.

Merriam-Webster.com defines the term 'kinship' as, "a feeling of being close or connected to other people" (def. 1 b). As an extension, 'other people' can be taken to mean the black community that resided in Cincinnati. Thus, this paper aims to explore the kinship between Baby Suggs and her family with the free blacks or the runaway slaves of Cincinnati who collectively form the local colored community. The common history that the community shares with Baby Suggs is that of slavery. These blacks, bogged down by the ghosts of their slave history, learn to accept themselves as free individuals only under Suggs' guidance. She is therefore rightfully called the "unchurched preacher" among her people (102). She motivates them even though she is, "Uncalled, unrobed, unanointed..." (102). But interestingly, the relationship is a highly erratic one. On the one hand, the local niggers revere Baby Suggs by naming her Baby Suggs, holy; on the other hand, they become envious of her and her kin's blessedness.

Baby Suggs - mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, neighbor, friend, confidante, spiritual mentor - is a free black who has lived the life of a slave for sixty years. After her son, Halle, 'buys' her freedom, Suggs is unable to find any purpose in life. Living alone at 124 Bluestone, she answers to her inner calling and becomes the "moral and spiritual backbone" of her community in Cincinnati (Krumholz 398). Every black man, woman and child would congregate with Baby Suggs in the "Clearing," an open space in the thick of the forest (102). She would call to her people, "Let the children come Let your mothers hear you laugh Let the grown men come Let your wives and your children see you dance...." (103). Then she would call out to the wives and the mothers of the blacks and ask them to "Cry For the living and the dead. Just cry" (103). She encourages them to re-learn living and inspires them to believe in themselves for, "She recognizes them not only in their otherness but also as a collectivity" (Moglen 35). Under the atrocities of slavery, generations of blacks had forgotten to trust their inner beings and had lost faith in their strengths. She reminds them all, "You got to love it Flesh needs to be loved love your heart. For this is the prize" (104). Sethe later confesses the predicament of every free/runaway slave, "Freeing your-self was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was quite another" (111-2). Baby Suggs, with her heart-felt speeches, brings together the lost souls of the free slaves. She teaches them to believe in themselves, in each other, and in the spirit of community.

The story unfolds at House Number 124, Bluestone Road, Cincinnati in Ohio. The narrative is fragmented with little chronological order. Each character reveals their inner most thoughts or memories at different stages in the novel. The story runs parallel to the present as well as to eighteen years in the past. At the outset, we are told that 124 Bluestone is haunted by a "spiteful" ghost (3). About eighteen years ago, a pregnant Sethe had run away from her sadistic slave owner in search of a better life. Having already sent her three children

to safety ahead of her, she too sets out to join her mother-in-law, Baby Suggs, in Cincinnati. On the way, she gives birth to her fourth child, Denver. After 28 days of living a relatively 'contented' life with her children and Baby Suggs, one day, she is appalled to see her white master - the school teacher - riding up the road towards her. In an attempt to 'save' her children from being reclaimed by her slave owner, she plans to slay them all rather than letting her master push them back into slavery. Reading on, one learns that the abusive ghost at 124 belongs to the dead baby girl who was slaughtered by Sethe as she could only kill one of her children. The dead baby girl is never named, except on her headstone, which addresses her as 'Beloved.'

The disjointed plot-structure of *Beloved* also gives us peeps into the community where Baby Suggs and Sethe lived with the children before, as well as, after the murder. The colored populace of Cincinnati, as depicted by the author, comprises of blacks such as Stamp Paid, Paul D, Ella and John, Lady Jones and Janey Wagon, all of whom, in some way or the other, touch the lives of Suggs and her family. For instance, Sethe was brought over from across the big Ohio River by a black man named, Stamp Paid. He was a "sly, steely old black man: agent, fisherman, boatman, tracker, savior, [and] spy" (160). It is only the loving concern for a fellow slave that spurs him on, despite the risks involved, to assist Sethe in crossing over. He takes baby Denver from the sweaty Sethe and wraps her in one of his nephew's coats. And when the nephew wants his coat to be returned, Stamp Paid replies:

You want it back, then go ahead and take it off the baby. Put the baby naked in the grass and put your coat back on. And if you can do it, then go on 'way somewhere and don't come back. (107)

His genuine desire to help niggers in distress is very well portrayed in the novel. He leaves the "old sty open" as a signal when there is a crossing and "knots a white rag on the post" if there is a

child involved in the crossing (108). Even his act of chiding his nephew shows Stamp Paid's efforts to instill the very same passion into the younger generation.

And over the years, Stamp Paid has helped many runaway slaves hide, ferried them across the big river, and passed classified information from one place to the other. He recalls that "sneaking" has been his life – "though always for a clear and holy purpose" (199). In a way, Stamp Paid can be considered as a 'Middle Man' who assisted any and all black families in his vicinity. His jobs included reading and writing their letters; helping with the fire wood; knowing the gifted children from the disabled ones; and lending a helping hand in clearing the debts of any of the black families. As a result, he is always welcome in each home. He never has to even knock at any of the doors, "Dispensing with that formality was all the pay he expected from Negroes in his debt Since all his visits were beneficial, his step or holler through a doorway got a bright welcome" (203).

Paul D, another member of the colored community, had known Sethe from her life as a slave at the Sweet Home plantation. He pays her a visit at 124 and begins to live there as he develops a soft corner for Sethe. Initially, he is able to banish the ghost, until it returns in the form of a strange young woman who calls herself, Beloved. Once Paul D learns of Sethe's public secret, he cannot bring himself to stay with them any longer. But even though he leaves the three women to fend for themselves, he does come through for Sethe towards the end when he promises a despondent and lost Sethe: "... me and you, we got more yesterday than anybody. We need some kind of tomorrow You your best thing, Sethe" (322). It is evident from the narrative that Paul D will become Sethe's pillar of strength in the years to come.

Stamp Paid feels as if he owes a favor to Baby Suggs and her kin and that it is his duty to look out for their welfare. So much so, that following Paul D's sudden exit from 124, Stamp Paid tries to

approach Sethe but is unable to do so even though he knocks at her door several times. And peeping-in through the window, he is greatly perplexed to see two heads, one of which he is not able to identify. He even visits Ella and John to find out about the identity of the stranger at 124 Bluestone since “Nobody, but nobody visited that house” (217).

Ella and John, a black couple, assist Stamp Paid in his endeavors to rescue runaway slaves. They regularly keep a look-out for his signals beside the river. Both are two free slaves who share rather strong ties of kinship with the local black community and they are ever ready to come to the aid of their people in times of crises. In fact, it is Ella and John who brought Sethe’s three children - Howard, Buglar and “crawling already? baby” - to their grandmother, Baby Suggs (110). Ella had been a friend of Baby Suggs as well as Sethe before the killing of Beloved. Nevertheless, despite all differences, Ella plays a significant role in rescuing Sethe in the end.

However, Stamp Paid’s concern does not center round Suggs and her family alone. Rather, it extends to every nigger living in the neighborhood. For instance, when Paul D leaves 124, he has nowhere to go to. Therefore, he bunks out at the cellar of the local church. Stamp Paid, upon realizing this, invites Paul D to pick any house of the colored people to live in. He is full of pride when he offers Paul D a roof over his head, for Stamp Paid is cognizant of the strength of the bonds which the Negroes hold dear:

You got to choose My house. Ella. Willie Pike. None of us got much, but all of us got room for one more. Pay a little something when you can, don’t when you can’t. . . . Stay around here long enough, you’ll see ain’t a sweeter bunch of colored anywhere than what’s right here. (273)

The narrative brings to light many accounts of the community coming to the aid of each other in times of trial. But, it is only in the case of Baby Suggs and Sethe that Morrison depicts matters slightly

out-of-consonance. The black community of Cincinnati is envious of Baby Suggs and her clan not because of Sethe’s despicable killing of Beloved but rather by virtue of the ‘holiness’ of Suggs. Baby Suggs’ large-heartedness, insightfulness and spiritual-mindedness are looked upon with a jaundiced eye. Over and above that, the communal resentment leading to the isolation of Sethe can also be attributed to “her pride, [and] her stubborn refusal to share her horror” (Scarpa 97). But this estrangement appears to be rather the exception than the norm.

Sethe recalls vividly that 124 Bluestone was not always plagued by ghosts. In fact, it had once been a “cheerful, buzzing house” (102). This was a haven where strangers were made to feel welcome, and there was always food left over for the weary. The feeling of community and camaraderie were very much a part of 124 while Baby Suggs was alive. But Sethe’s brutal killing of her ‘crawling-already? girl’ put an end to their interactions with the community. Once word of Sethe’s deed got out, “124 shut down and put up with the venom of its ghost. No more lamp all night long, or neighbors dropping by” (105).

Toni Morrison paints a rather chiaroscurist picture of the local colored people. The neighborhood is not just a loving one; traces of jealousy and envy can also be gleaned from the story. When Stamp Paid brings over two buckets full of the ripest and the most succulent black berries, Baby Suggs decides to bake pies. To complement the pies, Sethe provides chicken and Stamp Paid brings in his catch of perch and catfish. That delicious meal for a few, over a period of time, swells to a feast for ninety people. And the blacks collectively begrudge Suggs her bliss as:

124, rocking with laughter, goodwill and food for ninety, made them angry. . . . Where does she get it all, Baby Suggs, holy? Why is she and hers always the center of things? How come she knows what to do exactly and when? Giving advice; passing messages; healing the sick, hiding fugitives, loving, cooking,

cooking, loving, preaching, singing, dancing and loving everybody like it was her job and hers alone. (161)

They become bitter over the good fortune of Baby Suggs. They begin to think that her hardships were not as gruesome as theirs had been, for she had “not even escaped slavery – had, in fact, been *bought out* of it by a dotting son and *driven* to the Ohio River in a wagon – free papers folded between her breasts” (162).

The local community distances itself from Sethe as they find her “show of love, similar to that of Suggs, too prideful and selfish” (Washington 179). Even though the white enslaver considered his slaves his ‘property,’ yet Sethe dared to love them - Halle, as well as her children - selflessly. Her *sui generis* efforts to protect her children from harm ultimately alienate her from the other blacks. This is the defining moment that sets her apart from the rest of the niggers. Washington, therefore, claims that “By doing what no other communal member would conceive of doing to protect his or her wealth, Sethe’s private work of protection becomes a grandiose display” (179).

Looking back, Stamp Paid wonders why none of the members of the black community forewarned them about the approaching party of four. The group, led by the school teacher, was approaching 124 to re-claim his ‘property’ which included Sethe and her four children. Stamp Paid reminisces:

why nobody ran on ahead . . . to say some new whitefolks with the Look just rode in . . . Nobody warned them, and he’d always believed [it was] mean-ness – that let them stand aside, or not pay attention, or tell themselves somebody else was probably bearing the news al-ready to the house on Bluestone Road where a pretty woman had been living for almost a month. (184)

Moreover, it is perhaps due to this feeling of cumulative resentment that when the blacks saw Sethe being led away by the sheriff, none of them except Stamp Paid stepped forward to help.

In addition to the general discontent, the locals also misinterpret Baby Suggs’ celebration of Sethe’s safe arrival and the subsequent free life of her grandchildren as “a personal flaunting of wealth and a show of pride,” and as a result, “the community removes its complementary protection from her” (Washington 176). Towards the end of her life, Baby Suggs gives in to a sense of hopelessness and indifference after Sethe attempts to kill her children. Baby Suggs feels that she has lived an eventful life both as a slave and as a free black, and now she belonged to a community of free blacks “to love and be loved by them, to counsel and be counseled, protect and be protected, feed and be fed” (209). And then, all of a sudden, to have that very neighborhood step away from her, is simply too devastating for the old woman.

The colored community of Cincinnati also has in its midst Lady Jones, who is, in fact, the only literate black woman in the area teaching black children to read and write. “For a nickel a month, Lady Jones did what whitepeople thought unnecessary if not illegal: crowded her little parlor with the colored children who had time for and interest in book learning” (120). It is in Lady Jones’ parlor that Denver learns to count and spell. At the tender age of seven, Denver looks forward to those two precious hours spent there every day. Being a good student that she was, when Denver stopped coming to her school, Mrs. Jones had been kind enough to make Baby Suggs an offer. She offered to waive off the nickel for a period of time if Baby Suggs would continue to send her granddaughter to study. But it was to no avail. Never-theless, despite it all, Lady Jones comes to help 18 year-old Denver ultimately. And it is perhaps in Lady Jones’ footsteps that Denver will follow after she has completed her education as can be deduced from the novel.

Janey Wagon is a free black woman of Cincinnati who is working for the Bodwins. The Bodwins are white siblings who “hated slavery worse than they hated slaves” (162). Upon the arrival of a free Baby Suggs at the Bodwins’ doorstep, it is Janey who looks

after her. Later, Janey even helps the third generation of Suggs' kin when she finds work for Denver with her own employers, the Bodwins.

The low supply of rations finally forces Denver to step out of 124. As she steps out she wonders who to turn to for help - Stamp Paid, Lady Jones or Paul D - for these are the only black folks she is acquainted with. So it is with a lot of trepidation that she approaches the house of Mrs. Lady Jones. But Jones, with her kindness and concern, soon wins Denver over. Wyatt claims that, "Lady Jones's maternal language indicates that Denver is a child of the community, not just of her mother" (Wyatt 483). When Denver asks Lady Jones for part time work in exchange for a little food, the gracious Lady Jones feeds Denver and assures her, "if you all need to eat until your mother is well, all you have to do is say so" (292). She is sent back home with some rice, some tea and four eggs.

The community comes together for the inhabitants of 124 Bluestone and the blacks begin leaving meat, eggs, white beans etc at the edge of a neighboring tree. Each time Denver receives food, she also finds a slip attached to the parcel giving the name of the donor. Thus, Denver starts to open up to the community gradually as she goes to personally thank each family who has helped her. Many of the families fondly reminisce about the old days with Baby Suggs, when 124 was:

a way station, the place they assembled to catch news, taste oxtail soup, leave their children. . . . May be they were sorry for her. Or for Sethe. Maybe they were sorry for the years of their own disdain. Maybe they were simply nice people who could hold meanness toward each other for just so long and when trouble rode bareback among them, quickly, easily they did what they could to trip him up. In any case, the personal pride, the arrogant claim staked out at 124 seemed to them to have run its course. (293)

The kinsfolk are most responsive towards Denver because they seem to have forgotten about their envy of Baby Suggs. Now, it

is just the colored community helping a young girl make ends meet. The memories they have of Baby Suggs, holy can be summed up in Janey's words, "...she was always nice to me Never be another like her Everybody miss her. That was a good woman" (299).

In fact, Janey is so intrigued by Sethe's condition that despite Denver's deliberate attempt to couch *Beloved* as a 'cousin,' Janey is astute enough to deduce *Beloved*'s true identity. She remarks: "Tell me, this here woman in your house. The cousin. She got any lines in her hands?" (299). When Denver replies in the negative, Janey affirms, "I guess there's a God after all" (299). The news that Sethe's dead daughter had returned "to fix her" spreads among the black community like wild fire (300). The black women believe the information, disbelieve it, or analyze it, but each seems to have an opinion on the matter.

Ella is the one who stands up for Sethe when the rest regard it as a deserving comeuppance. Sethe's misfortune hits closer home as Ella did not approve of:

. . . past errors taking possession of the present . . . she could not countenance the possibility of sin moving on in the house, unleashed and sassy . . . nobody needed a grown-up evil sitting at the table with a grudge. As long as the ghost showed out from its ghostly place-shaking stuff, crying, smashing and such-Ella respected it. But if it took flesh and came in her world . . . this was an invasion. (302)

She sees her own sordid past in Sethe's trial. Ella remembers her days as a slave when she had been forced repeatedly to have sex with her white slave owner as well as his son. Consequently, she had delivered "a hairy white thing" that had died within five days due to her refusal to nurse it (305). Ella is disgusted by the very "idea of that pup coming back to whip her" (305). She therefore raises her voice against Sethe's suffering and convinces her black kith to rescue Sethe.

Black culture, as a legacy of their African heritage, believes in a “continuous interaction between the spirit world and the human world. Ghosts have lives parallel to those of humans, and some people feel them, see them, and even talk to them” (Scarpa 96). Therefore, exorcism is fairly common and many writers have used it to bring home their point. August Wilson’s *The Piano Lesson* uses the same concept at the conclusion of the play. Exorcism of Sutter’s ghost represents an end to the white man’s tyranny over the Negro. As in *The Piano Lesson*, so also in *Beloved*, exorcism involves Christian faith as well as faith in old African rituals, “The healing ritual combines Christian symbolism and African ritual expressions, as is common in the African-American church” (Krumholz 398).

Towards the last few pages of *Beloved*, as Denver awaits Mr. Bodwin, thirty colored women gather near 124 Bluestone Road. They do not know what they would be doing, yet they have congregated to rid Baby Suggs’ kin of the ghost. As Ella leads the prayer, the others join in. They brought with them “what they could and what they believed would work Others brought Christian faith” (303). Attracted by the raised voices, as Sethe stepped out with *Beloved*, she felt as if “the Clearing had come to her” and soon, the chants “broke over Sethe and she trembled like the baptized in its wash” (308). In the end, it is the collaborative effort of the colored women of Cincinnati “who finally break through the noose surrounding 124 and free the house of *Beloved*” (Hayes 677).

It can certainly be argued that the black folks’ urge to help Sethe is borne out of brotherly love. They gather to show their support for Sethe; to forgive and forget; and perhaps to start afresh. Thus, the hitherto variegated patterns of kinship transform to those of kindred spirits by the end of the novel. But noteworthy is the fact that it is not merely the legacy of their ‘unchurched preacher’ that prompts them to gather at 124. The communal need to exorcise *Beloved*’s ghost far outweighs the legacy of Baby Suggs. It is the horror of their shared slave history, with its anguish,

torment and misery, which galvanizes the colored community of Cincinnati to come to the aid of Suggs’ kin in their time of trouble.

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Reena Dhiman

“Falling Apart” and Cyclic Nature of Life : Elkunchwar’s *Desires in the Rock*

The gradual growth of development in present age has upgraded the living standard but degraded the social system and its values. W.B yeats in his ‘Second Coming’ bemoaned over the disintegration of traditional society and its values, which is persistently declining ‘falling apart’ and on the verge of turmoil and an apocalyptic view exhibits all over the world. The urgency of ethical values and morals is a very widely concerned topic all over the world. It is being observed by most of the thinkers, intellectuals, scholars and writers that the culture is getting debased with a quick avoidance of the structure and standard as set by our ancestors. Paul Burton points out, “never before were so many people plunged in so much uncertainty, so much perplexity and unsettlement.”² Men feel all isolated, anxious and perturbed. He is guided by his own instinct to fulfill his desires without worrying about the social defiance and breaks the shekels of norm and system established by the society. He is lost, alienated from the social system and beliefs and ultimately his life is turning into absurdity. Martin Esslin mentions Ionesco’s parallel concept of the absurdity: “...Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless”.¹ The present paper is a modest attempt to look into this absurdity how it is demonstrated in the plays of Mahesh Elkunchwar

In the contemporary era, Mahesh Elkunchwar is one of the most prominent and influential playwright along with Satish Alekar and Vijay Tendulkar. More than fifteen plays to his name, his fame is not restricted only to Marathi art world but he is a truly distinguished playwright in the field of modern Indian theatre. A creative thinker Mahesh sincerely admits the influences of modern playwrights such as Pinter, Beckett, Strindberg, Camus and Albee in his creative skills. He has written numerous plays questioning the experimental institutions and various colors of existence. The modern Indian drama in English/translation has made bold innovation and successful experimentations in terms of both dramatic techniques and thematic concerns.

Mahesh Elkunchwar has depicted this society in his plays. There the characters go beyond established norms, meaning, power, culture, society and self. The present paper focuses on his play *Desires in the Rock* in which he has expresses forbidden sensibilities in a very neutral way. His plays have become riddle from the point of view of the message intended to be imparted. The simple reason is Mahesh Elkunchwar’s impartial attitude to the problem. He has left the solution to the reader. For this one has to synthesizes two things . One is the model of life drawn from our shastras. It underlines a system impregnated with five essential human values such are love (*prema*), truth (*satya*), non violence (*ahimsa*), right action (*dharma*) and peace (*shanti*). These values are the guiding principles of life that contribute to the all round development of an individual. The realization of these values is the recognition of *sattvik guna* in one’s actions which add good qualities to life and contribute to the welfare of family, the community and the nation. The second is the attitude

of the characters of Mahesh Elkunchwar to life, to their actions and the results thereof.

There are two selves in everybody: the social self and the personal or internal self. The social self participates in the play of life with a thick mask, with the help of which, man keeps hiding his feelings by changing his mask time to time. In the society nobody is without mask, though exceptions are always there. We all know this fact but do not accept it. We all meet with one another by using a kind of mask and do our business. At this juncture, man cautiously keeps hiding his feelings which at varying intentional intervals keep coming up and going down. His real life, which is hidden by his ceaseless efforts, is his internal self or personal self, a world of man's imagination and nature. The feelings of this internal empire, which is either absolutely pure or impure, keeps changing also. Man socializes those which are pure but the feelings like greed, jealousy, lust, hate, attachment, anger etc., the impure ones, are expressed carefully or kept hidden in the internal world. In order to perform this play successfully, man wears the mask of detachment, gentleness, civilization etc. and for his convenience, he remains busy in alternating the masks prepared for various situations arisen in the course of life. He at a certain stage becomes conscious of this masks alternatively used by him. It is to note here that in this course of the play, the three *gunas* (qualities), which are present in person, now engender a struggle in him. This constitutes the true self or genuine self of man who is for the most part unconscious of it. From this state, it is not

necessary that man always achieves a right path. It all depends upon the predominance of one particular *guna* of the three present in all human beings, though in different degrees. Accordingly, he may have one of the three paths of *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (passion), and *tamas* (inertia) and man is said to be 'sattvik (pure)', 'rajasik (passionate)' and 'tamasik' (inert). All these *gunas* influence man's thought, intellect and desires and make him do good or bad deeds of all kinds. A person, whose nature aims at light and knowledge is called the 'sattvika'; a person whose nature always wishes to be active and cannot sit still and its activities are limited by selfish desires, is called the 'rajasik'; and a person whose nature is dull and inert; mind is dark and confused and life is one continuous submission to environment is called the 'tamasik'. It is here again worth noting that 'sattvik' does not get rid of the ego-sense. It also causes desire though for noble objects. The self which is free from all attachment is here attached to happiness and knowledge. Unless we cease to think and are with the ego-sense, we are not liberated. The scriptures say that however much one may have been sinful in his life, a single pious act coloured with the experience of the absolute is enough to attain this *sattvik* nature. (Sharma)

The play *Desire in the rocks* is the example of bold expression of this interplay of *gunas* where Hemakant and Gauri overcome the absurdity of life caused by the influence of western culture and ethnicity. The fundamental root of present play is the post modern existential debate. The play depicts the familial and incest relationship which is highly influenced by the western cultural sensibilities. Bottomore, denotes that the radical changes in Indian social structure,

came during the British colonization in India it was the time when India came into contact with western notion of industrialization and liberal individualism and its freethinking. This transition of culture had a fundamental impact on Indian family system and its relations, joint-families gradually disintegrated and gave birth to modern nuclear families where people don't bother values and ethics and alienate from their cultural heritage. The unity of these families highly depends upon sexual attraction and solidarity between the couple, and camaraderie between them and their children. Not only this the above liberal individualism casted a worse impression on our young minds and their way of living, for them their mind is the only guiding principal, they do what they like without bothering the defiance of norms or structure.

The play *Desire in the rocks* reveals and criticizes such social stigma as the practice of incest, the taboo within the range of familial relationship. The play deals with the most amoral issue the incestuous relationship, which not only shakes humanity but also disturbs the stability of an individual's mind. The play depicts the incest among brother and sister relationship. Lalita, the protagonist of the play and her brother Hemkant are in the trap of natural animal instinct which could be controlled, if they had lived a harmonious family set up. He did not get love and support from his father and this results into defiance. Bandhopadhyay explains "Even as his ego has transformed his unconscious into an agenda, a creative urge repressed by familial/patriarchal authority turned into a defiance of taboo, and drawing energy from it, something that he thinks he can control and direct, he will be autocratic above all else" (Elkunchwar xvii). Likewise Lalitha's life is stirred by passion the most 'self destructive force' and so

unmindfully she is also indulges in an sexual act with her own brother. They turn all deaf to feel the voice of their true self within. As a result *Tamasic* happiness deludes the soul both at the beginning and at the end. (Chinmayananda, Ch. 18, 88-89)

Lalita herself admits when Hemkant asks about her will, Lalita answers, 'My will? Where's the question of my will?' she says, 'You decide. You planned everything . . . after meeting you; I've no will of my own left.' The sense of wrong always there in her mind but the "the passion shared by the lover criss-cross and overlaps as the sense of sin raises its head in the exchange between Hem and Lalita" (xvii). Therefore such overpowering emotion subside the sense of guilt and they both lost in the ocean of such *rajasic* happiness and enjoy the sensual pleasure. Hemkant wanted to carve Lalita's as an image of palpitating and erotic youth in stones. Influenced by the fruit-of-action, Hemkant exhibits greediness, impurity and callousness to those who come in the way of his self interest. He also displays the action which is stimulated by yearning for contentment of desires, impelled by his self-- centered persona without ever knowing his real Self, his actions are totally Rajasic in nature here. In this phase of life one cannot differentiate between what is right and what is wrong because of his egoistic intellect therefore Hemkant is also swayed by his same self-centered perception. But Lalita soon suffers from anxieties. "The fear from within the home that had been Lalita's fear earlier, now becomes fear from both within and without, and more multivalent than before as the fear from Hemkant, the deep fear for sin, and fear for social censure in the form of the growing threat from the local community." (xviii) The result of this incestuous relationship is that Lalita discloses the news of her pregnancy. She believes that her baby is the real creativity than the fake scriptures of Hemkant. "A

mark of your vitality is growing in my womb, my darling. You will be immortal. This child will make you immortal. Not these scriptures”(106).

But Hemkant’s obsessive warped passions for his art make him blind and he turns cold and leaves Lalita in lurch. She deserts that mansion and roams around like a destitute beggar but finds no room to hide. Society now turns cold and wants to penalize the sinners. Lalitha feels her baby’s death as the punishment of her incestuous act. She comes back and feels guilty but the same time she finds her brother the culprit and complains,

LALITA: You are my brother.

HEMKANT: So?

LALITA: However weakly, I did resist. Not you. Myself. Why didn’t you help me? Instead you crushed all my attempts.

HEMKANT: So it was my responsibility?

LALITA: No it wasn’t. But it is a sin. A terrible sin. The whole village has risen in anger against us.

HEMKANT: Because we don’t live according to their conventions.

LALITA: Why not?

HEMKANT: Because we live according to our own impulses.

LALITA: And so we suffer. (118)

Now Lalita is the one who realizes the consequences of her wrong actions as she confronts her true self. Here the impulse of her actions is instigated by the *sanskara* of *sattvika guna* which was earlier in a dormant state. She liberates herself from all egotistic drives and attachments to the fruit of actions. Her sense of the realization of

truth and her guilt guides her for further actions of betterment. She bearing with the burden of sin, seeks the punishment of her offense and turns out to be a prostitute but this profession doesn’t content her soul. By the act of tormenting her body she tries to purge her soul. Lalita’s inner turmoil and chaos is actually “yogic” which leads her into the state where she loses all attachment and turns indifferent to the worldly affairs. She comes back and is ready to accept the end without anger or regret. She peacefully waits for her end which is the dawn of new life, a kind of realization in the life circle. At this stage her fear of death vanishes and a change descends on her for the betterment. Now her knowledge of truth excels her from all confines and she is ready to accept her end peacefully. Later Hemakant also overcome the fear.

When the villagers gather outside the mansion and resolute to punish the sinners, Hemkant realizes his mistake and accepts himself guilty of all this,

HEMKANT: I’m the one who should be punished.

LALITA: How are you involved?

HEMKANT: I have destroyed you totally.

Now Hemakant finds his art naked and crippled with no sense of truth. He accepts that it was nothing but the monuments of his filthy lust which he practiced with Lalita and brought about their destruction. In such state of powerlessness he collapses and holds Lalita’s hand. Her anger fades away and she turns empathetic for Hemkant. Thus when man frees himself from anger, greed and lust and with knowledge of right action and direction, one develops a sympathetic attitude for all being and act for the betterment and for what is right. Lalita proves to be the master of situation at the end

she picks a torch and set fire to the whole mansion and finally finds the way to get redeemed from her sins. This turns out to be the real salvation when one accepts one's fate peacefully.

Thus, the play successfully depicts this tragedy of victims persuaded by their own impulses and self-destructive desires. Samik Bandhopadhyay expresses about this tragic drama, "What Elkunchwar illustrates in *Desires in the Rock* is the perverse and aberrant nature of the sexual forces that rise against the unjust, oppressive, repressive social norms internalized within the unconscious mind." (Elkunchwar xvii). The characters of Elkunchwar represent the modern society which is degenerating and ruining happiness for meaninglessness, normlessness. But the characters do not suffer like western society. The reason is our philosophy of life which is cyclic which give us a solace to wait for another turn in the form of new beginning. This opportunity is unending. This approach gives a fine equilibrium of form and content and every expression is strong enough to communicate a meaning beyond the verbal implication.

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Sunita Jakhar & Devika

Divakaruni's Sister : Decoding Myths & Traditions of Hindu Bengali Community in *Sister of My Heart*

The Indian diaspora has created a niche for itself all over the world. Late Prof. Meenakshi Mukherjee observes that, “the category of writers called ‘the third world cosmopolitans, who are globally visible, who are taught in postcolonial classrooms the world over, and who are hailed in the review pages of Western journals as interpreters and authentic voices of the non-western world hardly ever include a writer from India who does not write in English ... the precondition for belonging to this club is that s/he must write originally in English ...” (Mukherjee, 2000). I observe in the literary scene, around me, majority of the Indian diaspora writers, write about the culture left behind and the culture confronted. Perhaps it may have been easier to evolve plots from one's own experiences. According to Salman Rushdie, the diaspora writers cannot help ‘looking back’ perhaps due to nostalgia and an automatic return to one's own culture. Mr. Rushdie maintains that for Indians, “... exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge which gives rise to profound uncertainties- that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create functions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind”(Rushdie, 1983).

Call it nostalgia or the desire to reconstruct ‘imaginary homelands’ as suggested by Salman Rushdie. Beyond doubt the diaspora writers play the role of cultural ambassadors. Lately the women diaspora, including Divakaruni have imparted an important role in this direction. Lisa Lau writes, “it appears that it is predominantly the diasporic women writers who are the creators and keepers of the global literary image of South Asian culture”(Lisa Lau, 2005). Meaning thereby that a corpus of works already exists revealing on the cultural front.

Divakaruni in *Sister of My Heart* has reconstructed myths and traditions related to the lives of a select group i.e. Hindu Bengali community in India. I propose to highlight this particular culture which, over the years has evolved as a complex notion, structured with beliefs, practices, nuances, unspoken assumptions and inner sensibilities, which Divakaruni deftly knits in, around and with her characters. Divakaruni has been presenting Indian culture through her writings but, “as emissaries, third world individuals are often expected to be virtual encyclopaedias of information on all sorts of different aspects of their complex ‘cultural’ heritage. Their encyclopaedic expertise is often expected to range from the esoteric to the mundane, from popular to High culture, from matters of history to contemporary issues”(Narayan, 1998). Divakaruni was born and brought up in India and later moved to the West. In her writings both the influences (i.e. of her formative years in East and present location in the West) are evident through her locales, characters and themes. Not only Divakaruni but most creative writers produce material from their own experiences and surroundings. In *Sister of My Heart*, the locale shifts from India to the US, the two lands Divakaruni is most familiar with.

The first sentence of the novel *Sister of My Heart* begins with the myth of ‘*Bidhata Purush*’ who is, “They say in the old tales that the first night after a child is born, the Bidhata Purush comes down to

earth himself to decide what its fortunes is to be. That is why they bathe babies in sandalwood water and wrap them in soft red malmal, colour of luck. That is why they leave sweetmeats by the cradle. Silver-leafed sandesh, dark pantuas floating in golden syrup, jilibis orange as the heart of a fire, glazed with honey-sugar. If the child is especially lucky, in the morning it will be gone” (*Sister of My Heart*, 15, hereafter the initial SOMH would be used to mark references from the text). It is evident from the above quote that *Bidhata Purush* is a heavenly denizen. It also shows the fatalistic approach of Indians who believe that everything is pre-decided by fate. Red is an auspicious colour often worn in marriages and important ceremonies e.g. by a child after birth, preparing it for *Bidhata Purush*’s visit. Whether somebody has actually seen the food gone in the morning is a fact towards which nobody has paid heed. It is a religious practice in most of Hindu homes, that Gods are offered best of foods, mostly sweets in the form of *prasada*. It is a sin if somebody tries to eat sweets offered to God, “... no servant in all of Calcutta would dare eat sweets meant for a god”(SOMH,15).

Like the Christian mythology in which God and Satan are binaries, the Hindu mythology has gods and demons, “The old tales say this also: in the wake of Bidhata Purush come the demons, for that is the world’s nature, good and evil mingled. That is why they leave behind an oil lamp burning. That is why they place the sacred tulsi leaf under the baby’s pillow for protection. In richer households like the one my mother grew up in, she has told us, they hire a Brahmin to sit in the corridor and recite auspicious prayers all night” (SOMH, 15). The significance of burning an oil lamp is to keep the evil spirits away. The evil spirits are averse to light and their abode is darkness. The chants of a Brahmin have a sanctifying effect.

Some house-holds still believe that a girl child is unlucky, as Pishi points out, “... girl-babies who are so much bad luck that they cause their fathers to die even before they are born”(SOMH,18). A

woman’s role is type cast in the society, she is expected to have certain feminine traits; which are visible even in the names, e.g. the two girls of the household Anju and Sudha aka Anjali and Basudha, “Anjali, which means offering, for a good woman should offer up her life for others. And Basudha, so that I will be as patient as the earth goddess“(SOMH,21).Sudha and Ashok have a short romance which could not end in marriage as Sudha did not want to bring any disturbance to Anju’s marriage. Later, in the novel Sudha has an unhappy marriage:

They say in the old tales that when a man and woman exchange looks the way we did, their spirits mingle. Their gaze is a rope of gold binding each to the other. Even if they never meet again, they carry a little of the other with them always. They can never be wholly happy again. That is why, in families that kept the ancient traditions, girls were not allowed to meet men until the moment of auspicious seeing, shubho-drishti, when the bride and groom gave themselves to each other with their eyes (SOMH. 75).

Sudha, who studies Greek and Roman legends at school associates herself with Icarus and Persephone. Like Icarus she ventures to fall in love and is saddened as her mother never loves her physically like Ceres lovingly embraces Persephone. Singhji hides his identity and lives with the family as a driver. He is beyond recognition due to a scar on his face. The scar due to, “burned forehead is a sure sign of lifelong misfortune” (SOMH,20). Branded unlucky most people wouldn’t hire him for work. Pishi, a widow leads a kind of life that is dictated by the norms of the society. She is allowed to go for *kirtans* (holy song) but wouldn’t as she has important work of drying mangoes, “for everyone knows that if the slices are touched by a woman who hasn’t bathed, or has lain with a man that day, or is menstruating, they will turn furry with fungus”(SOMH, 32).

Sunil and Anju prepare well in advance for the arrival of the baby. Unlike Jhumpa Lahiri; Divakaruni has given a modern tinge to Sunil who is shown compiling baby names in *Bangla* and English. In *Namesake* too, Lahiri portrays a Bengali couple i.e. Ashima and Ashoke preparing for childbirth but they are more tradition abiding in the sense; they wait for a name to be sent from an elder member of the family in Bengal. Anju consumes more of almonds as it would be beneficial for baby's mind, whereas Sudha watches, "holy stories from the Ramayana" (SOMH, 246) as according to her mother-in-law, almonds are good for the child's personality. Sudha's mother in law believes *Shashti* is the goddess of fertility and keeps Sudha's pregnancy discreet lest evil eye falls on her.

The novel is divided into two parts, i.e. 'Princes in the Palace of Snakes' and 'Queen of Swords'. In the first part Sudha is the princess who is troubled by characters (snakes), in the second part Sudha is the queen who takes up the sword in order to protect herself and the unborn girl from the serpents, it is evident from Anju's observation, "There are faces in the torrent, human faces- Ramesh, Sudha's mother-in-law, Aunt N., Sunil. But as I watch, their features flatten out, their skin grows black and scaly, and their tongues forked. They are serpents now, throwing their coils around my baby, pulling at him" (SOMH,258). Sudha is compared to goddess Durga, Rani of Jhansi and Greek founder hero Theseus who fought and overpowered his enemies.

Pishi, epitomizes the attire, behavior and social position of a widow in Bengali society. She is always, "dressed in austere white, her graying hair cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style" (SOMH,16). Bapsi Sidhwa through her novel *Water*, presents a poignant and realistic picture of widows of all ages from Chuhiya, a nine year old to Patreyji, an elderly widow. Residing in the *ashrams* of Benaras, they live a life of abstinence. The hypocrisy of the Hindu traditions are revealed through the nexus between Kalyani and the rich men of Benaras. Moving on same lines

Pishi abstains from feasting during festive functions. One sees that gender roles are dictated, for example Nalini constantly dictates how girls in particular Sudha and Anju should behave, "Worst of all is when she makes up little rhymes with morals tagged onto them. Good daughters are daughters are firebrands, scorching their family's fame" (SOMH,23). Contrary to closely shaven hair of a widow, a married woman has long hair and applies in the hair parting, "the good luck sindur that proclaims to the world that she is a married woman" (SOMH,36).

Anju and Sudha are raised in a protected environment of the house just like the *zenana* space of bygone era. In Sudha's words, "in our house the few men servants did not come up beyond the ground floor. And Singhji, although his deformity seemed to place him in a separate, androgynous zone, never entered the house at all" (SOMH,66). Though there is a touch of tradition as well as modernity in their surroundings such as, the girls of their age wore westernized dresses unlike, "traditional bordered handlooms" (SOMH,67), their mothers bought for Sudha and Anju.

Sudha falls in love with Ashok Ghosh. She could not help it but was sure that others in the family would disapprove of him as he belongs to a lower caste. A strong cultural divide in the name of caste persists. Chatterjees are in the higher cast category then the Ghoshes. Therefore Sudha's mother rejects Ashok's proposal. Eventually their marriages are arranged and fixed by the elders of both the families. Marriages are the high points in a woman's life. The mothers have been saving the best things e.g. the precious ruby to be given as dowry in their marriages.

Sunil is modern and believes in giving equal rights to one's better half unlike his own father Mr. Majumdar who often ill-treated his wife in a fit of rage. In spite of Sunil and Anju's condescending attitude towards the long marriage ceremonies, they patiently participate in the rituals with the rest of the family members. In the

words of Anju, “I can’t see his face because the women are holding up a silk sheet between us. They will lower it only after the priest finishes the mantra he is reciting to bring us good luck. It’s a thousand-year-old mantra from the Vedas and defines luck as cattle and horses and vassals- and the one hundred sons I am supposed to present to Sunil” (SOMH,164).

A typical Indian wedding has several ceremonies dovetailed into each other like the ‘puffed rice ceremony’ and ‘bridal flower-bed ceremony’. During these the bride and the groom several times touch the feet of the elders out of respect to seek their blessings. Anju has to be alert during the ‘shubho-drishti’ ceremony as her, “eyes are supposed to meet Sunil’s as soon as it’s lifted, for that’s the moment of auspicious seeing” (SOMH,165). Anju and Sudha as well as Sunil and Ramesh go through all ceremonies patiently and respectfully as people are, “susceptible to the suggestion that practices and institutions are valued merely by virtue of the fact they are long standing” (Narayan, 1998).

Sudha’s mother-in-law takes charge of heavy household work as it might harm the child in Sudha’s womb, but as soon as she learns from the medical report that it is a female child, she is bent on getting it aborted in the name of family tradition, “the eldest child of the Sanyal family has to be male- that is how it’s been for the last five generations” (SOMH,259). Sudha feels terminating the pregnancy might make her unfit for pregnancy. The mother-in-law defends it, “once goddess Shashti has smiled on a woman, there’s no fear of that” (SOMH,259). Leaving Ramesh’s house was a courageous step as Sudha realizes how Pishi as a widow had been a victim of tyrannical rules of the society. Pishi contrasts a widow’s plight with that of a widower, “Men whose wives died could marry as soon as a year had passed. They didn’t stop their work or their schooling. No-one talked about their bad luck The unlucky man’s cow dies, the lucky man’s wife dies! But

when, after three years of being a widow, I begged my father to get me a private tutor so I would at least have my studies to occupy me, he slapped me across the face” (SOMH,269). Not much has changed in South Asia as the patriarchal set up is still rampant and the case of Malala from Pakistan is quiet recent.

While fixing arranged marriages, it is a tradition that the boy’s family comes to see the girl in her house. Anju reacts to Sudha’s viewing, “I just hate the way women are paraded in front of prospective grooms, like animals at the fair” (SOMH,123). In Indian Hindu weddings the *feras* are the most important part so was in Anju’s marriage, “The ends of our garments are tied together, and we walk seven times around the sacred fire”(SOMH,166), the significance of number seven is for seven lifetimes the husband and wife would be united. During these ceremonies *Sanskrit mantras* are recited constantly. The *fera* ceremony is followed by a special ceremony in which, “the women will come to dress us in our Bashar clothes for the long night of singing and jokes that follows the wedding”(SOMH,169).

The myths and traditions in practice give uniqueness to a particular culture, as shown in the above discussion, “The influence of culture permeates the individual’s ways of thinking, feeling and judging, food, clothes, bodily gestures, pains, values, ideals, nightmares, forms of imagination, and aesthetic and moral sensibilities”(Bhiku Parekh, 69). The above quote is applicable to the character’s of *Sister of my Heart*, for example Sunil’s western influence makes him an understanding and kind husband towards Anju. Whereas Mr. Majumdar has been living in a patriarchal society where the women have a little or rather no say except for cooking and rearing-bearing of children. It is also interesting to observe Sudha’s mother-in-law, who is a widow but her basic nature, behavior, education, personal experiences and encounter with the outside world besides the domestic part has made her overshadow Ramesh’s personality. Sudha was pressurized to get the female child

aborted. There was no respite for her from Ramesh as he was unable to take or stand or support his wife against his mother. Divakaruni in *Sister of my Heart* has amply drawn from myths and traditions especially pertaining to Hindu Bengali community. Avtar Brah calls it a diasporic tendency where, “tradition is itself continually invented even as it is hailed as originating from the mists of time”(Brah, 1996).

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Deepak Kumar & Shagufta Naj

Use of Political Rhetoric in William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

ABSTRACT

The present paper is an attempt to describe the use of rhetorical devices by pointing out its pedagogical value with an analysis of political discourse in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. The main aim of this paper is to present the use of rhetorical devices as a multilayered accumulation of rhetorical motives by looking at the political confrontation that unfolds in this literary work. The fundamental communicative act in this segment happens to be the two speeches made by Brutus and Marc Antony. Therefore, the attempt will be to outline those points from their speeches that include the language elements of 'exhortative discourse' that form the main perspective of the rhetorical process. The paper also seeks to demonstrate the power of rhetoric strategies to influence individuals and sway crowds to action and also how the lacking of rhetoric quality brings the tragic consequences. It also scrutinizes the relevance of 'logos,' 'pathos,' and 'ethos' in analyzing the use of rhetorical elements.

Keywords: Rhetoric, Political discourse, Pathos, Republicanism, Ethical Appeal, Reason.

William Shakespeare's fascination with republicanism allows him to assert himself as a playwright who focused on contemporary political discourse with a perfect and balanced use of rhetorical devices in his writings. Shakespeare is not an author traditionally linked with seventeenth-century political discourse, but it can be strongly argued that he wrote his plays with as much attention to politics as attention to the rhetoric of his characters. He spent the greater part of his life under the rule of Elizabeth, and, therefore,

knew about the varying degrees of civil unrest, and allowed Shakespeare to explore political disintegration. A clear indication of Shakespeare's interest in the issue of politics can be noticed in his setting of the opening scenes in public places in so many of his plays. Robin Headlam Wells argues that "Shakespeare is not a political propagandist; he is interested above all in human beings caught up in the drama of power" (Wells 89).

Shakespeare perfectly used of classic rhetoric devices in his historical and political plays, particularly in *Julius Caesar*. Person/characters in Shakespeare frequently engage in the rhetorical process during their speeches or conversation, which is why this study targets the unravelling of the basic intentionally and motives underlying such speeches. Cronick also points out that the study of rhetoric is used to explore people employ language to achieve certain things, that is, to convince others, establish power structures and make people do what they want. This means that the speech should be presented in a clear manner in order to reach out to the audience.

Shakespeare brings the fears of Renaissance England to the stage in 1599 when *Julius Caesar* was first performed. Andrew Hadfield suggests that Shakespeare wrote *Julius Caesar* recognizing that the significance of the play was the death of the republic and the rise of imperial Rome (Hadfield 167). As a commentary on republicanism, Shakespeare highlights the fall of Brutus and the small resemblance that his Rome bears to established republican ideals. Brutus and Cassius represent the need for a change over oppressive rule and Mark Antony represents the voice of reason against political chaos. Thus, *Julius Caesar* is an offhand way for Shakespeare to posit himself as a political analyst. It is a different breed of political analysis for Shakespeare because the play focuses on a republican form of government (Hadfield 469).

The men who conspired to kill Caesar were hoping to restore a republican government to Rome. Even though the assassination

was successful, the conspirators could not gain the support of the public. Without this support, they could not gain the political edge that they desired because they could not manipulate the situation to their advantage. Perhaps what Shakespeare is suggesting with *Julius Caesar* is that the government, including the English Monarchy, cannot survive, or at least cannot prosper, without the will of the people to support the leader. The conspirators are quickly sentenced to violent revenge by the gentle persuasion of Mark Antony when a few lines before they were hanging on the words of Brutus. He convinces the crowd that Caesar's death was by no means a justifiable act and that the conspirators were just struggling for power. Shakespeare explores the struggle for supremacy faced by the conspirators and the triumvirate of Caesar's friends. The play ends with a new group of leaders Mark Antony, Octavius Caesar, and Lepidus who will now fight for control of Rome. This continues the circle of strife that is maintained by multiple leaders. But Shakespeare proposes that a singular leader is necessary for a political system to work.

As it is clear that along with political discourse in Elizabethan England, rhetoric also became as much a set of tools for reading and literary analysis as an art of composition, and that writers in that age used metaphor and other rhetorical resources functionally, for the purposes of argument, praise and blame (Keller 399). As Sigmund Freud also wrote that "words have a magical power . . . words are capable of arousing the strongest emotions and prompting all men's actions" (qtd. In Coenn 1). The study of *Julius Caesar* clearly discloses that this work constitutes and portrays the comprehensive and effective use of rhetorical devices in the communicative actions of Cassius, Brutus, and Mark Antony. Hadfield writes that, "The central feature of the republic at its height was rhetoric, the public art of persuasion, enabling listeners to weight up the evidence on either side of the argument and choose the right way forward (Hadfield 178). This shows how by the power of rhetoric the society can switch from one political side to another and how the majority opinion

sways the course of political action. This observation agrees with that of Kangira and Mungenga who point out that “the use of rhetoric is to influence other people to follow their good or bad intentions” (Kangira 110). In view of this, the main objective of rhetoric is persuasion of one’s audience.

To regard this, Hussey emphasises that “the word must be the cousin to the deed, meaning that different styles are suitable for different subject-matters” (Hussey 66). Smit accepts that in relation to discourse, metaphor is important because of its functions of explaining, clarifying, describing, expressing, evaluating and entertaining and that people choose metaphor in order to communicate what they think or feel about something (Smit 95). This point clears that the objective of this is to achieve the desired persuasive goals. Meanwhile, another scholar, Ronggen identifies several lexical and rhetoric features that speakers and writers alike normally employ to create vivid and emphatic effects and evoke profound persuasion. These are simile, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, paradox, allusion, hyperbole, understatement and irony (qtd. in Kemwi 11).

Hussey points out that during the Middle Ages, *memoria* (memorising) and *pronuntiatio* (delivery) were very important, where oral delivery was more common than silent reading (Hussey 67). And as time went on, rhetoric became more concerned with elocution, the ornaments of style. These devices are particularly used for elaboration, illustration and amplification. Hussey lists some of the more common devices which can be used in speeches: *Adnominatio* (repetition of the same word in a different form), *Anaphora* (repetition of the same word(s) at the beginning of successively clauses or lines of poetry), *Apostrophe* (highly-charged emotional comment frequently shown in successive lines beginning with ‘O’ or Alas!), *Epistrophe* (the same word ending successive clause—the opposite of anaphora—), *Isocolon* (balance of two clauses of equal length), *Parison* (balance

of two clauses of corresponding syntactic structure), *Litotes* (understatement frequently by negatives e.g. ‘He is no fool’), *Ploce* (repetition of the same word or phrase, sometimes after the intervention), *Sychomythia* (a form of dialogue in which single lines are uttered by alternative speakers). (Hussey 68)

According to Hussey, these rhetorical figures provide speakers with a means to organise their speeches, especially utterance of some persuasion which needs to be distinguished from an ordinary talk. He further points out “talking and eloquence are not the same, to speak and to speak well are two things” (68). Cronick also considers that the speaker not only tries to convince his or her listener, but is also “thinking” out loud, so to speak” (Cronick 4). He adds that the speaker is elaborating his/ her own political, philosophical and existential posture in a continuous and changing negotiation with his/ her social environment (5). He also observes that “the use of rhetorical figures, interpretative distance and historical allusions in texts reveals a great deal about the intentions of the speaker” (Cronick 5). In this regard, for the speakers to be able to reach out to their audience their speeches should be organised through the use of the mentioned rhetorical devices.

In *Julius Caesar*, the story is put in motion as Cassius pulls Brutus aside to discuss this perception of Caesar and the dangers of Caesar’s growing power, in an attempt to persuade a man loyal to Caesar to rebel against him. With this objective of convincing a man to turn his back on his friend, Cassius focuses on two specific strategies: to weaken Brutus’ devotion to Caesar and to prompt Brutus’ sense of civic responsibility. First, Cassius uses devices such as “contradiction” and juxtaposition” (Chou 2). He points out Caesar’s shortcomings and juxtaposes him to fellow men, showing no difference between Caesar and ordinary men in comparison. This implies Caesar is just likely to become corrupted with power, despite him being treated as a god. As case of juxtaposition would be his constant comparing Caesar with Brutus:

Brutus and Caesar— what should be in that “Caesar”?
 Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
 Write them together, yours is as fair a name. (1.2 144-146)

He forces Brutus to question whether such ordinary and weak men deserve to hold such power, while continually flattering Brutus. Next, Cassius is aware that “knowing the audience” is essential to successfully persuading. Twice in eight lines Brutus uses the word “honor,” reflecting the weight he places on honour. Cassius quickly takes advantage of this:

I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus
 As well as I do know your outward favour.
 Well, honor is the subject of my story. (1.2 90-92)

One will discover in the ensuing speeches delivered by Cassius and Antony, respectively in Act Scene II and Act III Scene II, the chosen wording of “honor” repeatedly appears. In Act III, Brutus finally falls victims to Cassius’ tricks and joins the conspirators after receiving Cassius feigned letters, in which fake citizens urged Brutus to lead Rome.

Persuading by the speech of Cassius, Brutus makes no attempt to hide his involvement in the assassination of Caesar, and he takes the platform to justify Caesar’s death to the public of Rome. He presents his speech in plain prose and aims to appeal to the people’s reason, he addresses them as “friends,” empathizing with their alarm. He addresses the crowd of Plebeians as follow: Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear” (3.2). These lines are enunciated with the intention of fortifying the highly valued identification between the orator and his audience. We shall notice afterwards that the first three signifiers are not only a chain of formal and clichéd lexemes used for oratorical delivery, but a significant principle that crystallizes the political project that Brutus himself adopts with prudence. Further, he addresses, “If then that friend demand why

Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more” (3.2 23). With the conditional he predicates the “answer-vindication” as ethically normal with regards to his viewpoint where the forensic development of his speech will focus on. Through these lines, with steadfast decisiveness he discloses to the audience the issue under the bush (Newman 9). He simultaneously presents the vivid antithesis (conjoining contrasting ideas) by the use of antithetic lexemes “less/more” which is a political dividing line between tyranny and republicanism (Newman 9). Through this technique, one idea could be heightened to importance, while the other diminishes to oblivion. The people will consider Brutus Valorous for placing his personal affections beneath his patriotism. He would appear as a man of true honour.

Moreover, Brutus eloquently uses “rhetorical questions” or reverse psychology to augment his argument: “Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men?” (3.2 24) and it is understood that men would refuse to become slaves and feed disposed to freedom. Linguist Antonio Reyes believes questions imply connections with the audience, since they are formulated in the here—and—more moments of discourse. These questions constitute confirmatory questions, used often as solidarity devices” (Reyes 192). Brutus continues step by step to stack up Caesar’s virtues by the words, “There is tears, for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his ambition” (3.2). Ending the sentence with the word “ambition,” Brutus claims that this is the real cause that motivated him and his friends to carry out the assassination. By using his rhetorical technique, he proposes question after question to the people:

Who is here so base that would be a bondman?
 If any, speak- for him have I offended.
 Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman?
 If any, speak- for him have I offended.
 Who is here so vile that will love his country?

If any, speak-for him have I offended. (3.2 31-33)

Here, Brutus uses another rhetoric technique “epimome,” the frequent repetition of a phrase of question to manifest one point. Nearing the end of his speech, he swears to take his own life if the people spiritually shouted in response, “Live Brutus! Live! Live!” (3.2 45). By using isocolon and anaphora, he becomes success to gain the confidence and emotional bondation of the people, which he sought to secure by means of his justification. Thus Brutus demonstrates consistency with his taking the life of his friend, for killing himself would prove his commitment in placing the good of Rome above all personal affections. Brutus delivers his oratory in a potent and brief style basing his arguments largely on appealing to the audience’s logos and their patriotic love of Rome (Chou 4). Further, Brutus’s impending strategy is coming to a head in which he “permits” Antony to deliver what he thinks is a normally expected speech as funeral oration. Brutus simply believes that Antony will pay tribute to the deceased; he requests the citizen to listen to Antony’s speech, “Plebeians say, “stay, ho! And let us hear Marc Antony” (3.2). Thus, Brutus gives a pass way to Antony.

Antony begins his speech by the words, “For Brutus’ sake, I am beholding to you” (3.2). As the audience are still under the influence of Brutus’s apparently well aimed argumentation, which in the end seems to have appeased them. There is, at least, the indication that they, “identify” with the rhetorical vision that Brutus has promoted. Moreover, there is the apprehension that Antony might speak with impertinence against Brutus. Antony’s speech is a classic example of powerful rhetoric. Its widely believed that Shakespeare composed Antony’s speech following the rhetorical guide of Thomas Wilson’s 1560 book *Arte of Rhetorique* (Chou 4). This is concerned to the theories of rhetoric and includes the example of how to fit an argument to different circumstances. There are three different rhetorical/ artistic proofs are : ethos or ethical appeal based on the character, credibility

or reliability of the speaker, addresser or writer, Pathos or emotional appeal and logos or use of inductive or deductive reasoning (Shipale 36). Antony uses the device “ethos” with an address that clearly flatters the audience, “Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears; I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him” (3.2). He starts at a moment when the listener were impressed by the speech of Brutus, and were in his side, Wilson heeds that “nothing should be spoken at the first, but that which might please the judge” (Chou 4). In carefully choosing the wording of “lend me your ears,” Antony applies the device “metonymy,” where he associates two concepts –the ear and the act of listening; with metonymy, Antony effectively grasps the audiences’ attention. Now, the crowd has calmed down and has become less reluctant to hear Antony’s words:

Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me.
But Brutus says he was ambitious
And Brutus is an honourable man. (3.2 83-86)

Antony carries out his speech referring to Brutus an “honourable man,” which he would repeat several times throughout the text. The people were pleased to hear Brutus praised. However, this is in Antony’s favour, for he will use the same repeated phrase to spark the audience into doubt. Antony cunningly combines the use of “juxtaposition” and “repetition” (Chou 5). Furthermore, he addresses:

Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral
He was my friend, faithful and just to me.
But Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man. (3.2 83-86)

Through these lines, Brutus connected two facts with each other as one: Brutus says Caesar was ambitious , and Brutus is an honourable man. When two facts are juxtaposed as such, if one of them has proven questionable both the facts will become doubtful.

Antony aims to prove Caesar was not ambitious, and by doing so, Brutus' honour and honesty will become shaken. Chou notes that for justifying his point strongly, Antony appeals to Aristotle's "logos," in giving three evidences of Caesar's moderate ambition- Caesar paid ransom, implying his generosity. He also added that Caesar wept for the poor, implying his compassion for the people. Caesar refused the crown three times, inferring his lack of ambition. Antony creates a logical chain connecting Julius Caesar's behaviour to his lack of excessive ambition. Chou writes, "This technique is called, 'exdosa' by the Sophist, which is the manipulation of commonly held beliefs. Through recalling certain events, citizens have witnessed, he supports his position" (Chou 5).

Afterwards, Antony appeals to the emotion of the audience, also known as Aristotle's "Pathos," thoughtfully conveying his grief for Caesar: "When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept; ambition should be made of sterner stuff: Yet Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honourable man". Thus through the use of 'pathos,' sentiment that is here presented from a personal account which aims for the audience to respond by accepting the idealized image of Caesar and to gradually identify with the ethos of his projection. This emotional response contrasts heavily with Brutus' stern demeanour. While Brutus firmly states his emotions, Antony conveys it through his actions. "If you have tears prepare to shed them now," he says as he shows the people Caesar's gashed and bloody cloak. He even walks down into the crowd, combined with his emotions, Antony seems more of a man of the people than Brutus, who spoke from a heightened platform in an elevate manner

Finally, he appeals to the self-interest of the crowd, who under the terms of Caesar's will should all inherit money and the enjoyment of his private gardens. Here, Antony again uses rhetorical devices to emphasize his point (the will) through seemingly passing over it- "paralepsis" (Chou 6).

Have patience, gentle friends. I must not read it.
It is not meet you know how Caesar loved you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men.
And, being men, bearing the will of Caesar, (3.2 139-142)

Thus, he states as given fact that "everyone" loved Caesar, regardless of deviously playing with the word "cause" which emerges here in an ambiguous way. Antony has also selected the depiction of sentimental incidents that focus on 'pathos'. Moreover, we have here an aptly formed enthymeme:

- 1- "We should mourn those who once had cause of love."
(Major Premise)
- 2- "We once had a cause to love Caesar" (Minor Premises)
- 3- "Therefore, we should mourn Caesar" (Conclusion)

In this way, and with the dramatized diffusion of the sentimental incident, Antony is in a position to manipulate the audience with an affected discourse that he fervently executes without restraint. Behold the following interjection: "O judgement thou art fled to brutish beasts, and men have lost their reason" (3.2). By using the three devices: hyperbole, apostrophe and Pun, especially his paying on the word 'brutish' as a subtle reference to Brutus captures the way Antony can denigrate his opponent. He portrays the situation as a departure from rational thought and the disintegration of the social fabric.

Consequently, it's becoming noticeable that the Plebeians are on the verge of completely submitting to the imposition of Antony's highly charged and scheming rhetoric. To be sure, the obvious inconstancy fickleness and shallowness of the crowd show how the audience in this particular instance, can radically change its beliefs in a flash! The statement made by the first Plebeians, "Me thinks there is much reason in his sayings" proves that Antony's speech is persuaded and totally based on Brutus's fundamental argument. Moreover, the act of persuasion by the use of rhetoric devices tends

to assist the listener in taking the decision so as to behave or to act as the speaker wishes. Kamwi writes that persuasion in effect demands a commitment from the listener in the form of changing his/her mind or behaviour. (17). The Plebeians elevate Antony as the “noblest” man in Rome; and so he now manages to gain supremacy in the arena of current political confrontation.

To conclude William Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar* presents the multifaceted variety of rhetorical schemes which turned out to be effective. Antony’s victorious influence was attained by using a highly expressive logos as rhetoric, as a rule, is made up of a logos in which the orator seeks to instil his or her worldview in an audience so that they will identify with it (Chou 6). They are all used for a political purpose to sway the minds of the Roman people as well as leaders in power. Moreover, through *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare also presents that the public must perceive the forthcoming consequences of the expediency and the basic motives of the orators who use their rhetoric tongue for their own purposes. As in the end, Antony charmed the Plebeians with his rhetoric. With an effective use of his brain and tongue, he was in a position to lead this uncivil audience down a pathway that he himself had chosen.

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Mudita Agnihotri & Dipika Bhatt

The Tidy Hunger in *The Hungry Tide*

This paper aims to study *The Hungry Tide* a novel written by Amitav Ghosh with a different note at the peak of his powers. The future of the novel in 21st century or the condition of the novel in New Millennium is hopeful, as the trend of the fiction has opened new vistas for novel writing. No doubt, writing a novel has become a charming activity along with professional attitude. This is why Austin S. Camacho is encouraged to write his experiences in the form of a book (*Successfully Marketing your Novel in the 21st Century*) to be comprised as tactics to become a successful writer. But the novelists like Amitav Ghosh have not deviated from their aim to explore the deeper sensibilities of human heart. His great sense of place has made the novel unforgettable as a novel of ideas, of relationships, uncertainty of life, the complexity of human life, and the most promising is his narrative style that makes the reader aware of the many things of our ecosystem. Simultaneously it could be called a philosophic, scientific, geographic and historical novel as it projects the struggle of the persons to find their place in the world. The tendency of human heart as Piyali, the scientist also seems to be a good sign for the wild life protection and its conservation.

Ecology is the scientific study of natural interdependencies of life forms as they relate to each other and their shared environment. Creatures produce and shape their environment, as their environment produces and shapes them. Ecology developed in reaction against the practice of isolating creatures for study in laboratories, is based in field-work and draws on a range of specialist disciplines including

Zoology, Botany, and Geology climate studies. Concepts that illustrate ecologies work are eco-system, ecological niche (space), food chain.

The word ecology is frequently used in connection with the 'green' movement. Deep Ecology, for example, is a radical version of environmentalism, conceived in the early 1970 by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess and developed in the 1980 by US environmentalists Bill Devall and George Sessions. Deep Ecologists reject merely technological and managerial solutions, because these constitute yet another form of human dominance. Instead, Deep Ecologists advocate a bio-centric view; which recognizes the non-human world as having value independently of its usefulness to human beings, who have no right to destroy it except to meet vital needs. Deep Ecology proposes drastic changes in our habits of consumption, not only to avert catastrophe but as spiritual and moral awakening. Social Ecology, mainly associated with the US anarchist writer Murray Bookchin, emphasizes the link between environmental degradation and the exploitation of human beings, arguing that better treatment of the environment can only come with the abolition of oppressive hierarchies in human society. These philosophies use the word 'ecology' in a much looser sense than the scientific this practice-somewhere between seeing culture as manifestation of ecology and using ecology as metaphor for culture, is also common in eco-criticism. The great philosopher Bate provides an illustration. He finds in Wordsworth's "The Excursion" the insight that: "Everything is linked to everything else, and, most importantly, the human mind must be linked to the natural environment" (Waugh 536). Bate is drawing an implicit analogy between material connections, such as the circulation of nourishment, that an ecologist would identify, and the emotional process, the way the loved place acts on the mind-explored in the poem. For Bate this is more than analogy.

Man, basically belonging to the 'total environment', seeks his space not in dualistic separation from nature but in his monistic

identification with the ecosphere, not in the 'shallow ecology' where nature is valued only in terms of its usefulness for human purposes (aesthetic or everyday necessity), but in the 'deep ecology' where the intrinsic value of nature is recognized. This is a cataclysmic shift from the traditional anthropocentric occidental philosophy to the nature-centric oriental system of values. In *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century* George Sessions opines: "The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes" (Basak 1). Once this intrinsic value of nature is established, man's place in the integrated relation between his individual, local or community existence and his existence in terms of his 'total environment' gets recognition.

The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess is of the view that: "We humans are neither the rulers nor the centre of the universe, but are embedded in a vast living matrix and are subject to its laws of reciprocity" (Leena 81). Ecology is the origin of two words oikos: the family household and logy: the study of. According to the German Zoologist Haeckel, by ecology we mean the body of knowledge concerning the economy of nature, the investigation of the total relations of the animal to its inorganic and organic environment. According to H.G. Andrewartha, ecology is the scientific study of the distribution and abundance of organisms. According to Odum, ecology is the structure and function of nature. The goal of ecology is to understand the principles of operation of natural systems and to predict their responses to change. Nature and literature have always shared a close relationship as is evidenced in the works of poets and other writers down the ages in almost all cultures of the world. India is a country with variety of eco-systems which ranges from Himalayas in the north to plateaus of south and from the dynamic Sundarbans in the East to dry Thar of the West. These eco-systems have been adversely affected due to increasing population and avarice of

mankind. The two components of nature, organisms and their environment are not only much complex and dynamic but also interdependent, mutually reactive and interrelated. Ecology relatively a new science, deals with the various principles which govern such relationships between organisms and environment. Ecology is defined as the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment. In this relationship they are so much interdependent on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other. History has proved this every now and then that with every change in the civilization the relationship of animals and human beings have also changed and the effect on civilization of the changes in environment has been so acute that sometimes it has wiped the whole civilization from the face of the earth. Therefore, concern for ecology is one of the most discussed issues. It is the concern of every country to replenish the diminishing factors of ecology which threatens human beings the most.

The word 'eco-criticism' first appeared in William Rueckert's essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in eco-criticism" in 1978. Eco-criticism is the study of relationship between environment and literature. Its practitioners explore human attitudes toward the environment as expressed in nature writing. It is a broad genre that is known by many names like green cultural studies, eco-poetics and environmental literary criticism, which are some popular names for this relatively new branch of literary criticism. Literary criticism in general examines the relations between writers, texts and "the world". In most literary theory "the world" is synonymous with society- the social sphere. Eco-criticism expands the notion of "the world" to include the entire ecosphere. Most ecological work shares a common motivation, that is, the awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support system. This awareness brings in us a desire to contribute to environmental restoration, not only as a hobby but as a representative of literature. Eco-critics

encourage others to think seriously about the aesthetic and ethical dilemmas posed by the environmental crisis and about how language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications.

There are a few novels in the history of Indian English Literature which can be read through the lens of eco-criticism. It is true that a serious concern with ecology seems to be lacking in the earlier works, yet nature has been used as an important backdrop against which the story develops. Firstly there is Raja Rao as one of the most prominent writers of Indian English novels. His depiction of the South Indian village culture and environmental setting is a true depiction of relationship between man and nature. R.K.Narayan wrote in the same decade and has given life to a place, Malgudi, or it can be said that he has developed a place as a character which can be seen in almost all his prose fictions bearing the same features. In other words he used landscape as an important theme and this is also one of the important considerations under eco-criticism. The other Indian English Fiction writers and their works are : Bhabani Bhatta-charya's *So Many Hungers*, Kamala Markandya's *Nectar in Sieve*, *The Flood*, Ruskin Bond's *An Island of Trees*, *No Room for a Leopard*, *Copperfield in the Jungle*, *The Tree Lover*, *The Cherry Tree*, *All Creatures Great and Small*, Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*, *Voices in the City*, *Clear Light of Day* and *Where Shall We Go This Summer*, Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*.

Amitav Ghosh may have become the first Indian writer to strongly engage with ecological issues in Indian English Fiction with the publication of his novel *The Hungry Tide* in 2004. The novel has been equally accepted by all the eco-critics, without giving rise to any objection in calling it a fiction with an eco-critical approach. It does have the elements of the earlier concept of eco-criticism that is, the interrelationship between human, nature and animal worlds. In other words it deals with the study of nature writing. The book is about one of the most dynamic ecological systems of the world. It takes us to the Sundarbans and the hundreds of islands found and

lost in a short span of time. It is about the hardships of the settlers trying to give a meaning to their lives against all the odds offered by the place. We see nature in both its full beauty and its ugliness. He presents before us the wrath of nature and fragility of humans at the mercy of the former. This blend of the political and the social truth with its concern for nature has brought this novel of Indian English Literature under the discussion of the seminars based on eco-criticism.

The Sundarbans is the largest single block of tidal halophytic mangrove forest in the world. The Sundarbans is a UNESCO World Heritage Site covering parts of Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal. The name Sundarbans can be literally translated as “beautiful forest” in the Bengali language (Shundor, “beautiful” and bon, “forest”). The name may have been derived from the Sundari trees (the mangrove species *Heritiera fomes*) that are found in Sundarbans in large numbers. Sundarbans is a World Heritage Site awarded by UNESCO in 1997 is the world’s largest delta covered by mangrove forest and vast saline mud flats. Sundarbans, the world’s largest estuarine forest is a land of fifty four tiny islands, crisscrossed by innumerable tributaries of River Ganga. Sundarbans spread in an area of 9630 sq. km., where seventy percent is under saline water.

Sundarbans was established as a National Park on May 4, 1984. It had earlier been designated as a Tiger Reserve in December 1973. Sundarbans, the place of a large flora population, the land that is inhabited by Royal Bengal Tigers is very near to Kolkata, West Bengal. Sundarbans is the breeding ground of immense variety of birds and unknown wildlife of the world. The Sundarbans Tiger Project was started in 1974 and has an area of 2,585 sq. km. A network of estuaries, tidal rivers, and creeks intersected by numerous channels, it encloses flat, marshy islands covered with dense forests. Places of interest in the Sundarbans are various such as The Sajnekhali Bird Sanctuary, Sundarbans Tiger Reserve, Bhagatpur Crocodile Project. Netidhopani is the ruins of a 400-year-old temple and legends lend mystery to the atmosphere. Haliday Island is the

last retreat of the barking deer. Kanak is the nesting place of olive ridley turtles. Piyali is seventy two kilometer. from Kolkata and is a gateway to the Sundarbans. It is being developed as a tourist complex. Bakkhali is a well-known beach resort, close to Frazerganj. Ganga Sagar (Kapil Muni Ashram) is a religiously important tirth and also has an exceptionally good beach for the tourists.

A variety of wildlife survived till the latter part of the 19th century despite the rapid depletion of habitat. Hunter records that tigers, leopards, rhinoceros, wild buffaloes, wild hogs, wild cats, barasinga, spotted deer, hog deer, barking deer, and monkeys are the principal varieties of wild animals found in Sundarbans in 1875. The islands of Sundarbans at present do not have any access to grid connectivity and solely depend on solar, biomass and renewable energy sources. Solar power has emerged as the primary source of electrification in most of the inhabited islands in Sundarbans. Cyclone Aila which hit West Bengal on May 25, 2009 has devastated the entire solar panel set-up in the Sundarbans Island, leaving the Island completely bereft of electricity. The area is known for the eponymous Royal Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*). The Sundarbans serves a crucial function as a protective barrier for the millions of inhabitants in and around Khulna and Mongla against the floods that result from the cyclones. The Sundarbans has also been enlisted among the finalists in the new-seven wonders of nature. Sundarbans National Park is a National Park, Tiger Reserve, and a Biosphere Reserve in the Indian state of West Bengal. The fauna of the sanctuary is very diverse with some forty species of mammals, 260 species of birds and thirty five species of reptiles. The greatest of these was the Bengal Tiger of which an estimated 350 remain in the Bangladesh Sundarbans.

Human settlement in the place meant for plants and animals, reclamation of coastal areas for the construction of buildings, and destruction of mangroves which are habitat for seabirds, amphibians and the aquatic animals are traced out as the root cause for the ecological and environmental problems and the source

for hungry tides and earthquakes. Postcolonial writers respond to these global phenomena in various ways. Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Hungry Tide* has profound ecological implications as he views the current global ecological crisis from the ecological and eco-feminist perspective in the Sundarbans. In this virgin land, refugees from India were mainly those who have fled from the torturous resettlement camps in the central India after Partition came and settled down. Some others had come after the Bangladesh war of 1971. Many had come even more recently; when other nearby Islands was forcibly depopulated in order to make room for wildlife conservation projects. Though it was extremely difficult to earn a living in the infertile soil of the Sundarbans Islands; they persisted on hunting and fishing, both risky jobs in the tide country.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, winner of Hutch Crossword Book Award of 2004, acclaimed as the best work in English Fiction, is a stunning work of fiction that exhaustively deals with the ecological and environmental conditions immensely affecting the local rhythms of life in Sundarbans, an archipelago of islands spread between the sea and plains of Bengal on the easternmost coast of India. Here there are no borderlines to separate fresh water from salt, river from sea and land from water. Survival is an everyday battle for the settlers of the Sundarbans who have learned to strike a balance with nature. The novel extensively deals with the ecology of the tide country that includes a couple of small villages such as Lusibari, Garjontola, Canning, Gosaba, Satjelia, Morichjhapi and Emilybari. In this isolated world the lives of three people from different backgrounds collide. Piyali Roy, an American biologist of Indian origin, engaged in research on a rare endangered dolphin which is rumored to be alive in the rivers of the tide country, engages the fisherman, Fokir, to help her in her research and finds a translator in Kanai Dutt, a businessman from Delhi. As the trio launches into the sea water for the purpose of finding out dolphin, they are drawn unawares into the hidden under-current of this isolated world

inhabited by thousands of Bengali refugees whose eviction by the government of Bengal from the Sundarbans constitutes the focal point of the story of the novel which explores the topics like humanism and environmentalism, especially when they come into a conflict of interest with each other.

Kanai and Piya come close to the ecology of the tide country through Nilima who has been running a hospital in Lusibari since her husband's death. Nilima's husband, Nirmal Bose, was a school head master in Calcutta. On being diagnosed with a terminal disease, Nirmal is advised to settle in the Sundarbans to avail of the benefit of pollution free environment. Following the doctor's advice, Nirmal and Nilima leave Calcutta and settle in Lusibari, a tightly packed settlement of palm thatched huts and bamboo walled stalls and shacks Lusibari was developed as a model village by Sir Daniel Hamilton, a Scotsman who left his native land to seek his fortune in India. Having immense wealth at his command, Hamilton purchased ten thousand acres of land in the tide country from the British government. Having no regard to the ecology of the tide country Hamilton used this land as a means to augment his wealth and ensure a better future for his coming generation. He named this area as Lusibari after his niece Lucy. Introducing Kanai to the history of Lusibari Nirmal says:

“Remember, at the time there was nothing but forest here. There were no people, no embankments, no fields just mud and mangrove. At high tide, most of the land vanished under water and everywhere you looked there were tigers, crocodiles, sharks, leopards” (Chaturvedi and Mishra 27).

When Nilima and Nirmal reach Lusibari, they find that hunger and catastrophe were a way of life. Life was hazardous and people died in their youth. Nilima notes that it was customary for the women of the island to dress as widows when their men- folk go for fishing. Such harshness however does not stop men from exploiting natural

resources. "... Thousands risked death in order to collect meager quantities of honey, wax, firewood and the sour fruit of the kewra tree" (Gaur 87). Nirmal noticed that many species of birds has been disappeared. When Kanai asks Piya; "Do you think there are fewer dolphins than there used to be?" (*The Hungry Tide* 266). Piya grimly connects this fact with drastic and disastrous changes in the ecological system and comments, "when marine mammals begin to disappear from an established habitat it means something's gone very, very wrong" (*The Hungry Tide* 266-267). Technological development resulting in advanced fishing gear has also had a destructive influence on nature. Fokir's wife Moyna told Kanai about the scheme of catching crabs and fishes in Sundarbans; "Mashima (Nilima) says that in fifteen years the fish will all be gone. ... These new nylon nets are so fine that they catch the eggs of all the other fish as well. Mashima wanted to get the nets banned, but it was impossible" (Gaur 88). *The Hungry Tide* projects a deep awe of nature. For the Purpose of converting eco-sensitive area of Lusibari into a lucrative business place, Hamilton ordered killing of the wild animals. Expressing his anguish at Hamilton's insensitivity to the wildlife, Nirmal says to Kanai: "Think of what it was like: think of tiger, crocodiles, and snakes that lived in the creeks and nalas that covered the islands. This was a feast for them. They killed hundreds of people. So many were killed that, Hamilton began to give out rewards to any who killed a tiger or a crocodile" (Chaturvedi and Mishra 27).

Morichjhapi is an eco-sensitive island of Sundarbans, a couple of hours from Lusibari by boat. In 1978 a great number of people suddenly appeared in Morichjhapi, cleared the plants and trees, built dams and put up huts. It happened so quickly that in the beginning none even knew who these people were but in time it came to be learnt that they were refugees from the government settlement camp in Dandakaranya, deep in the forest of Madhya Pradesh, hundreds of kilometers from Bengal. A few months after their settlement in this eco-sensitive area, the government authorities

declared Morichjhapi a protected forest reserve and made an announcement that the settlers would have to leave the island at the earliest. As the settlers were adamant on staying in the island whatever be the consequences, there had been a series of confrontations between the settlers and the government forces. The government authorities do their best to evict the settlers but did not succeed and finally Morichjhapi was banned under the provisions of The Forest Preservation Act and section 144 was imposed on the whole area. Hundreds of policemen barricaded the settlements, stopped the supply of food items as a result of which the settlers were reduced to eating grass causing damage to the ecology of the area. As the tube wells were also destroyed and as a result there was no drinking water, the settlers drank from puddles and ponds and an epidemic of Cholera had broken out. Disclosing their motive behind perpetrating atrocities against the settlers the policemen announced: "This Island has to be saved for its trees, it has to be saved for its animals, it is a part of a reserve forest, and it belongs to a project to save tigers, which is paid for by people from all round the world" (Chaturvedi and Mishra 27).

Ghosh contextualizes the great ecologist disaster faced by the world today by creating two groups of characters in the novel; one representing those who work to maintain the sustainability of the ecosystem called supporter of deep ecology and the other, seeking material prosperity with the help of the newly emerging technologies called the supporter of shallow ecology. Some of the fictional characters introduced in *The Hungry Tide* serve to highlight the anthropocentric attitude of human beings towards animals. Kanai and Fokir and the villagers of the Sundarbans Island who killed the tiger which strayed into the human habitat are more anthropocentric and the supporters of shallow ecology. They hold the opinion that any animal that obstructs the smooth life of human beings is to be killed. But Piyali Roy was a staunch supporter of deep ecology. She thinks that all life on earth has an equal importance. She holds the

opinion that all living and non-living things exist in relation to each other.

Ghosh's novel asserts that the physical environment is not passive; rather it exhibits harmonious workings that bind together the vegetation, the animal and the human worlds that affect one another directly or indirectly and are themselves affected by the environment. The regional topography, settlement pattern, land utilization and professional practices of the people of this tide country affect their social community formation. Ghosh's novel explores this interwovenness and unseparatedness between the ecological and social organisms. The uniqueness of this jangal Sundarbans has been picturesquely explored by the deft hand of Amitav Ghosh. It is a mangrove forest and is "a universe unto itself, utterly unlike other woodlands or jungles" (Basak 2).

It is Nature's own right to shape or reshape, break or build the islands and the peninsulas at its own will. Human endeavor to deforest or install badh for their own habitation is of Nature's aversion and it often causes Nature's fury against human beings. In the cosmic chain of being, every species has the rightful claim to exist on the earth. The disruption of this chain, the law of nature by human transgression might adversely affect the symbiotic relationship between man and nature. Biodiversity is essential for the survival of every species, as each organism is linked to the other in a fragile web called the web of life. They form the food chain that links food producers and consumers and maintain eco-system diversity. But all food chains are fragile, and if even one link is broken it sets off a series of reactions that cause the collapse of the eco-system. All organisms such as plants, animals, micro-organisms and human beings as well as the physical surroundings interact with each other and maintain a balance in nature. Mangroves are natural barriers against natural disasters and they are the essential members of the eco-system.

Dolphins are human friendly marine mammals. From time immemorial these fine sleek, aquiline creatures lived peacefully in the coastal areas as well as in fresh water. They have acute sensory perception to gauge atmospheric pressure and to give forewarning to the fellow creatures against impending natural calamities. A symbiotic relationship exists between dolphins and fishermen in the Sundarbans Rivers. Piya, the researcher is deeply pained to see them becoming extinct and she wants to do something to protect them. Hence she undertakes a miniature project on the vanishing species of dolphins in the Irrawaddy river in the Sundarbans, hoping that such localized endeavors to save the marine mammals may be an inspiration to others to venture into this novel field. Arne Naess, in his essay "Deep Ecology" observes: "The struggle of life and the survival of the fittest should be interpreted in the sense of ability to co-exist and cooperate in complex relationships, rather than ability to kill, exploit and suppress. 'Live and let live' is the more powerful ecological principle than 'either you or me'" (Leena 82).

Piya is a leading character and mouth-piece of the writer her project work is on the Irrawaddy dolphins. She faces many problems during her survey; the major problem in one of them is language. She did not understand Bengali language so she appointed an English Translator Kanai Dutt for her work. The chief objective of her project work is to study, the physical appearance of dolphins and its pattern of behavior. To her home is there where the dolphins are, seeing her excessive interest Fokir carries his boat to Garjantola pool which is also known as dolphin's tidal pool. Here she got a chance to see dolphins and confirm the fact that when the water level falls, the dolphins appear and when it rises, they disappear. It also became clear to her that the dolphins gather in the pool to wait out the ebb tide until the water rose again. In the time of Piya's research of dolphins Fokir's chief concern is to catch crabs and put them in a pot full of water. One day, Piya happens to see fifteen crabs inside the pot. She

feels elated on seeing them tumbling out in a chain with an outburst of clicking and clattering. The activities of the crabs bombard her mind with a volley of questions with regard to their role in eco-system. Unfolding the questions of her mind she says:

Didn't they represent some fantastically large proportion of the system's biomass? Didn't they outweigh even the trees and the leaves? Hadn't someone said that intertidal forests should be named after crabs rather than mangroves since it was they, certainly not the crocodile or the tiger or the dolphin, which were the keystone species of the entire eco-system? (Chaturvedi and Mishra 28)

The high-sounding motor boats with its propellers make the life of the aquatic creatures really risky and many of them are on the verge of extinction. Ecological degradation due to human interference is wiping out many species. Poaching and wild life trades are major national concerns and all the laws of the world have not been able to stop this. Mangroves are natural barriers against natural disasters and they are the essential for the protection of coastal ecology. Crabs keep the mangroves alive by removing their leaves and litter, without them the trees would choke on their own debris. They are the key stone species of the entire eco-system. Dolphins are killed for their oil and flesh. Unmindful of the fact that removal from their natural habitat will reduce their span of life; people catch and keep them as aquarium pieces. Submarines and ships knock them down carelessly. Poachers catch hold of them by dropping nylon nets upon the congregating dolphins. Natural calamities and uncertain and unpredictable tidal waves leave them stranded on land. Avaricious men catch hold of them either to sell them at exorbitant rates or to tap oil from them to be used as fuel in motor boats.

In the Sundarbans Rivers there is a proliferation of aquatic life, which is the result of unusually varied combination of water itself.

The waters of the sea do not intermingle evenly in this part of the delta; rather they interpenetrate each other creating hundreds of different ecological niches which are responsible for creating and sustaining a dazzling variety of aquatic life forms from gargantuan crocodiles to microscopic fish. Mangroves can recolonize a denuded island in ten or fifteen years. Their fibred network of roots and the marshes function like an appropriate breeding ground for aquatic animals and amphibians. The terrain is hostile to human beings and is determined to destroy or expel them. Snakes, crocodiles and tigers are a constant threat to the scant human population of the Island. The destruction of these animals will create ecological imbalances in nature. Hence, Ghosh allots the leading role of the novel to Piya so as to defend the life of the animals and to make cause for their conservation. For the sake of the entire life system she has to suppress her human instincts; the most challenging of all was to float on the tidal rivers of the Sundarbans notwithstanding day and night with a strange young married man and his five year old son and to look for dolphins.

The common conception that females are weak and require the protection of males is challenged by Piya, when she embarks on with great confidence to find out the original habitat of the *Oracella fluminalis* through the labyrinthine waterways of the Sundarbans Rivers. It is through Piya, one of the protagonists of the novel, that Ghosh expresses his evaluation of the current ecological situation. Man's greed for worldly pleasures has forced him to behave callously towards nature which is now on the brink of disaster. Apart from the gross environmental pollution engendered by the present technological advancement, man is denying the right for other animals to live. The encroachment of tiger reserves for human settlement, the undue killing of rare species like dolphins for man's selfish benefits, navigation through the habitat of marine mammals using motorboats etc. are endangering their lives. According to Bill Devall, "Man is a plain

citizen of the biosphere, not its conqueror or manager” (Leena 84). He argues that massive human-induced disruptions of eco-system will be unethical and harmful to men. Design for human settlement should be with nature not against nature. The settlers of the Sundarbans have affinity with the tigers, crocodiles and fishes and vice-verse. Piya, during her survey, came across a number of occasions when she witnessed this affinity. On one such occasion she expressed her astonishment: “Did there exist any more remarkable instance of symbiosis between human beings and a population of wild animals?” (Chaturvedi and Mishra 28).

The sub-narrative fore-grounded in the character of Fokir represents the third voice of this ecological drama. William W. Hunter mentions forest guides called “fakirs” who accompanied woodcutters and hunters on their expeditions to the forest. Hunter points out that these woodcutters were so superstitious that they would not venture into the forest unaccompanied by a fakir: “Who is supposed to receive power from the presiding deity whom he propitiates with offerings, over the tigers and other animals? Occasionally a large number of boats proceed together in a party, taking a fakir with them” (Anand 24). Fakir is the anglicized form of Fokir, the name of Ghosh’s character who guides Piya and Kanai through the waterways. But Ghosh empowers him on another level, in his familiarity with the tide country and its creatures, and the legacy of centuries-old oral tradition he inherits, qualities that distinguish him from Piya and Kanai. Despite their high-tech GPS equipment and educational background, the outsiders are dependent on Fokir to navigate the waters. Ghosh’s portrayal of Fokir thus resists the stereotypical patronization of him as the noble savage or the innocent villager or even the epitome of an ecological pioneer. W.R. Greer suggests that choosing the Sundarbans as his setting allows Ghosh: “To create a setting where everyone is on an even footing...the hostile

environment erases all social strata because everyone is an equal in the struggle to survive in the hostile environment” (Anand 24-25).

The present system demands a reciprocal relationship between human beings and nature. The tidal waves capable of destroying everything created by man will spread havoc everywhere. *The Hungry Tide* that Ghosh refers to in the novel has devastated everything including the life of Fokir, the fisherman. The knowledge that Piya gained from her university education in America and all the modern gadget of marine research and Fokir’s traditional knowledge, expertise and craftsmanship couldn’t withstand the undulating tidal waves unleashed by the howling storm and Fokir succumbs to death though he resisted for long. Piya is left alive as if to protect mother earth from impending disasters. She realizes that the duty left on her shoulders is not easy. Her hand-held monitor, connected to the satellites of GPS (Global Position System) has recorded the movement corridors of dolphins and the areas where they congregate. That one map represents decades of work and volumes of knowledge which will form the foundation of Piya’s project. This will help the authorities in taking remedial measures to preserve the vanishing species of a rare variety of dolphins and the dream of Piya will come true. By allotting the leading role to a character like Piya, Ghosh underlines the emergence of a new generation of eco-feminists who are out to save nature from the patriarchal form of development.

Thus, the novel is devoted to the treatment of ecology of the Sundarbans. The novelist is very sensitive to the problems and challenges that confront those who depend on nature for their existence. He has specially highlighted the exploitation of the settlers of Morichjhapi by policemen to bring to light what is happening in the eco-sensitive areas in the name of development and preservation of wildlife. The major focus of Ghosh in *The Hungry Tide* is to warn humanity of an impending ecological disaster. Unless people are ready to discard some of the crazy ideas for development, global warming and such other disastrous

consequences of modern technology will devour us altogether. Cyclones and earthquakes will become a common factor taking toll of human and animal kingdom. The novel is left open-ended and the readers are left to ponder over the issue and suggest solutions. There are other hints of similar meaningless exploitation of nature and consequential stasis of human life in *The Hungry Tide* the vast waterway of Malda river is reduced to a narrow ditch. This dilapidated state of the river has practically closed the Canning port and people prefer to go to Lusibari through Basonti. Retaining the contemporary perspective *The Hungry Tide* shows that even the less bountiful natural surroundings are thoughtlessly exploited by man, wreaking havoc on the already precarious ecological balance.

The Hungry Tide is permeated by an underlying consciousness of the subaltern and a narrativization of the subaltern experience. *The Hungry Tide* takes a step further to voice the subaltern experience, in that the novel's publication had the force of a political pamphlet which made the world take stock of efforts to corporatize parts of the Sundarbans National Park. The novel raises national and global awareness about the history of violence inscribed on the Sundarbans, throwing into relief the continuing exploitation of the place. In this vein, Ghosh's novel reveals the interactions between the state, the poor, the fauna and flora, and the physical environment, and in doing so this work highlights both the tragedy and the hypocrisy that were inherent in the conservation efforts in the Sundarbans.

In *The Hungry Tide* Ghosh problematizes the tensions between and within human communities, their respective relations with the natural world, and the extra discursive reality of nature that changes and is simultaneously changed by humanity. According to a Zoological Society of London statement rapid deterioration in mangrove health is causing as much as 200 meters of the vegetation rich coast to disappear annually in the Sundarbans. Thriving human development, rising global temperatures, degradation of natural protection from

tidal waves and cyclones is inevitably leading to species loss in this richly bio-diverse part of the world. A part of the mangrove forests of the Sundarbans may be lost in future due to the rising water levels in the Bay of Bengal as fallout of global warming. Prof. Niladri Chakraborty of Jadavpur University, the principal investigator of the study in the Sunderbans said that the particulate matter gets deposited on the leaves of the mangrove trees. This deposition prevents photosynthesis of plants, leading to their gradual death. As a result, he said that a large number of trees are dying out. Their finding is that the mangroves are yet to adapt to the dense concentration of particulate matter. The impact of particulate matter must be worse on animals and living organisms. Since we never measure its impact on wildlife, we cannot comment on it. But we also found that a large number of Sundarbans residents suffer from lung diseases. The revelation is alarming not only does the Sundarbans have a rich and unique biodiversity, its mangrove eco-system also helps to protect Kolkata its closest metropolis from the direct impact of tropical cyclones and storms that originate in the Bay of Bengal. The extent of pollution and resultant concentration of particulate matter may well spell doom for the Sundarbans. Experts warn a thousand species of flora and fauna will become extinct from this ecological sensitive zone.

Experts said that in absence of electricity and cooking energy sources, a huge amount of bio-mass is burnt rampantly in the area this result in emission of particulate matter. During the period of study, there was a huge amount of dust in the area due to a lot of road construction activity. The emission from bhatbhatias (diesel-driven country boats) ferrying passengers is greatly contributing to particulate pollution. It was heard that the Administration has announced Rs. 200 crore grants for the Sundarbans as part of the World Bank's Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project on January 13, 2010 during their maiden visit to the world's largest mangrove biosphere reserve. This money will be utilized in the next five years starting

June 30, 2010. They also plan to set up a Sundarbans Ecosystem Task Force to look into climate and environmental issues of the critically vulnerable coastal area. The Administration also announced Rs. 2 crore for rainwater harvesting in villages around the core area. There are nearly two lakh people living in the buffer zone. They will also set up an Indo-Bangla Sundarbans Ecosystem Forum, the first meeting of which will be convened in March. Experts said that nearly 60% of the Sundarbans falls in Bangladesh land it is very keen to work with India for protection and conservation. *The Hungry Tide* might prompt readers to think in new ways about human settlement on islands; any connection to place is always in the process of being made and liable to transformation. While Nirmal's dictum, "A place is what you make of it" (Fletcher 14), suggests that humans have agency in relation to their environment, the depiction of the "terrain's hostility to their presence" (Fletcher 14). In *The Hungry Tide* Sundarbans reminds us that, ultimately, we may read but we neither possess nor control the places in which we live.

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Mudita Agnihotri, Dept. of English, KGC, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar

Deepika Bhatta, Dept. of English, Mahila Vidyalaya, Kankhal, Haridwar

Ajay Kumar Sharma

Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*: Plight and Revolt of a Touchable Dalit

The present paper aims at showing that the term 'Dalit' should not be confined only to the curse of untouchability and colour oriented Varna Vyavastha or caste system; rather it is a word of wide dimension, indicating that the rolling machine of oppression crushes the white and the black alike; the sense of revolt may rise from the exploited Brahmin and Pariah alike. Sometimes, even murder becomes inevitable when self pride and democratic opportunity are at stake. Such is the message of *The White Tiger*, which records the ups and downs in the life of Balram Halwai, who feels insulted and is so much infuriated that he does not hesitate even to kill his master, Ashok, for the latter had taunted and condemned the Indian Parliamentary system, in the making whereof the illiterate, rural and poverty stricken men and women have also their say. The last straw on camel's back comes when Balram, the taxi driver, is asked to own the responsibility of a child's death, whereas the infant was crushed when Ashok's wife was driving the car. However, the murderous revolt makes the protagonist not only to assert his identity, but to flourish financially also at Bangalore. Essentially it is an upsurge of the suppressed anger against the evils of the feudal system, which may change its colour from time to time & place to place. The conflict between capital and labour leading to excessive exploitation becomes the prime cause of inequality leading to intolerance and revolution; though not explicit, the contents of brief case (currency notes for bribe) of Ashok may also be treated as a latent reason of murder of the master by a taxi driver; the power of wealth helps Balram to establish himself as an entrepreneur in Bangalore; thus end justifies the means.

The stream of ambiguity emerging from the iceberg of the nomenclature, 'Dalit Literature', flows into two channels—the one, literature written by Caste Hindus about the downtrodden class or Dalits and the other, literature written by the Dalits about the Dalits. Such a concept has given rise to the fundamental question as to who may be termed as 'Dalit': "D;k og nfyf ftls tkfrxr vk/kkj ij nfyf ekuk tk jgk gSA ;k og nfyf ftldk lfn;ksa ls 'kks"k.k gks jgk gSA ;k og L=h tks vkt Hkh lekt esa mis{kk] vieku vkSj 'kks"k.k dh f'kdj jgh gS vkSj vkt Hkh çrkfMr gks jgh gS" [Is that Dalit who is being considered to be a Dalit on caste basis or that Dalit who is being exploited since centuries or that woman who has still been a victim of negligence, dishonour or exploitation and even today is being tortured] (Sharma 147). The plight of mythical Ahilya, abandoned by her husband, sage Gautam, is an example of such womanhood. The gulf between the caste Hindu writers depicting Dalit problem and the Dalit writers exploring the plight of the downtrodden is widened on the ground that the Caste Hindu novelists see the Dalits through the spectacle of upper class mercy and the Dalit fiction writers have a sense of volcanic eruption and revolt of throwing away the yoke of exploitation.

Though the Dalits had been existing in Indian social infrastructure long-long ago, yet the Dalit consciousness in its modern literacy context started in Maharashtra. It emerged as a legacy of Mahatma Phule and Baba Sahab Bhimrao Ambedkar. In a restricted sense, the Dalit literature comprises writings by the Dalit writers about the plight and anguish of the Dalits only. Till now the majority of scholars think that the Dalit literature written by a Dalit writer must get an upper hand, for the people of the suppressed Caste have a first-hand experience of what they are writing about. That is why, when Mulk Raj Anand showed the draft of his novel, *Untouchable* to Mahatma Gandhi, the latter asked him to go and clean latrine in order to get a first-hand

experience. Since then, much water has flown down the Ganges; the concept of Dalithood has crossed the barriers of caste; a number of Caste Hindus and touchable poor are called upon to do the menial jobs such as, utensil cleaning, washing the dirty linen, sweeping and wiping etc. Such experiences also need some pen to raise their voice and it is with this aim that the upper caste authors like Aravind Adiga have to come forward to highlight the miseries of a new class of touchable Dalits, comprising a class called ‘poor servants’ belonging to touchable community, oppressed and exploited akin to untouchable caste of dalits. Adiga himself was conscious of this fact while writing *The White Tiger*: “It just seemed that the most interesting story ... was the story of the ... servants and the poor who still make up the bulk of our country, even after all these years of economic growth” (Frenette, “Q.A.: Aravind Adiga”).

The term ‘Dalit’ should not be confined only to the curse of untouchability and colour oriented *Varna Vyavastha* or caste system; rather it is a word of wide dimension, indicating that the rolling machine of oppression crushes the white and the black alike; the sense of revolt may rise from the exploited Brahmin and Pariah alike. Sometimes, even murder becomes inevitable when self pride and democratic opportunity are at stake. Such is the message of *The White Tiger*, which records the ups and downs in the life of Balram Halwai, who feels insulted and is so much infuriated that he does not hesitate even to kill his master, Ashok, for the latter had taunted and condemned the Indian Parliamentary system, in the making whereof the illiterate, rural and poverty stricken men and women have also their say. The last straw on camel’s back comes when Balram, the taxi driver, is asked to own the responsibility of a child’s death, whereas the infant was crushed when Ashok’s wife was driving the car. However, the murderous revolt makes the protagonist not only to assert his identity, but to flourish financially also at Bangalore. Essentially

it is an upsurge of the suppressed anger against the evils of the feudal system, which may change its colour from time to time & place to place. The conflict between capital and labour leading to excessive exploitation becomes the prime cause of inequality leading to intolerance and revolution; though not explicit, the contents of brief case (currency notes for bribe) of Ashok may also be treated as a latent reason of murder of the master by a taxi driver; the power of wealth helps Balram to establish himself as an entrepreneur in Bangalore; thus end justifies the means.

Some adverse comments of the critics, condemning the novel as ‘stupid’ or ‘piece of junk’, hold no water and show the ridiculous ignorance of such writers, for Adiga never thought of Ambedkar, Jagjivan Ram and Mayawati etc; rather he was thinking of the globalisation of Dalit psyche irrespective of caste creed or sex and this was his creditable achievement, for the book has been translated into more than 16 languages.

The spirit of Samuel Richardson has flown through the quill of Aravind Adiga when he uses the epistolary method while writing *The White Tiger*. The novel is in the form of a series of letters, written by the anti-hero, Balram Halwai, to Wen Jiabao, an imaginary Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, when he was about to pay a visit to India. These letters present a record of Balram’s progress from a lowly birth to the current position, enjoyed by him as an entrepreneur in Bangalore. He very candidly narrates the tale of his plight and revolt and recounts how he became a successful entrepreneur; he doesn’t conceal anything and most blatantly and shamelessly confesses the cold-blooded murder he committed of his own master, Mr. Ashok.

The protagonist of the novel, Balram alias Munna, is a touchable Dalit whose genesis is not of the lowest caste, but economically he has to live below poverty line. He is a resident

of the village of Laxmangarh in Bihar; he hails from a poor and oppressed community in the “Darkness” of rural India. Although born in a touchable caste of a Halwai (a person belonging to caste of sweet-makers), yet the traditional confectionery business of making sweets is far beyond his reach due to poverty of the family, that’s why his father has to work as a rickshaw-puller. The affectionate parents named him “Munna” such a domestic baptism was not liked by the school teacher, who was desirous of giving a meaningful name of the pupil. Hence, Munna was named Balram, the elder brother of Lord Krishna. Such practice is a day to day tradition in Indian village schools. It is an irony that the age-old oppressed people i.e. dalits have no right even over their name.

The ill fated boy has to toil in a tea-shop in Dhanbad and break coal pieces and wipe tables. It is in the township of Dhanbad that Balram learns driving, as he knows that drivers are paid a ‘high salary’. After getting the technical know-how of car driving, Balram finds the gate of opportunity open for him, when “The Stork”, a long-nosed rich man of the village, hires him as a chauffeur. Hereafter, Balram becomes a driver of the Stork’s son, who has his abode in the metropolis of Delhi. The metropolitan environment of Delhi is a renaissance to Balram, who drives his master and wife to shopping malls and call centres. Though he is conscious of his limitations that he will not be able to reach the world of Midas, yet he becomes aware of wealth and opportunity surrounding him. His first hand experiences teach him much about the urban world of ‘Light’ and it is something more than he might have learnt from schools or books. He has gained the practical knowledge of affairs.

Balram thinks of finding a shortcut to prosperity and glamorous life and comes to conclusion that he can become rich suddenly only by murdering his master. This shows how a suppressed dalit touchable or untouchable, becomes ambitious

and crime oriented. The idea of doing away with the adversary or hindrance comes in his mind when he goes through the magazine, *Murder Weekly*, which deals with murder, rape, and revenge: “Just because drivers and cooks in Delhi are reading *Murder Weekly*, it doesn’t mean that they are all about to slit their master’s necks. Of course they’d *like* to. Of course, a billion servants are secretly fantasizing about strangling their bosses — and that’s why the government of India publishes this magazine and sells it on the streets ...” (Adiga 125)

The awaited day arrives. Ashok is taking in his brief case seven hundred thousand rupees in cash in order to give bribe to politicians in New Delhi. This is sufficient temptation for Balram to murder his employer. He becomes successful in his murderous plan. Having performed the foul deed, Balram runs away and reaches Bangalore alongwith his nephew, Dharam. With the help of the plundered wealth, Balram starts his own taxi company under the name of his dead master i.e. Ashok Sharma. The Odyssey of the plight of touchable Dalit, Balram from Munna to impersonated Ashok Sharma makes him a wealthy entrepreneur in Indian social infrastructure dominated by new technology. Not only this, the protagonist emerges as an integral part of the zenith of Indian caste system representing the Light, another synonym of the cosmos of the rich, who live in the metropolis. Thus, the proverb ‘Lead me from Darkness to Light’ [relks ek T;ksfrxZe;] has come out to be true in the plot structure of the novel, *The White Tiger*.

For Aravind Adiga Dalit or oppressed is not confined to a person born in a scheduled caste; rather an upper caste Hindu may also be a Dalit because of his poverty. Sometimes the creamy layer person belonging to a low caste also may inflict tyranny and torture upon a poor upper caste Hindu. However, the Dalits as defined in the contemporary context of the term think that they are the depressed sufferers; hence an understanding of miseries

of Dalits is their own monopoly. If a caste Hindu writes about them, there may be an echo of pity and sympathy, but no sense revolt or emancipation from the clutches of the upper caste can be expected from them. Hence the writers belonging to the Dalit caste should exercise the right to write about Dalits.

The concept of touchable dalithood has contemporaneity of its own; in Indian context the other backward castes, if the creamy layer is removed, come nearer to his new down-troddenness. There has been brought a charge against Aravind Adiga that the experiences narrated by him are not firsthand ones, as he is a western scholar and is not well versed with the sad plight of Indians. “Adiga counters these allegations by terming the novel as his fruit of labour as a reporter in India (being a correspondent for the *Time* magazine). His tedious job took him to the length and breadth of a country known the world over for its backwardness” (Srivastava 88).

The novelist has depicted a new class of the Dalits which comprises servants belonging to touchable caste of lower Hindu hierarchy who are compelled to become labourers in elite Indian families; not only this, the protagonist is also conscious of a servile attitude, which has been breathed into his being for centuries. While working as a servant in Delhi, Balram has to press the feet of his tired master Ashok. This is an instantaneous slavish act of an oppressed servant as Balram remarks: “Because the desire to be a servant had been bred into me: hammered into my skull, nail after nail, and poured into my blood” (Adiga 193).

There are two worlds revealed in the novel *The White Tiger*: the one Dark and the other Light. The rural world has been called the Dark World. The plight of the oppressed or the dalits is so pitiable and pathetic that their sense of revolt is limited to nicknaming the oppressors as animals such as ‘the stork’, buffalo, raven etc. It is in the Dark World of the village Laxman-

garh that the Dalits find themselves neglected and exploited. Hence they are filled with a desire to react and revolt. As they are helpless and are incapable of resorting to violence, they express their anger through given nicknames to the persons belonging to the elite class: “There was another fellow inside the Ambassador; a stout one with bald, brown, dimpled head, a serene expression on his face, and a shot gun on his lap. He was the buffalo. . . one of the landlords in Laxmangarh” Similarly, there was a contractor of the river. He used to collect fish as a token of tax from fishermen; further, he collects toll tax from boatman also and he has been called the Stork: “The Stork was a fat man with a fat moustache, thick and curved and pointy at the tips. He 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” (Adiga 24). Then there was a landlord who exploited the cultivators against a payment that was not sufficient to make their both ends meet: “His brother was called the Wild Boar. This fellow owned all the good 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 day wages” (25). There was an owner of the worst land; he was called *The Raven*, meaning black crow. These names were given to those men who were of beastly nature.

In such a world of Darkness even the purifying river, Ganga, is polluted and scatters stink and filth; that is why the premier of China of advised not to take a dip into it:

Now, you have heard the Ganga called the river of emancipation, and hundreds of American tourists come each year to take the photographs of named *sadhus* at Hardwar or Benaras, and our prime minister will no doubt describe it that way to you, and urge you to take a dip into it.

No! – Mr. Jiabao, I urge you not to dip in the Ganga, unless you want your mouth full of faeces, straw, soggy parts of human bodies, buffalo carrion, and seven different kinds of industrial acids. (Adiga 15)

Such a Dark World is not worth inhabitable, though myths give an account of some divinities such as Lord Buddha walking through Laxmangarh, but Balram thinks otherwise and says: “My own feeling is that he ran through it — as fast as he could — and got to the other side — and never looked back!” (Adiga 18) Not only the potamic pollution, but the cause thereof is also hinted at. The sewage water flows down several channels and it contains “adulterated and stale items of rice, cooking oil and kerosene, biscuits, cigarettes and jaggery” (19). This dark world is not without the patronage of strange deity also; inside the temple there is “an image of a saffron — coloured creature, but half man and half monkey: this is Hanuman, everybody’s favourite god in the Darkness.” Such a god is liked by the narrator, for he “was the faithful servant of god Rama;” he is worshipped by men like Balram because “he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love and devotion.” In such a dark world, which Indian villages represent, it is not only difficult, but impracticable also “for a man to win his freedom in India.” Of course, the concept of freedom is economic self dependence; even Hanuman, being adored, signifies the servile attitude, which is the destiny of Indian dalit, downtrodden or exploited populace.

It is an irony that Indian villages are called paradise, “adequately supplied with electricity, running water and working telephones” (Adiga 19) but the reality is quite otherwise, electricity poles are defunct, water pumps are broken and the plight of children is no better in the Darkness – “too lean and short for their age, and with oversized heads from which vivid eyes shine, like the guilty conscience of the government of India” (20). The house of Balram Halwai also does the same tale repeat;

the most important member of the family is the water buffalo, the hope centre of the village women: “If she gave enough milk, the women could sell some of it, and there might be a little more money at the end of the day ... She was the dictator of our house” (20). It is said that the pen which wrote *David Copperfield* was often dipped in Dickens’s blood; more or less the same plight is narrated, when Balram records how the body of a rich man differs from that of a Dalit: “A rich man’s body is like a premium cotton pillow, white and soft and blank. *Ours* are different. My father’s spine was a knotted rope, the kind that women use in villages to pull water from wells ... The story of a poor man’s life is written on his body, in a sharp pen” (27).

A new journey from Darkness to Light is also not without an account of the plight of rural expatriates; they come from the village to the metropolis with an ambition to shine bright; they understand that the ‘marshalling of affairs comes from those that are learned’, hence Balram, in order to get a proficiency in the technical knowhow in the skill of car driving, “graduates to become a driver for Mr. Ashok and his gorgeous wife, Pinky. From here becomes a new journey, from Darkness to Light, from Laxmangarh to Delhi” (Srivastava 92).

It was Richard Lovelace who sang: Stone walls do not a prison make / Nor iron bars a cage. Somewhat in the verisimilitude of this expression Aravind Adiga in *The White Tiger* comes out with the concept of ‘Rooster Coop’, the word which means a cage with several shelves in which the fowls are kept. Balram sees such an ornithical abode near Jama Masjid, Old Delhi, and starts brooding that the life of servants is no better than that of these winged creatures; the irony is that the immigrants are in the cage and “are waiting alike the inevitable hour”; the Premier is advised by Balram :

Go to Old Delhi, behind the Jama Masjid, 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 a horrible stench ... They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they're 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 173-74)

Further, the term 'Rooster Coop' covers a wider range and engulfs the lot of servants. Aravind Adiga takes some leaves from the book of Indian economy in the city of Mumbai and Surat:

Every evening on the train out of Surat, where they run the world's biggest diamond-cutting and polishing business, the servants of diamond merchants are carrying suitcases full of cut diamonds that they have to give to someone in Mumbai. Why doesn't that servant take the suitcase full of diamonds? He is no Gandhi, he is human, he's you and me. But he's in the Rooster Coop. The trustworthiness of servants is the basis of the entire Indian economy. (Adiga 175)

The narrator himself is not free from the peril of this plight; he goes to the National Zoo in New Delhi and notices that the cage containing the white tiger reads: "Imagine yourself in the cage" (Adiga 177); after coming back, he finds himself in the mosquito net engulfed in a neglected isolation, for nobody comes to see him. Moreover, Balram becomes restless by the undue pressure of owning the responsibility of crushing the child under the car, which, in fact Pinky Madam, wife of Ashok, was driving at the time of accident. It became a question of his very existence; he is afraid that he would be imprisoned and will come out as a branded criminal. Hence, he would even find himself unable to tell the judge the whole truth: "My life had been written away. I was to go to jail for a killing I had not done. I was in terror, and

yet not once did the thought of running away cross my mind. Not once did the thought, *I'll tell the judge the truth*, cross my mind. I was trapped in the Rooster Coop." Balram wants to break this rooster coop and make himself free; he had in him a latent rebellious instinct since his boyhood, as he recalls at one point, "Even as a boy I could see what was beautiful in the world: I was destined not to stay a slave" (41). A certain sense of self-defence and self-respect emerges in him when his master to his amazement and shock grabs him and pushes him against the balcony of the apartment; he is compelled to believe: "The landlord inside him wasn't dead, after all" (182). This incident proves to be the last nail in the coffin, for it augments Balram's desire to eliminate his master and take his place.

The escape of the protagonist killer from Delhi to Bangalore is a strange metamorphosis of Balram Halwai to impersonated Ashok Sharma, "All that remains to be told is how I changed from a hunted criminal into a solid pillar of Bangalorean society." With the right contacts all his criminal past is forgotten. By hook or by crook he becomes a member of the elite. This he does within a short span of time, as he says: "I tried to hear Bangalore's voice, just as I heard Delhi's" (Adiga 292, 297).

Thus it is evident that the touchable Dalits are doomed to suffer as it is seen in the novel, *The White Tiger*; they are compelled to revolt when the oppression crosses the limit of their tolerance; their revenge is directed not against one individual, rather against the entire social infrastructure; the catastrophe is like an arboreal fall which shakes the heaven and the earth; the sense of crime and punishment is also typical; their very existence is tied to the wheel of fire, which consumes the rich and the poor alike; in fine they are more sinned against than sinning and the journey of their adventures is like the rise and fall of a meteor: "Balram's meteoric rise to his delusional success

unfolds many truths, linked to the numbing social violence in nearly every strata of Indian society ... Short cuts do not pave the path to success. The sordid tale of Balram Halwai is no inspiration for the teeming impoverished millions” (Srivastava 96).

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Mohammad Kamran Ahsan

Dynamics of Sexuality : Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Lowland*

Cultural displacement and feminine identity have been recurrent themes in the works of Jhumpa Lahiri. Unprecedented in her previous works, the second novel *The Lowland* depicts the evolution of its protagonist Gauri from a patriarchal resister to a woman bi-sexual, where she ceases to accept gendered role of woman imposed by the heteronormative society. Being a bi-sexual, Gauri goes one step further in destabilizing the discourse of lesbian feminism as “Women bisexuals[...] disturb the gender and sexual dichotomies that are the basis for lesbian feminism. Their presence has been severely resisted in many lesbian communities, but they have become a contradiction not yet resolved in lesbian feminism” (Lorber 19). In a way, her bi-sexual identity is her attempt to carve out an identity distinct from the established patterns of sexuality as “bisexuality can best be understood as a perspective, though also containing within it the possibility and indeed a necessity for a strategic and non-essential identity” (Naylor 54). Ann Keloski Naylor highlights that “lesbian/ feminist literary theory offers particular constructions of sexuality which, while challenging many of the assumptions of heterosexual feminist literary theory, largely ignores the bisexual content of much lesbian fiction, and consequently glosses over some of the tricky areas of gender and sexuality difference.” However Annamarie Jagose analyses heterosexuality and focuses “on the mismatch between sex, gender and desire” (McHugh 108). Judith Butler’s “*Gender Trouble*”, a foundational text in queer theory undermines the discourses that “deligitimate minority gendered and sexual practices.” (Butler viii) Thus Gauri’s identification with queers is her attempts to undermine binaries based on class, race and gender. The proletarian revolt against

the bourgeois in the form of Naxal uprising created in her a sense of dissociation from the binaries of man/woman, nature/culture, proletariat /bourgeois.

Written in the backdrop of Naxal movement of 1960s in West Bengal, Jhumpa Lahiri posits various facets of patriarchy i.e. capitalist patriarchy that oppresses both women and underprivileged classes; Naxalism, a counterattack on the patriarchal interests of the capitalist class, itself becomes a patriarchal agency as it collaborates in male violence, and uses women in the macabre killings of civilians and several innocent citizens. Though *The Lowland* is a “bourgeois novel”, it presents a realistic account of socio-political situation of West Bengal in 1960s presented by the eclectic sources, hence the writer herself does not take either side. Lahiri fills the narrative with local colours of colonial and post-colonial Calcutta. Unlike Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri critically scrutinizes Naxal movement and its effects on the lives of innocent civilians. The novel is a realistic account of India in pre-independence period and in 1960s and subsequent socio-political events; Bengal famine, a manmade disaster in Colonial India, post-independence Indian state as a colonial agency to serve the interests of the feudal-capitalist classes, social unrest and upheaval against the failed state in the form of Naxal movement, as well as communal riots. Unlike her previous technique of sequential events in plot in *The Namesake*, Lahiri takes recourse of flashback technique and shift in the events in this novel.

The story revolves round Mitra brothers, Udayan and Subhash and Gauri, who happened to be Udayan’s wife first and later gets married to Subhash after Udayan dies in his struggle against the State. Subhash moves to the US in search of green pastures where he gets admission in a university. The daily chores of both brothers are minutely depicted to show the shared bonds between them. Not only does, Lahiri write about Udayan’s involvement in Naxal movement out of his idealism to create a just and egalitarian society,

she writes how an ideology turned nasty by using women in the attainment of its interests. Gauri’s complicity in killing a Policeman is her inadvertent move, manipulated by Udayan and his comrades. As for Naxalism, what was predicted by the Chinese Press fifty years ago at the time of Naxal uprising, is coming true today. “The Spark in Darjeeling will start a prairie fire and will certainly set the vast expanses of India ablaze” (23). Though Lahiri does not depicts the present situation of Naxalism, the novel leads us to scrutinize the failed government policies to redress the problems of poor and marginalized in post-colonial India. Lahiri’s symbolism is conspicuous in depicting the presence of imperial interests in Indian policies. “Though Nehru was Prime Minister, it was the new Queen of England, Elizabeth II, whose portrait presided in the main drawing room” (7).

Unlike her other works, Lahiri presents an ultra-feminist in the form of Gauri. The conditions in which Gauri grows up lead her to be patriarchal resister. The unsupervised childhood away from her parents, no one to care for her, or instill the confidence in her, she always feels at the margins. Her predicament as an unmarried girl presents her social status as “other” and “inessential in front of the essential” (de Beauvoir 6). Her unattractive features render her incapable to fulfill the patriarchal role of a beautiful girl.” Around men she’d felt invisible. She knew she was not the type they turned to look at on the street, or to notice across the room at a cousin’s wedding [...] she was a disappointment to herself in this regard [...] Wishing she could alter herself, believing that any other face would have been preferable” (60).

Her marriage with Udayan substantiates her feminist spirit as she proves to be a maverick in marrying an outlaw. From the very beginning Gauri is shown as a defiant to the gendered niche of feminine as “she prefers books to jewels and saris.” (46) Udayan’s decision of marriage can also be viewed in the patriarchal perspective as de Beauvoire analyses marriage as a patriarchal institution. “In bourgeois

society, one of woman's assigned roles is to represent: her beauty, her charm, her intelligence and her elegance are outward signs of her husband's fortune [...] If he is poorer, he boasts of her moral qualities and her housekeeping talents; most deprived, he feels he owns something earthly if he has a wife to serve him" (de Beauvoivre 199).

Failed in his career, Udayan doesn't have anything to flaunt in front of the society except his wife. Gauri's marriage with Udayan is much to the dismay of her in-laws, she enters her in-laws' house as an unwelcome intruder. The difference between the view from her in-laws' balcony and the balcony of her grandparents' is also symbolic of the claustrophobic conditions for Gauri. Though brazen her love marriage is, it gives her little scope to live a life free from constraints. "From her in-laws' house there was little to see. Only other homes, laundry on rooftops, palms and coconut trees" (291). From the outset, Gauri defies institution of arranged marriage as prescribed by the patriarchy in Indian context. Marriage according to queer theory is considered as a contract through which men appropriate women's productive and reproductive labour for themselves, and thus establish a social relation called servitude between the two. (Calhoun) Gauri's marriage with Udayan signifies the inherent patriarchal intent of Udayan. The tale of Gauri can be attributed as her journey from a patriarchal resister to a bisexual where she out rightly defies gendered role of a woman and eventually ceases to be a woman by discovering her bisexual orientation. Gauri's eventual desertion of her married life and daughter is owing to her incapacity of fulfilling sexed/gendered role of woman. She seems to uphold Monique Wittig's claim "Lesbians are not women" (Wittig 57). Gauri conforms to Monique Wittig's claim of heterosexuality as an oppressive agency.

"For heterosexual society is the society which not only oppresses lesbians and gay men, it oppresses many different /others, it oppresses all women and many categories of men, all those who are in the position of the dominated" (Wittig 55). Initially she conforms

to heterosexual niche of a woman, and despite being patriarchal resister, she plays a role of a passive heterosexual female. Gauri's inadvertent involvement in Naxal activities disenchant her from the resistance against the feudalism. She comes close to Naxalism through Udayan and fancies of a just society as Udayan does. Both view arranged marriage as an oppressive institution. She analyses Naxalism as another form of male violence in which she was unknowingly pushed by her own husband. Gauri's induction in the deadly activities is "scripted, controlled. She wondered exactly how she was contributing, who might be watching her. She asked Udayan but he would not tell her, saying this was how she was being most useful. Saying it was better for her not to know" (292). Thus Udayan acts as a typical heterosexual male who wields women as an instrument to serve the vested interests of patriarchy/ heterosexuality. Being woman, Gauri's involvement in the killing, though essential, remains perfunctory and clandestine. Gauri's forced inclusion in violence may be assessed from the point of view of queer theory. The division of sexes "suits the economic needs of heterosexuality and lends a naturalistic gloss to the institution of heterosexuality" (Butler 143). Wittig argues that it is the difference between the sexes that "ontologically constitutes women into different/others. [...] The function of difference is to mask at every level the conflicts of interests, including ideological one" (Wittig 55). Naxalism or Maoism, a counterattack on capitalist and feudalistic oppression serves no meaning for women; rather it wreaks havoc in the lives of women whose men folk suffered violence it unleashes. Given the typical homophobia prevalent in India, till date Naxalism or any political movement against the state patriarchy does not recognize issues of sexual minorities. The narrator evokes a poignant image of the Policeman's widow and son; through this meeting Gauri identifies herself and her unborn child with the sufferers of male's tyranny. Gauri's sense of guilt is symbolic of woman identifying woman to counter male oppression. After Udayan's murder by the paramilitary,

Gauri's marginalization is palpable in the house; the subordination is legitimized by the religious patriarchy as being a widow she is not allowed to partake fish or meat and has to be dressed in white sari. Gauri's widowhood evinces the prototype of widows in West Bengal, thousands of widows from West Bengal flock to Vrindavan, a place known for its widow asrams. Lahiri painstakingly describes the constraints on widows in the form of diet and clothing. Two starkly different images, Gauri as a widow, frail and marginalized, and Goddess Durga, a fetish image of female deity, worshipped for her power, are juxtaposed to highlight the hypocrisy of religious patriarchy. Udayan's parents hold her responsible for the fate befalls on Udayan. Gauri's move to marry Subhash is another blow on the patriarchal structures. Neither the family, nor do the Maoist Communist Party members approve her decision. She moves into a loveless marriage with Subhash in order to seek refuge from the stigma of widowhood.

Gauri's acculturation of American ways of life starts soon after her arrival. She shreds all her saris and petticoats as well as cuts short her long hair. The drastic change in her appearance is not just a process of acculturation; rather it is her move to do away with her cultural identity. Gauri's aversion to the cultural attire of Indian woman is equivalent to her denouncement of the cultural values imposed by the heteronormative society. An irresistible urge overpowered her in shedding her cultural identity, not even Subhash dares to resist her despite his resentment. Subhash's resentment is symbolic of his belief in the expression of cultural identity as well as patriarchal values imposed on woman. After the birth of Bela, she accepts him as her sexual partner. "It was the only moment he felt no part of her resisting him" (148). Her willingness of sex with Subhash symbolizes her taking control of her own sexuality. In her marital relationship, nowhere she is seen in love with Subhash. Her unwanted motherhood always makes her apprehensive about her future; she lives in an existential fear of something unknown, unpredictable. Her motherhood incarcerates her in a domestic space that is completely hers,

unrecognized, aloof from the domain of the world outside. Her invisibility in the society is conspicuous as "there was seldom anything addressed to her. Only an occasional letter from Manash. She resisted reading them, given what they reminded her of" (153). Her reluctance to read the letter evinces her will to delete the imprints of her past. The marginalization results in her indifference to Subhash and Bela, her daughter and marital relationship become encumbrance for her. Earlier in the marital relationship with Udayan, she was given the same role of housekeeping and serving her husband. Udayan, despite his beliefs in revolution had the same notion of male superiority "at home he'd expected to be served; his only contribution to his meals was to sit and wait for Gauri or her mother-in-law to put a plate for him" (126).

In return of his favours that Subhash does with Gauri by marrying her, Subhash's expectations from Gauri are much beyond sex. Despite his mother's prediction about Gauri that she would not love Subhash, he expects that the memories of past associated with Udayan would fade from Gauri's mind, and she would start to love him as she did Udayan. But time unfolds disappointment before Subhash. Gauri's attitude though unsettling for the readers, is owing to her past experiences. The narrator delineates the inner working of her mind regarding sexual relations with Subhash and bearing second child. Being encumbered with the familial responsibilities, she determines not to bear second child. As for sex, she simply does it for the fulfillment of the physical demands of Subhash and herself. By declining babysitting for Bela to facilitate Gauri's academic pursuit, Subhash limits her niche to child rearing and housekeeping. Though in the absence of Subhash, Gauri identifies herself with Bela vis-a-vis dependence and restrictions imposed on her. In the patriarchal perspective, women are equal to children, frail and passive, vulnerable to harm, hence this physical weakness of women legitimizes their incarceration to domestic sphere that is considered safe and protective. The lack of space for her study in her apartment reminds

Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. Virginia Woolf advocates economic freedom and space for women in order to use their natural flair. The strained conjugal relationship of Gauri and Subhash can be analysed in the light of de Beauvoire's argument. "When two human categories find themselves face-to-face, each one wants to impose its sovereignty on the other; if both hold to this claim equally, a reciprocal relationship is created, either hostile or friendly, but always tense. If one of the two has an advantage over the other, that one prevails and works to maintain the relationship by oppression" (de Beauvoir 73).

The claustrophobic conditions of her life motivate Gauri to search for the meaning of her life beyond the daily chores of domestic sphere. Despite her rebellion to the patriarchy, she is not free from a sense of guilt, of playing truant of her maternal and conjugal duties. The guilt can be attributed to her sustained mental conditioning by the patriarchal society. Notwithstanding her aversion to the patriarchal niche of woman, she tries to come to terms with the fact that Bela is her responsibility. "She was not only ashamed of her feelings but also frightened that the final task Udayan had left her with, the long task of raising Bela, was not bringing meaning to her life" (164). Though Udayan's memories haunt her even after her second marriage, she resents Udayan for betraying her in the end. Even in the end the same sense of shame permeates her. Though brazen in her actions, she never hesitates or compromises her individuality.

Subhash dismisses Gauri by refusing to speak to her for leaving Bela unattended during her errands to the locality and the university. In order to punish Gauri for her refusal to conform to the patriarchal role of a mother, Subhash takes recourse of the traditional way of ostracism. Gauri faces ostracism in the house for her crime of rebellion against the patriarchy. Apologetically, she admits her fault, but in the recesses of her heart she hates Subhash who stands for the patriarchy. Given her economic dependence on Subhash and Bela's childhood,

she remains in the bonds of marriage, despite the ostracism she faces by Subhash. He ceases to maintain physical relations with her, thus completely negates her existence. For Gauri marriage has become "a forced arrangement" (212). Eventually this leads her to an ineluctable desertion of Subhash and her own daughter Bela, when both visit India. The narrator's comment that "Gauri's mind saved her" (213) shows the pragmatism of Gauri in choosing a path of her own; in lieu of suffering in a loveless marriage, she prefers to live apart. Marilyn Frye, Katherine Pyne Addelson, Monique Wittig maintain "The heterosexual celibate, virgin, single parent head of household, marriage resister, or the married woman who insists on an egalitarian marriage contract all apparently qualify as escapees from the category "woman" (Calhoun 563). Thus deserting her marital life, Gauri ceases to be a "woman". Her journey from Rhode Island to California is metaphoric of her dismissal of a repressive patriarchal order based on heteronormativity that curbed her freedom and intellectual pursuit. "She entered a new dimension, a place where a fresh life was given to her. The three hours on her watch that separated her from Bela and Subhash were like a physical barrier, as massive as the mountains she'd flown over to get here" (232). The imprints of her first love with Udayan fade as soon as a hindsight of her forced induction in the Naxal violence by Udayan transpires. At first, she would dedicate her academic pursuit to Udayan, but "by now it was a betrayal of everything he had believed in" (234). Gauri's sexual exploits with different lovers and eventual lesbian relationship with Lorna is symbolic of her defiance to the ideals in which Udayan believed. Lahiri seems to be inspired by Virginia Woolf and Michele Roberts who talk about psychic bisexuality and in their fiction present characters who are sexually oriented towards both man and woman. Given her teaching profession in philosophy, Gauri's sexual orientation may be attributed to her existential quest. In "Gender Bending", Roberts argues for a "bisexual imagination" (Naylor 57). Gauri's bisexual orientation may also be an outcome of her philosophizing

sexuality. Gauri's first meeting with Lorna creates sexual impulses in her towards Lorna, but somehow she manages to control these impulses. The relationship starts only after Lorna takes initiative. Though in the end, she feels humiliated by Lorna as she later snaps her ties as soon as she completes her dissertation under Gauri. Lahiri underlines homophobia as the liaison between the two remains furtive owing to the code of conduct imposed by the society as well as the institution that employs Gauri. Gauri's professional integrity during Lorna's defense concretizes Sarah Hoagland's claim of "Lesbian Ethics". Sarah Hoagland in her "Lesbian Ethics: Towards New Value" stresses on a value system to be adopted by lesbians in order to give meaning to lesbian existence and withdraw from the heterosexual value system (McHugh 71). Despite her physical relationship with Lorna, Gauri adheres to ethical values of professionalism.

Lahiri depicts concomitant social stigma of bisexuality when Bela reproaches Gauri for abandoning her family. Gauri's clandestine relationship with Lorna also evinces stigmatization of bisexuality. Lahiri contends Wittig's claim of Lesbianism as a liberating space for the "escapees from the category "woman"". Had her bisexual orientation be known to Subhash, he would not accept Gauri as her wife and thus she would be deprived of her daughter. These presuppositions may be argued as Gauri's excuse for her abandonment of family. In this regard, Lorna also is not to be blamed for snapping her relationship with Gauri as Lorna's move may be attributed to avoid stigma concomitant her lesbian relationship. In order to pursue her career, she may have to hide lesbianism and pose herself as Gauri's friend. Bela's character is impinged by the circumstances in which she grows up. Bela is audacious in raising her child through single parenting and thus qualifies to be an escapee from the category "woman". Bela's attitude towards her studies portends her non-normative behavior in future. In contrast to Gauri and Subhash, she discontinues her studies and opts for a profession unusual for a girl. Her decision of bearing her child even without informing child's father is another

blow to patriarchy. Despite Subhash's dissuasion of bearing the child, she remains undaunted. Subhash's apprehensions regarding Bela's demeanour put him in a pitiable condition. He remains in an eternal fear of losing his paternity, the only symbol of masculinity that patriarchy/ heteronormative society has set. On the standard of patriarchy, Subhash is failed as neither he has a wife, nor does his own progeny. Though in the end, his courtship with Elise is his attempt to set the things right in his life. Thus in the novel, sexuality determines the characters. Subhash's predicament can be attributed to his normative ways, whereas Gauri and Bela are governed by their nonnormative ways of life.

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Sumana Mehendale & B.K. Anjana

Vision of Life in Dorothy Livesay's *Ice Age*

The maturity of Dorothy Livesay, a well acclaimed Canadian poet, involves her language, tone, images, themes, and emotional state. The poetic renditions in old age are befitting to her maturity. They present her determination and strong belief in life and death, even when her physical strength was dwindling. Her poetic technique has also undergone a transformation over the years and she abandoned formal stanza form, strict metre and line length. She desired for freedom in technique also as a means of self – expression. This evolution and the faith in life-death-life cycle make her a matured poet.

In Livesay's poetry her emotional maturity moves beyond intelligence to a higher state of consciousness, guided by what she senses, feels and intuits. It is a process in which the poet is continuously striving for greater sense of emotional health and is at peace with herself. She is not volatile but has learnt to be at peace, accepts and appreciates "self" because she has come to certain "self-realization". The poet approves and validates her work in this life as a human being, bringing peace, and the persona looks forward to death as a gateway to the next life. Her poetry of this phase reflects that she has no apprehension of the approval or disapproval of the world forces but on the contrary she has learnt to keep a lid on her emotions and feelings, to combat the last battle with death. Livesay asserts the importance of the self and dignity of an individual through her writing because writing is an act of expression and affirmation of will. Certain symbols such as winter; symbolizing death and emptiness, sunset; departure, upward flight; towards spirituality and intellectual

heaven, snow as cessation of life and transformation linked with purity are used that force the idea of maturity and fulfillment in life.

Livesay lived as a strong individual and all her life she has been affianced with desire to write which she continued even in her 70s. She once told McInnis about aging that she did not fear death but only thinks of having enough “reservoir, enough courage” to face it. The poet broods over old age and the condition of the world which, she finds, is heading towards Ice Age. Her poems in the book *Ice Age* deals, as she explains, “with the world’s chaos and crisis. It’s perhaps a rather gloomy book with very few love poems. . . . a good number of poems about aging and poems which, perhaps, might be called mystical—a sense of what lies beyond mankind. It’s quite a serious book” (Interview to Lever).

An ice age is a long interval of time, may be millions of years, when large areas of the earth are covered by ice sheets and alpine glaciers. Here the poet feels that it will take a long time for human beings to bring the earth to its original blessedness, a balanced universe. “. . . the anticipated cold is not that of personal death, but of the death of the whole biosphere at the hands of technology” (Denham 93). We are heading towards an age, which we have fashioned, where life will not be possible and hence she, “a Sybil’s voice”, proclaims :

In this coming cold
 devouring our wheat fields
 . . . endless rain
 eternal snow
 . . . Worse than an animal
 man tortures his prey
 given sun’s energy
 and fire’s blaze
 he has ripped away
 leaf

bird
 flower
 is moving to destroy
 the still centre
 heart’s power (“Ice Age” 70).

When Allan Twigg asked her about the title of the book *Ice Age*, having personal and political implications, she added that it had human implications also. She added :

I have been reading . . . of the possible changes in our world climate. The ice age is moving down again. This is a symbol of what is happening to humanity psychologically and spiritually. And of course personally, as one is approaching seventy, one begins to sense that this will be the end. All I have said will turn to ice (*Strong Voices*).

Variety of experiences and presentation of them in words is her life long search for perennial question “Why we are Here?” After living through various experiences in man – woman relationship nothing could shake her belief in inter-personal relationship based on love and mutual respect “human to human”. The need for love and communication is very strongly projected in some of these poems also, though the emphasis shifted to old age and death. The poet has now grown old and attempts to define self-completion in an onward journey. Her *Ice Age*, produced in 1975, is an evidence of a great artist, it “draws on the accumulated past but zeroes in on the feminine psyche and on aging, often in combination. Grandmother, old lady, elderly artist, underestimated silverhead, experienced explorer, sage individual contemplating extinctions personal and global – the facets glitter separately, then overlap” (New, *DLB* 222).

In “Dawning” the woman realizes that the fire of flesh “has flown/ Instead: a well of clear water/ awaits” her. Symbolically entering a water body, plunging into water represents a passage from the known to the unknown space. The poet wants to enter the quiet region where peace and great rhythm, a new beginning awaits her.

She loved life, like a natural mystic who loves life with all its bodily and sensual experiences. There is no desire to leave this world or body untimely but there is a wish to attain self-completion, to be spiritual without losing the deep pleasures of life. Steeped in the world of beauty and sensuality, pleasure and pain, love and hate, union and separation, sun and moon, parents and children, body and soul, birth and rebirth, the poet passes from one stage to another accepting the challenges and changes. The old age requires more “than skin, flesh, blood” and “coursing heaving heart/ for my soul’s food” (*The Phases of Love*, now onwards mentioned as *TPL*, n.pag). She is caught in the music of the body and the soul and the “doorway appeared/ luminous/ as if light were music/ and music light” (*TPL n.pag*). The image of threshold, door and gateway appears in many poems, it symbolizes entrance into new world, into new life, a passage and communication between two worlds. It can symbolize a passage into life after death which suits the purpose of the aging poet where she stands and broods over the past and looks into the future. In entering the luminous doorway she knows that it would be “loss of all” her “dross and dress / and need”. She does not seek to touch or seize or possess the body but feel the dance “flow/ in dance with no beginning/ and no end” (“Step Beyond” *TPL* n. pag.).

The ever perpetual life flow is what she desires to possess. Her “acceptance of the “inevitable separateness” that is part of human life” is revealed in the poem says Banita (53). She searches for the meaning of human life, “Why we are Here?” She tries to answer it that some women are endowed with highly aroused sensitivity, given “a third ear”. She confronts Layton who once wrote that womb is a “diminutive place” and answers that animal pleasure is not the only thing for which we have come upon the earth. We are here for toiling in the noon and making the world a better place for living. Woman is not just “smell” of her body but a “breath of wind/ in a man’s nostrils” even in old age, “spreading freshness” (“Breathing” *IA* 68). She declares “in the small womb/ lies all the lightening”, associating womb

with a place for regeneration like earth (“Why We Are Here”, *IA* 13). “The stiff brown stubble may be unattractive to look at and painful to lie on but the hard soil is singing with underground water. The establishment of harmony with nature and the obliviousness of self lead to strength derived from being at one with all that is” observes Kudchedkar in “Dorothy Livesay: A Resource” (202).

Likewise she also awaits for the deliverance into a “blessedly complete” whole to “see through/ the windows/beyond” this world and its objects into the next world in “Windows”:

the redeeming silence
no words no thoughts
blind quiet
a touching a searching
into the void (*IA* 65).

The journey from this world into the brightness of the next world is mentioned in these poems.

Aging is a natural process which begins the moment we are born. Nobody can escape it; still we harbor the illusion that we will never become old. But as the cycle of life progresses we become sad and thoughts of aging capture us. Livesay celebrates this stage of life also as a fruit of wisdom and experience. It is the spirituality as practiced in life, being with your family and still progressing on the spiritual path. She welcomes old age followed by death. It is not a journey into darkness and gloom but a march towards light and illumination because after this only there is hope for renewal and rebirth. She does not want anybody to interfere in her thought process and journey for she has learnt “how to look in”.

The revelation of old age and the spirituality connected with it is innate in the matured poems. She feels warm in the “dark cave”, the womb, where “water endlessly/register no time”, the place of “mucous and sweat/semen and swift blood” hence ever continuing

and ever flowing stream in the unknown depths of life is suggested in “The Descent” (*IA* 58). Kudchedkar points out about the female experience in this poem that :

... whereas male myths take the form of onward or upward movement, female quest myths involve descent. Whether she is exploring the human past, her own past or her own consciousness, the woman protagonist must descend where there is no light, no air and no sure foothold.... Women have traditionally been regarded as unclean during child-birth and menstruation and have been conditioned into regarding their own bodies and bodily functions with disgust. But the poet accepts her body and her experience totally. “I have... pulled from my body the after birth” (203).

The image of pulling “the after birth” brings to our imagination the primitive openness and honesty. The experience of child birth is unique to a mother and she as well as the man should accept it as their contribution to the continuation of the world. Bernice Lever, in an interview, asked her about her optimism to which she responded, “It’s just, perhaps, a part of woman’s nature to believe in life going on and in overcoming obstacles. I think women who turn against that go mad. One thinks of Silvia Plath or Virginia Woolf, or Anne Sexton. The women who commit suicide are those that haven’t been able to believe in the life-giving powers”.

She projected the same emotion in her poems also, to travel ahead and believe in life. In “Surfaces” (*IA* 73) she talks of life below the surface “the life-line/ lies far below sub-sea/ unward/ We live/ only to submerge”. “...the sea provides ... the visible life on the surface- duck, gulls-is dependent on the fish who live under the surface” (Denham 91). There is a wish and eagerness to see the “secret garden” (“The Other Side of the Wall” *IA* 49). She has bravely climbed the rock and looked over:

That tangled secret garden
weedful, with fallen trees...
is not fearsome...
Beyond sky is serene
song lulls the air
all things once living have changed
but live on
there.
The wall is death.
My death. Not to be climbed
yet.
I have no fear.

The lines demonstrate that she has reached the pinnacle of her life and is prepared to welcome death fearlessly “to soar/free of pain and fear”, “leap to that new plane” and dance “in motion forever”(“Of Chains” *IA* 51). She is conscious of her dwindling body “shrunk arm.../after sixty winters whitted down/ to the bare bone” (“Cassandra” *IA* 43). In many of these poems she is watching the scene from inside her room, cabin or house, and she is not an active participant in the process. It appears as if she is brooding over her next life in calm and serene mood, “when the time is ripe/air will take over/fire and whirlwind/will send us to cover” (*IA* 69). She wants to experience the fury of death, the cold devouring death, like Robert Browning, and happily sings:

Let old age take over
with violence
ruthless possession
physical knockouts
if only to demonstrate
the other side of the mirror:

(“Salute to Monty Python”, *IA* 15).

One observes, in these later poems, that there is calmness and serenity befitting to the poet's maturity, but at the same time one can discern her lyrical powers were giving away. She has become more prosaic and the stanzas run as if reading a prose piece. In an interview to Marsha, Livesay admitted "I have no need to write poetry any more. The poems I've written in the last few years are much more prosaic than the earlier ones. They're not bursts of lyricism or confessional. They are much more objective" (*ROOM29*). This being a statement by an ardent lover of music and lyric is an evidence of her honesty towards her art. One startling quality of these later poems is abandoning of capitals, commas and full stops, which give an impression that the poet does not want any artificial break in her journey from life to the eternal world and its expression in poems as well.

The poems of Livesay written at old age display increased isolation, lack of energy and fixation on death and evaluating the "validity" of life. She has neither lost her hope nor become melancholic, though weak in body but strong in will, these traits are very much perceptible in her poems. She very strongly articulates her emotions, approvals and disapprovals, basic responses to life and relations, desiring only "bared truth". The final statement about her poetry is from her own poem "A Catechism":

The validity of my life
is a few poems caught and netted
a few strong feelings
about love and dying
and loss
a few tempestuous cloudbursts
because people couldn't be
as great as they might have been
...
The validity of my life
is whether you read this poem

or not
and whether it speeds
your arrow (*IA 66*).

With the coming of old age she hangs on to the theme of growth, attained through sense, experience and reflection. She has read a lot and had practiced "know thyself" and at the final stage of her life has entered into permanent association with death and nature. Her temper was essentially democratic and humanistic, deriving substance and sustenance from the natural world, having faith in the dignity and worth of common man.

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Sapna Parihar

Stephen Gill as a Literary Critic

Stephen Gill has evaluated three prominent British writers in his three separate critical studies. In addition to these studies, he has written several articles and research papers on different writers. He has also written critical introductions for several collections of poems by others. He has propounded a critical theory that he mentions briefly in the prefaces of his own collections of poems and details in his talks. Dr. Anuradha Sharma has brought out a collection of Stephen Gill's interviews. He discusses his critical theory in some of these interviews. However, scholars have not studied Stephen Gill extensively as a literary critic as they have studied him as a poet and fiction writer.

Stephen Gill's first book of criticism, titled *Six Symbolist Plays of Yeats*, was released by S.Chand and Company in India and later by Vesta in Canada. Gill believes that Yeats is primarily a poet. He also believes that the contributions of Yeats as a playwright cannot be ignored to evaluate him properly. For his study Stephen Gill selects the following six plays of Yeats, mainly to trace symbolic elements in them: *The Countess Cathleen*; *On Baile's Strand*; *The Green Helmet*; *At the Hawk's Well*; *The Only Jealousy of Emer*; and *The Death of Cuchulain*. Most of these plays are about the Cuchulain, an Irish super hero. Cuchulain, a wanderer, always found women to fall in love with, but he was never faithful to any of them. He kills his son unknowingly in a fight.

Both Stephen Gill and W.B. Yeats use mythologies, and both are attracted to Japan. Yeats is attracted to Japan for Noh play, and Gill is attracted to Japan for Haiku. Stephen Gill says that "Yeats's dissatisfaction with the naturalistic stage caused him to drink deep at the fountain of Japanese plays." (Yeats 40). The message of these

lines echo in Stephen Gill's preface to his book *Flashes: Trilliums in haiku spirit*. As the genre of haiku, that is of Japanese origin, suited Stephen Gill, "Noh Plays of Japanese origin suited Yeats's genius for he wanted the ritual of passion. The stage for these plays is simple, without any need for an orchestra. The simple beat of a drum or the melody of a flute is enough." Gill further says that "As a playwright, he (Yeats) attempted to wed lyrical elements with the soul of the play—action; he struggled to harmonize them in a perfect whole" (Yeats 41). About Stephen Gill as a critic of W.B. Yeats as a playwright, Professor T.H. Coulson writes:

It will be readily seen that Mr. Gill is thoroughly at home in the often labyrinthine passages of modern Yeatsian interpretation, and that he considers several of the most recent developments in this area, distilling the findings of some and indicating those of others, before putting forward the perspectives in which he finds Yeats's dramatic achievements most sharply illumined. The study of these plays inevitably forces the student to range widely, touching not only upon the folklore of Yeats's own Ireland, and the literary techniques and excitements of contemporary Europe, but leading as far as the Upanishads and the Noh plays of Japan. (Yeats, viii)

Both Stephen Gill and Yeats use mythologies as symbols. Yeats uses Irish mythologies in his Japanese Noh plays and Stephen Gill uses Indian mythologies in his poetry and fiction. Dr. George Hines says that it was natural for Stephen Gill to be attracted to W.B. Yeats whose plays are deeply symbolic. Gill has apparently selected Yeats's five interrelated plays to the great pre-Christian Irish hero Cuchulain, and his *The Countess Cathleen*, relating to a great Christian hero, as illustration of mythical historical personalities who, through nobility and self-sacrifice, exemplify the past glory of Ireland and stand as appropriate models for her future.

In his next critical study, Stephen Gill evaluates H.G. Wells. Stephen Gill openly criticizes H.G. Wells wherever he finds literary weaknesses in his fiction. Wells is influenced by French scientific romances. Stephen Gill's interest in H.G. Wells is because of their common interest in the future of humankind. Like Wells, Gill believes that a parliament of nations is necessary to stop future wars which may lead to complete destruction of the world. To evaluate Wells critically, Stephen Gill selects his early scientific romances. On this issue Dr. Hines notes:

Gill considers that Well's early and most creative work, written, c. 1895-1910, gives equal priority to art as to a message, but that his later work gives such overwhelming priority to content that art is largely absent. Therefore, he chooses mostly Well's early work for analysis and con-siders both its content and its art. His approach is indicated in his section headings: a writer with a purpose, science and socialism, a satirist, an utopist, Wells and naturalism, a World Federalist, and Wells's future. (Hines 53)

Admiring Stephen Gill's literary study on Wells, Robert Durrell writes in *Temiskaming Speaker*, a Canadian newspaper: *Scientific Romances of H. G. Wells will interest science and fiction buffs or individuals interested in the literature of the Transition Period* (Durrell). Norma West Linder, a poet and critic, also from Canada, adds:

Stephen Gill's work arouses in the reader a true curiosity about that man—not only as a writer, but as a human being caught up in "the age of transition". Gill satisfies that curiosity by making judicious use of excerpts from eleven of Wells's best-known works in the scientific romances genre. He goes on to give us satisfying analyses of these works, beginning with *The Time Machine* and following through to a lengthy and rational evaluation of the social satire "Men Like God."

During his long life (1886-1946), H.G. Wells was prolific as he was popular. In Mr. Gill's study, which is divided into four parts, he manages to make known to us this fascinating and complex man—and the society in which he lived. (Linder, Link)

Stephen Gill's third critical study, *Political Convictions of G.B. Shaw*, is about another eminent Irish writer. Whereas Stephen Gill selects Yeats because of his interest in mythologies and *The Upanishad*, he selects Shaw for his ideas. Stephen Gill notes in the introduction of this book :

It is a fact that politics exerts a considerable influence on human beings. Because of its importance, many artists have tried to combine it with literature. Among the predecessors of Shaw, Francis Bacon is one who belongs to this category. Like Machiavelli, he fused politics and literature. The works of both of them are not only excellent pieces of literature, but also hold a treasure of knowledge and information for readers. There is no doubt that many read a play or a poem for pleasure. Still, there are many who would like a coalescence of instructions and enjoyment. These readers and playgoers find Shaw immensely profitable. (Shaw, 7-8)

Shaw is a deeply misunderstood dramatist. To evaluate properly, Stephen Gill analyses him under the following headings: Goals and means; Democracy, Monarchy, Suffragist; Anarchist; International Politics; Realist; and Assessment. In addition to these three critical studies, Stephen Gill has written about his critical theory. Among the earliest galleries, where Stephen Gill's critical theory is displayed, one can include the preface to *the Flame* as well as to the collections of his poems *Shrine* and *Songs Before Shrine*. *The Flame* is Gill's epical and major poem. He says in its preface:

Poetry is an unusual experience that shakes a poet thoroughly. A poem is by a human for humans about a deep inner experience that is symbolized through a language. To describe

or illustrate, poets need tools and the struggle to master the use of the tools is perspiration. Through images and the arrangement of words and other tools, poets convey their experiences to their readers. Poetry is not only to convey that experience to readers, it is also to convey it in a beautiful way and that beautiful way should also be something like a new and delicious dish. That is where perspiration gets involved. (Flame 18)

In the same Preface, Gill explains what he means by perspiration. He also explains what he means by editing, read again and again, and to polish. In *Songs Before Shrine*, he elaborates this point:

I believe that the language of poetry is more compact, energetic, of greater intensity and emotional depth than the language of prose is and it has no room for clichés and unnecessary words. Poetry is a villa of glorious shape where every brick that is chiselled in a unique way belongs to its exact spot. Like other arts, poetry needs revisions for perfection and there is more than one way to do that. Poets are professional workers who keep polishing the tools of their trade.

The tools of an artist keep changing while zigzagging down a labyrinth of experiences. When it is said that artists are born with talent, this implies to me that they have a natural aptitude for particular skills. These aptitudes or talents are rough diamonds to be chiselled and polished to become hard, bright, precious and flawless gems. (Songs viii)

Stephen Gill advises creative artists to keep revising their works to be close to perfection and perfection can never be achieved because perfection is the attribute of only God. Peace is also the attribute of God, and for Stephen Gill peace is beauty. He says,

Poetry is an art and I do not try to break rules of the art for the sake of the propagation of my views. I am a votary of beauty and beauty is peace. I use poetry also to escape. I feel relieved when I clean the glasses of the self to glimpse a panoramic view of a new island. I am at my best when my fingers tingle and my arms begin to cry. That is the time when I feel happy that I am able to communicate better with the inner self and give birth to my thoughts and feelings. I call this process a type of spiritual liberation. (Songs 21)

The manure of Stephen Gill's literary theory is sprinkled in the introductions of his own works. He nourishes and uses this manure and advises others to use it to produce a better crop of their writings. Dr. Sudhir Arora expresses this view in his paper "Stephen Gill's Craft in *The Flame*," published in *The Flame Unmasked*. This is the view also of Dr. Rajput when she says:

The prefaces of the books and especially of the books of poetry usually give a graphic glance in the psychic of a poet and have some instances or notes on writing an ideal poetry. Like Dryden or T.S. Eliot, Stephen Gill's criticism is chiefly in the form of prefaces where he both justifies his own poetic creations and propounds certain rules and regulation of writing ideal poetry. He is one of those chosen few poets of the world who besides, providing spiritual solace and intellectual pabulum, gives valuable notes (both subjective and objective) on poetry and poetic craftsmanship. (Singh, S. 44)

As a critic Stephen Gill is known mostly for his ideas concerning creativity. He says that what an artist brings out was originally abstract. He calls this abstract form the god within. He uses the word the god within for experiences, ideas, feelings and dreams which are in abstract form. An artist gives them a concrete form by bringing them out or by giving them birth. It is a painful process. A poet uses different techniques and tools to shape this god within. He says when

an artist brings out the god within, it is in the shape of a rough diamond. An artist chisels this rough diamond to make it more presentable. He elaborates this process in his article "Symbolism With Reference to My Poetry":

The accurate representation of the feelings, thoughts, moods, sights, ideas and a variety of emotions is a serious enigma which poets face. Their representations are about personal opinions that are in the mind. Without going into philosophical or logical depth, I call them the god within. Language is inadequate to bring out the god within, because this god is intangible. In addition to a mastery over the language, communicators need special skills and movements of hands, raising of eyebrows, changing tones, shrugging of shoulders and other gestures. Still, communications are not fully accurate and are likely to be misunderstood. Verbosity does not help either. Communication becomes more difficult in poetry because it is a form of condensed expression.

Therefore, poets use symbols to represent the god within at a higher level and also to add beauty. They take the help of metaphors to represent the god within. Aristotle said that metaphor is the soul of poetry. Metaphor is a figure of speech that is used for implied comparison. I have used this device freely in my poetry, such as "sickles of bigotry"¹; "pilots of words"²; "snakes of personal migraines"³; "the albatross of intolerance"⁴; and "a pyramid of justice"⁵ to quote a few. (Singh 145)

While discussing about poetry with Professor Dr. Nilanshu Agarwal, Stephen Gill says that poetry is neither the definition of Wordsworth nor the definition of T.S. Eliot. He says that poetry is an art for which just natural talent is not enough. As fishers need training to catch fish, artists need training to catch the airy being of their art. Gill illustrates:

One element that is common in both definitions, and in most others, is the presence of emotions. I will call these emotions airy beings. With their tools poets catch the airy beings in the net of their words. It is like catching fish in a sea. Painters catch them in the net of their colors with the hands of their brushes. Dancers catch them in the net of the movements with their hands, eyes, brows and other body parts. These are different techniques that do the same work.

Poets train themselves to catch airy beings. I call these airy beings the robins of my art in my preface to *The Flame*. There I say that these robins are not meant to be caged. They are the birds of freedom. They enjoy their freedom when poets send them to publications or present them in a book for the enjoyment of the reader.

In my poem "Oars", I call them "naked creatures of waves." A poet "clothes them with images / stitched with words" (*Songs Before Shrine* 36). Poets are wordsmiths, who have knowledge and education about the tools that are used to clothe these airy beings in a graceful way. (*Contemporary Vib.*, 33-38)

The next step that Stephen Gill discusses is more or less connected with house cleaning. He discusses house cleaning in his prefaces and elaborately in his talks and interviews.

The whole process of writing in Gill's critical theory is divided into two parts. The first part is to bring out the god within. This god is formless. The question is how to give it a concrete form. Different artists use different technique to catch these abstract elements or the airy beings. It is like catching fish in the sea. Painters catch these airy beings with the net of their colors and brush, dancers catch them in the net of the movements of their legs, hands and other parts of their body, and poets catch them in the net of their words. To weave a rainbow of beauty, poets adjust words, using some techniques. Gill

stresses the need for revision to chisel what comes out in the form of raw diamonds. It is like letting the wheat and dross grow together. When the crop is harvested, a farmer separates the wheat from the dross that is to be thrown away or burnt. In the same way whatever comes from inside is a mixture of good and bad. It depends on education and training to separate good from the dross. Gill calls this process chiseling also. It may be called also the process of refinement that needs artistic tools.

Gill uses his own artistic tools to refine his poetry, advises others to use them, and also judges every poet. He advocates using the same tools to produce the poem that will touch a heart. This is what he says to Dr. A.N. Choudhary: "A good poem will touch my soul, and a poem will touch my soul if it follows the rules of craftsmanship that includes the use of imagery, language, and fresh phrases. Fat and over-used expressions are the pesticides that irritate me. A good poem is mostly bones and muscles" (Choudhary, 1-10).

To reduce a poem to bones and muscles, a poet has to use a chisel. For chiseling he suggests seven tools to shape an artistic chariot. One of the tools is Spirit. By spirit he means something that is an emotional force. He calls this force dedication or passion or an obsession for writing. He believes that an artist should get rid of any thing that is useless including redundant works. He calls these useless elements fat, because they do not contribute to the main theme of the writing. The second tool that he uses is the important part of his critical theory. It is imagery. He says it is a tool that helps poet or artist to represent the god within. He says poetry is not a set of general statements. He believes that creative artist should develop new and individual symbols. As a critic Stephen Gill is against the use of cliché or trite expression. Stephen Gill's third critical tool is to get rid of anything that is stale. He advocates using fresh or new symbols. His next intellectual or creative tool is to produce tone, and tone is the voice of a speaker that indicates if the speaker is angry or

preachy or hateful. A poet expresses the tone through words and expressions. The fifth critical tool of Stephen Gill is to differentiate poetry from prose. He believes that a poem should be more tight and compact than the prose. In a few words it is economy of expressions. His sixth tool is to avoid propaganda. In other words a poet should not be a direct priest.

Poems that are preachy are not admired much. One can be preachy without being obvious. If I have to preach something, I use prose. Poetry is an aesthetic art and I want to keep it that way. I use peace as a subject matter and toil to handle it as a piece of art. Art is beauty. When I read a poem, I look for aesthetic qualities, not for information and knowledge. For knowledge or information, I will read books in prose. This is what readers expect. Therefore I avoid being preachy in my poetry. I believe that to achieve peace, the best means are the peaceful means. If I have to preach, I will use the media of prose, where I can use logic and reasoning to get my message across. (Con. Vib. 33-38)

Seventh tool of Stephen Gill is to use literary devices such as alliteration, consonants and assonance to create beauty and grace. His epical poem *The Flame* is filled with the result of the seventh tool.

It would be easy to say that Stephen Gill believes in experimentation and hard work like a good cook. He keeps trying to find right type of spices to prepare an ideal meal. He believes that a work of art is largely perspiration which is the out come of a passion. Poetry for him is a passion. That is what he says in his interview with Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal:

When a person perceives an object—beautiful or ugly—it produces a reaction or feelings. Those feelings, reactions or sentiments are formless. A poet expresses those formless objects in a sensible form. One can use a cliché that is easy

and needs no effort, but there is no inventiveness in its use. One can find new ways and modes to express the object. That needs real effort. That is called individual approach—a distinctive element—fresh memorable piece of art. Such a treatment needs intellectual exercise. A poet has to manage an unmanageable horse of emotions that needs skills, guidance and control to be able to achieve smooth efficient operation of a poem. In order to achieve this object, a poet needs time to work in different ways to bring those feelings out. In other words, it needs revisions. Let me also emphasize that poetry is as demanding as any art is. It demands devotion, skill and professionalism. (*Con. Vibes vol.4*)

The Expositor (Canada) says that Stephen Gill “builds bridges with books.” A literary critic evaluates and interprets creative literature. Some of these literary critics have their own theory. Stephen Gill also has his own literary theory that he follows and also advocates others to follow. With his literary theory Stephen Gill shapes up the bridges of books into the pieces of grace and beauty.

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Shruti Agrawal

Idea of Heroism and Villainy in European Literature

ABSTRACT :

A person is a hero, or villain, is all up to which actions of a person is looked upon. Any person can be viewed as a hero or villain, depending on which aspects of their life we choose to study. No person can justifiably be called a hero or villain, because people's perception and their ideas are subject to change, and it also depends on the past experiences of each individual person.

What defines a hero? What about a villain? Good and Evil? Are they really two sides of the same coin? Or something less defined, something more *liminal*? What makes a hero a hero and what makes a villain a villain, depends upon our own ideas of good and bad and how we perceive someone. It is what classifies them as what they are. If we just think about what a particular has been through, and try to more or less put ourselves in that person's shoes, we would be able to better understand that person, and where he comes from.

This paper discusses different heroes and heroine throughout history and what causes these specific people to be thought of as a "hero," or "heroine." When we consider all the factors that go into making a person act or think a certain way, the realization dawns that no one can be defined in one word. This is supported by details from the earlier periods of the lives of the heroes or heroine. This paper tries to establish the fact that that heroism and villainy are just ideas of our own devices.

Keywords : Heroism, hero, villainy, villain, character development, Shakespeare, Bram Stoker, Mary Shelly, Frankenstein, Dostoyevsky.

Classification

It is tempting to classify literary, cinematic, and historical characters into groups. The trouble, of course, is that such labels can be misleading at best, and severely subjective and variable. When using terms such as hero, villain, anti-hero, anti-villain, or adventurer, it is important to remember how vague and movable the borders really are, and to ask why a certain label is or should be placed on a specific character. It is never enough to simply classify a character or a person. One must take into consideration what the creator of this character had in mind, what circumstances affected this person's actions, what culture or society this person came from, what his or her own beliefs or intentions may be, and finally, how our own principles, prejudices, and associations may influence our perceptions.

What makes a person a hero or a villain? How much comes from inner predisposition, from personal destiny, from mere interpretation? Is someone obliged to become a hero or villain by virtue of their existence, or are heroes and villains moulded over time with an outcome that could potentially have gone either way? How much of it is voluntary, and how many of these people truly anticipate (and care) how they will be interpreted by others?

Interpretation of Hero And Villain

One of the harshest fates that can be allotted to a historical figure is misinterpretation through both historical and literary sources, especially if such sources manage to excite public interest and admiration. Two excellent examples of this principle are Richard II and Richard III. Both deposed and killed, and both destined to be used as subjects in the plays of William Shakespeare, these two kings have suffered much from misinterpretation.

Richard II has been branded as a weak-natured tyrant who betrayed his family and practically ruined England by his extravagance. He was far from modest, but he was hardly a villain in the classical

sense of the term. Crowned at the age of eleven, Richard hardly had time to establish his reputation before it was methodically mangled by his own uncles, who felt cheated by his coronation. He was raised in a stifling atmosphere thick with intrigue and murder threats, in which his uncle John of Gaunt (the “time-honoured Lancaster” of Shakespeare’s play) was one of his biggest problems.

Richard’s confiscation of the Lancastrian estates after John of Gaunt’s death was a gesture of self-defence rather than of idle greed. His fears were more than justified when he was deposed and probably murdered by John of Gaunt’s son, the future Henry IV. The beauty of Shakespeare’s play, as well as the effects of propaganda both before and after Richard’s death have all but eliminated his chances of ever being assessed fairly for his intellect, his refined taste, and his fascinating personality, rather than his family squabbles.

Richard III suffered an even harsher fate at Shakespeare’s hands. He is now the anti-Christ, the epitome of villainy. Shakespeare has created a villain so fascinating, twisted, malicious, and irresistible, that hardly anyone even wants to know what he was really like. As in the case of Richard II, he who wins has the last word. After the Battle of Bosworth, Tudor sources overflowed with the most outrageous descriptions and accusations of Richard, ultimately turning him into a hideous monster that destroyed his entire family out of sheer malice. Shakespeare immortalized this vision through the medium of his play, giving life to the myth.

Few of the people who read and enjoy Shakespeare’s play ever learn that Richard was a talented administrator, with neither a hump nor a club foot, who also happened to be a caring family man and a loyal brother. Both men overcame enormous obstacles in their lives and did many noble and productive things. Richard II transformed every aspect of English culture, from cookery to fashion, and enthusiastically supported Chaucer. Richard III united his war-torn country and helped end the Wars of the Roses long before Henry

Tudor claimed that honour for himself. Are these men heroes or villains, and is it really fair to judge at all? But if we are going to be judgmental, why not form our opinions for ourselves before letting someone else feed them to us?

Some historical figures though not technically vilified by history may take a new and interesting turn for the worst through faulty identification. The infamous figure of Napoleon Bonaparte has influenced an unlimited number of books, films, and people. People want to understand Napoleon, to compete with Napoleon, and most of all – to be Napoleon. His incredible political and social rise through his own talents and ambition has made him an almost mythic figure. The trouble is that many are inspired for all the wrong reasons, and abuse his name to cover their own odd fantasies and egomaniacal schemes.

Identification with Napoleon has been used to justify tyranny, deception, treason, treachery, insanity, even murder. Poor Napoleon who never had half of the thoughts or intentions ascribed to him by his ardent disciples would have cringed at the horrid things they did in his name. He may have been no saint, but he was definitely not Raskolnikov from Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Raskolnikov randomly sets out to murder a helpless old woman, just to see if he can. He seems to feel that the success of this type of experiment will give him superiority over mankind, as if lack of a conscience somehow makes him a stronger and more efficient human being. He seems to be under the illusion that Napoleon was able to achieve what he did because he did possess this laudable trait.

He neglects to note that Napoleon had very clear goals and purposes that he fought for, and that killing in battle for a cause, is vastly different from the idle murder of an unarmed opponent. It is not surprising that this act gives Raskolnikov neither the unlimited power, nor the satisfaction that he imagined. Unfortunately, he is not

the first or the last to deliberately misinterpret Napoleon to fit his own desires, and this usage does Napoleon's public image no favours.

An interesting contrast to Raskolnikov is the character of Marcello from Alberto Moravia's *The Conformist*. Where Raskolnikov is ready to kill to prove that he is special, Marcello goes to the same lengths to prove the opposite. He is obsessed with being the same as everybody else. He is constantly torn between his violent, subconscious urges, and a desperate desire to be "normal". He draws his conception of what is "normal" from observing the surface appearances and attitudes of those around him. He generalizes what he sees, almost denying the potential for individuality. When he is faced with the necessity to deal with people on an individual basis, he cringes in horror and disgust. He wants to be just like "everyone", but not like any of the specific people he sees. He is terrified of being unique on any level, and he fears his own bloodthirstiness, not for its own sake, but because he is unable to identify the same types of instincts in anyone he knows.

If these are villains, what constitutes a hero? If a hero is defined merely as someone who sacrifices himself for the good of others (at least up to a certain point), there are many "heroes" that hardly stand up to scrutiny. Just because someone does good to others doesn't mean he/she gets nothing from it for him/herself. In fact one may bring an enormous amount of benefit to someone without sacrificing oneself at all. Does that make them any less of a hero? Also, just because a person is defined as hero, either in the context of a literary work, or through historical interpretation, doesn't mean that on closer inspection they may not prove to be controversial at best. The interpretation of the reader is bound to colour every aspect of the work itself.

Just as historical figures can be vilified unjustly through literature, they can also be elevated to a position they do not deserve. In William Shakespeare's *Richard II* and *Richard III*, the "heroes" Henry IV

and Henry VII, are shown as liberators, freeing England from oppression, tyranny, and discord. Regardless of how bland these actual characters are in the plays (Shakespeare himself was evidently more interested in the “villains”), they are meant to be admired for what they’ve done for England. What *have* they done? By destroying the direct line of succession, Henry IV sparked a centuries-long civil conflict, which all but annihilated every descendant of Edward III within eighty-six years.

As aptly noted by the Bishop of Carlisle in Act IV of *Richard II*, “. . . Disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny/ shall here inhabit, and this land be called/ the field of Golgotha and dead men’s skulls”. Now, who wouldn’t want to be rescued from tyranny that way? Henry VII virtuously united England by killing Richard III – the last legitimate heir to the throne. He also took care to destroy all of Richard’s illegitimate children, as well as his nephews (the children of George, Duke of Clarence, and Richard’s sisters). Wholesale slaughter of potential heirs to the throne – doesn’t that sound just like the popular image of Richard III? These two heroes certainly left quite a trail of “dead men’s skulls” in their wake.

It seems like a heroic thing to do, when a woman sacrifices her own pride and integrity to fight the prejudices of society and support herself and her impoverished sister. In fact, in Wilkie Collins’s novel *No Name*, Magdalen Vanstone is presented by the author as a self-sacrificing heroic figure. The revelation of an awful secret casts the youthful Magdalen and her sweet but helpless sister, Norah into the street after their parents’ untimely demise. It is discovered that the Vanstone daughters are illegitimate – an awful position for Victorian-era England. As they are entitled to none of their parents’ money, it passes to their father’s estranged brother, who refuses to help the two desolate girls.

Magdalen’s unscrupulous and tireless efforts to reclaim her father’s fortune by any means would seem like an almost noble quest,

considering her position. Wilkie Collins himself is full of admiration for his character’s ability to defy the restrictions of society and break down all social barriers to save her sister and herself from poverty. But do the ends justify the means? As various relatives meet their deaths and the money is passed on from person to person, Magdalen follows it in a number of guises intriguing against each person the money comes to. The original thought may have been noble. Seducing her ill and romantically inexperienced cousin, Noel, and marrying him under an assumed name is not. She uses all of his weakness against him, deliberately neglects his frail health, mercilessly exploits his love for her to get him to sign a will in her name, and finally drives him to his death at the age of thirty – hardly the actions of a heroine.

A case could be made for seeing her as an adventurer, but she doesn’t gain any enjoyment from her journey, and there is no venturesome thrill in her actions. Throughout the novel she wallows in self-pity, seeing herself as a tragic figure abused by fate and society. She never stops to think of the people whose skulls she crushes beneath her feet as she defends her lost rights. Any means at her disposal are acceptable if they can defeat her enemies – even enemies who have no idea she is fighting them. An adventurer need not have impenetrable moral principles, but at least some moral boundaries are expected. Pitilessly destroying an opponent who doesn’t fight back is one of those boundaries.

A similar predicament is explored in Willkie Collins’s most famous novel, *The Woman in White*. The seemingly irreproachable Sir Percival Glyde has a few nasty secrets of his own – namely his illegitimacy. Knowing that if this information became public he would lose his wealth, his estate, his title, his position in society, and everything he holds dear, he is ready to go to any lengths to protect himself. It is true that he is by nature a cruel and egocentric individual, and that the methods he uses are at least partly dictated by his own sadistic inclinations.

However, these negative sides of his nature might never have been revealed to such a great extent if the laws and morals of his society had not made him desperate. He commits a series of heinous crimes that he may otherwise never have been motivated to commit, and many innocent people suffer in the process. His villainous acts may be voluntary, but the situation that caused him to make such a decision in the first place is not his fault. His accidental death in an attempt to destroy the last remaining evidence of his secret is a vivid illustration of how the limitations of society can destroy a person morally and physically.

If suffering is essential to heroism, why is a villain's suffering so much less valuable? Many of the most vivid villains in literature were not necessarily born to be evil. A "villain" can acquire many of his malicious and vengeful traits through the injustice and cruelty of those around him. What a person becomes is very closely related to the way he/she was raised and treated by society. Many literary villains are the way they are not because they are randomly evil, but because they were given no other choice. They many have scores of admirable qualities and volumes of wasted potential that perhaps could have made them heroes or at least content human beings in a better world.

It is wrong to discard those labelled as villains as mere forces of darkness for the hero to defeat. We must stop and think – who are they really, and what made them what they are? Do they deserve to be destroyed, or are they just misunderstood? Every society is rife with rules, prejudices, and beliefs that deeply infiltrate its members. What happens to someone who doesn't fit these conventions, when "different" is almost invariably synonymous to "wrong" and "dangerous"?

No matter how much people assert their own spirituality, human beings are by nature shallow creatures. The first image an infant learns to identify is a human face, and we never stop judging people by their appearance. The first thing you encounter when you meet

someone is their physical appearance, and unless the relationship develops any further it is all you are left to judge the person by. It is small wonder then, that attractiveness is so often associated with goodness, virtue, and sweetness of disposition, and ugliness is seen as a sign of hidden malice and frightening potential. This sad truth is explored in depth in Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera*. Erik, the Phantom himself, is forced into hiding simply because of his disfigured face. He is not by nature a vicious person. In fact, he desperately longs for the tenderness and understanding that was denied him from birth.

Like the hunchbacked Quasimodo, from Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, Erik is constantly plagued by hatred, revulsion, and even outright aggression, simply because of the way he looks. Even the sensitive, romantic young opera singer, Christine does not have the courage to accept him the way he is. A musical and engineering genius, Erik is forced to conceal himself in the basements of the Paris Opera House. It is the only way he can stay alive and still have the joys of music to console him. Christine is fascinated by his music, she accepts his invisible help in her singing lessons, and indulges in prolonged conversations with him.

Inevitably, the spell is broken the moment she sees his face. They share the same interests, she knows he has a rich and beautiful soul, she is touched and entranced by his personality; why should his face change everything? Again like Quasimodo, he resorts to kidnapping hoping to win the warmth that he can never have. He is made bitter by constant rejection, he learns to kill because of the constant need for self-defense, and he quickly realizes that nothing in life will be given to him willingly, not even simple human affection. Erik and Quasimodo can't afford the luxury of being good.

This rejection is even more painful in the case of so-called "monsters". Not only are these characters considered repulsive – they are seen as inhuman. The titular character in Bram Stoker's

Dracula may be a vampire, but that does not imply that he has no remnants of human feeling. He can act and think for himself, just like a human being, so why can he not feel as well? Sadly, a creature that feeds on blood can hardly be a member of human society. Unlike Erik, he is dangerous by his very nature. He is capable of destroying anyone he comes in contact with, and is hardly able to control it. Of course he isn't really given a choice about being isolated. Like Erik he learns to expect fear and violence, and give exactly what is expected of him.

Conclusion:

One cannot help wondering, however, whether his dream of moving from Transylvania to London is more than just a desire to graze on new pastures. Perhaps what he really wants is to escape the confinement of his own curse and start a new life. Vampirism isn't a bad habit - it is a disease. One does not reject one's relatives and friends if they are contagiously ill, so why vampirism should be seen any differently? *Dracula* attacks because he is expected to, and because he knows that the moment he lets down his guard he will find himself with a stake in his heart.

The same type of understanding drives the unfortunate creature created by Victor Frankenstein in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Considering that he is sewn up out of the bodies of dead criminals as part of a perverse experiment in the creation of life, it can almost be said the monster *is* made to be a villain. However it soon becomes obvious that he is just a confused, naïve child whose first contact with the cruelty of humanity is what pushes him to the dark side. His hideous appearance and unnatural origin immediately excite horror and aggression in anyone he meets.

All his efforts at being peaceful, decent, and caring are soon shattered against an impenetrable wall of fear. He is constantly attacked and chased down like a wild animal, before he even has a chance to talk. Embittered and disillusioned he seeks vengeance

against the man who created him for his own ambition and then abandoned him to escape the responsibility. One cannot help but notice that the monster is the true victim in this scenario, not the villain. Victor Frankenstein, on the other hand, is a much darker figure. Ambitious, talented, and utterly irresponsible, he creates new life without stopping to consider the consequences, and when it is too late, he runs to save himself from any further unpleasantness. Unlike the monster, he knows exactly what he is doing and deliberately makes the wrong choice, ultimately destroying everyone around him, including himself.

When one considers all the factors that go into making a person act or think a certain way, the realization dawns that no one can be defined in one word. In the stories of our own lives, we may be villains to some and heroes to others. That is why, if we must categorize people, we should do it in a way that takes into account both the subjective nature of such a division, and the development of the case at hand.

Judgment is a dangerous thing. It can lead us to misconceptions and error, to lose sight of things that may transform the image altogether. For some, judgment may lead to undeserved elevation or help them find a strength they didn't know they had. For others, unfairly placed, or premature judgment, can lead them on to their destruction, or to hurt and destroy others. We cannot change the mistakes that made these people what they are, or distorted their reputations beyond recall. We can however do them the justice of thinking before we judge and giving them the understanding that so many have died for.

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Kavita Tyagi

Eco- Feminism in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

Ecofeminism represents movements and philosophies which link feminism with ecology. The term was coined by the French writer Françoise d'Eaubonne in her book, *Le Féminisme ou la Mort* (1974). Ecofeminism argues that there is a connection between women and nature. Ecofeminism is a movement that calls for a new way of thinking about nature, politics, and feminism. Ecofeminist theory rejects previously held patriarchal paradigms and holds that the domination of women by men is intimately linked to the destruction of the environment. This paper will present the special connection women have to the environment through their daily interactions as this connection has been ignored in the society primarily. The paper seeks to outline the essence of Ecofeminism in the work of Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* which explicitly foregrounds woman character along with nature. At the same time, I will try to conceptualize how Shashi Deshpande, the Indian woman novelist of modern time has symbolized this issue in this literary text.

The intimate consociation of nature and literature is portrayed in the literary works of poets and writers of all ages ubiquitously. The aim of the ecocritics is to point up the rapport of nature and society as contextualized by the writers in their works. In this frame of reference, the terms which have gained utmost importance are ecology and ecocriticism. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, "Ecology is the branch of biology that deals with relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings." Unwittingly, changes in the environment have impinged upon civilization so intensely that the concern for ecological subjects has become a crucial issue today.

This uprising threat to humanity from interminable misuse of our ecosystem has seized the attention of the writers in recent past. The textualization of the above said environmental problems in literary works has given rise to a new division of literary theory, namely ecocriticism which explores and analyzes, texts on nature writing to add to the catalogue in literary and cultural studies, environmental awareness in literary texts, illustration of human- non-human relationship and socio- political framework which includes Marxist, Ecofeminist and other approaches for contextualizing literary and cultural works. Yet, the most important approach within ecocriticism and ecological activism is that of the ecofeminists.

According to Webster's *New World Encyclopedia*, "Eco-feminism is a movement or theory that applies feminist principles and ideas to ecological issues". It is one of the forms of feminism which has emanated through the amalgamation of feminism and environmentalism.

Ecofeminist theory originates from the vital hypothesis that both women and nature are uniformly harassed by male dominating society. The central claims which constitute the heart of this study are:-

- * The coercion of both women and nature are annexed.
- * To unearth the aforesaid association in order to explain both the oppression of women and nature.
- * Feminist analysis must cover ecological vision.
- * A feminist context must be an element of any proposed ecological solution.

Therefore, ecofeminists foresee a vision of the world which would place the oppressed entities of ecosystem as co- members of the ecological populace.

The Indian women writers from the twentieth century onwards, whose literary works have advocated the concept of ecology in

relation to woman, include Kamala Markandaya, Mahashweta Devi, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Usha K.R, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai. Anita Desai explores the disturbed psyche of the modern Indian women. Her protagonists are usually highly intellectual women who end up on the verge of mental crisis in their attempt to manage a home and children and find emotional fulfilment. Nayantara Sehgal also deals with problems concerning women. She writes sensitively of the way women suffer owing to sexist bias in a patriarchal set up.

There are eco-feminist concerns in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*. The former novel is a chronicle of sufferings of peasants, especially of Rukmani and Nathan and their family in colonial India. In this novel Markandaya gives a pathetic account of the sufferings undergone by women in a male dominated world mainly in the person of Rukmani whose sufferings certainly have more general ramifications than her personal losses.

The eco-feminist concerns are perceptible in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* also. The writer excels in delineating the sufferings, traumas, exploitation and submissiveness of a middle class educated woman who is more or less bound to undergo physical tortures and sexual assaults in society. She makes her female protagonists search for self and discover their identity. The novel has a metropolitan city as its main locale. We see the writer raising feminist issues in a city unlike those presented in rural setting by Kamala Markandaya in *Nectar in a Sieve*. The city has its own nuances and malaise. Jaya's discomfort on her arrival in the city shows her sense of displacement. The newsreel in the cinema hall is a significant peep into the displaced plight of the displaced ruralites. The concrete jungle of the metropolitan city marks the total erosion of flora and fauna that has been shown triggered by industrialization in *Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya.

The critical analysis of *That Long Silence* from an ecofeminist's perspective might add to the scanty literary catalogue on ecocriticism in contemporary Indian women writings. She was awarded Sahitya Akademy Award for the novel *That Long Silence*. She has penned down six novels: *The Binding Vine*, *Matter of Time*, *That Long Silence*, *Roots and Shadows*, and *Small Remedies* along with children's books and collection of short stories. She delineates the lives of many women enclosed within domestic space and enduring different forms of male coercion and self destruction. Her protagonists try to free themselves from gender inequalities they experience at home, yet their break from tradition causes a serious sense of guilt and trauma since their roots are in orthodox Indian customs and religion. In an interview Shashi herself tells:

The women in my books are people who come to realize what it is to be a woman in the process of their own lives and substitution them not through books and theories? I think feminism is an entirely personalized perception. It is when you start questioning preconceived notions about your roles. I don't think there is anything inherent in a woman apart from the fact she can conceive. All other things are equally important for them as they are for men. (Reddy & Y.S, 85)

One cannot ignore the fact that "silence" has been used by the novelist as a highly meaningful and multilayered metaphor. It stands for surrender, passivity, acquiescence and letting the other take crucial decisions on matters affecting one vitally. This word becomes indicative of protagonist Jaya's helplessness and helplessness of other characters like Kusum, Vimla, her mother-in law, Ravi's wife Asha, the woman in the Nair family. It reduces the affected women to walking corpses even if it does not lead to their physical death. It is in this context Jaya's actions are to be viewed. The whole story revolves around the marital relationship of Jaya, a modern educated woman and Mohan, a middle class educated young man but old in his outlook on women. Despite their settlement in Bombay, Jaya's

roots are in Saptagiri and Mohan's is in Ambegaon. The gradual struggle and tension in their life explores how country side people from middle class background have to suffer in silence and estrangeness because of mechanical city life bereft of feelings. The changes in Jaya's life come after their shifting to Bombay Churchgate flat as well as their shifting from Churchgate to Dadar. It is solely because of Mohan's male power attitude towards her.

Mohan is very much an emblem of domineering psyche. It may be because of the environment in which he is brought up amid the wants of basic necessities. He himself recollects his father who paid scant attention to his wife and treated her as an object of sexuality. The relation between his father and mother was of master and slave. Yet Mohan completes his studies remaining unmindful of his poverty and his father's cruelty. Unfortunately the ingredients which have remained buried in the unconscious mind of Mohan start enhancing with the passage of time. He starts showing his rough and dominating attitude many a time in the story towards his wife and his son Rahul. When one short story written by her bags 1st prize and is published in a magazine, he displays insensitivity and intolerance about a particular incident as he fears lest it should reveal their own relationship. The story was about a couple—a man who can not reach out to his wife except her body. Herein, the writer reveals the hypocrisy and double standards of so called Indian husbands.

Jaya feels all the more dejected, when she comes to know the death of her mother-in-law who is a living symbol of women's subjugation, as she dies in silent suffering. She comes to know Mohan's mother died when she went to a midwife for the abortion. Jaya can not escape herself from thinking about the fate of Vimla, Mohan's sister who dies of tumour in her ovaries. She refrains from taking cure as she does not want her ovaries to be removed as it will make her barren forever. It makes the protagonist ponder over the mentality of Indian people when she thinks of the sweepresses, Jeeja

and Nayana. Jeeja's husband marries another woman due to her barrenness and Nayana loses her life in the fifth pregnancy. All such incidents inspire her to find out the lost Jaya in playing the role of a dutiful daughter, wife and mother. It continues till her husband is involved in a bribery case. She feels guilty conscience and is not ready to become a partner in his wrong doing. So, she maintains her silent looks and indifferent attitude towards the whole affair, whereas Mohan is so much disturbed, uncomfortable and restless. Mohan expects at this vocal support from Jaya who keeps mum. Irritated with Jaya's silent looks, once he comments: "I know you, he said and, as if to reassure himself, repeated, after all these years together, don't you think I know you well enough?" (*That Long Silence*, 122)

Once Mohan bursts out to Jaya "Why don't you say something? You don't seem interested. It seems to me you just don't care." (*That Long Silence*, 32) Thus she is misunderstood and mistaken as an indifferent wife. When Mohan leaves the home in a huff, Jaya feels perturbed and starts feeling like a widow who can't live without her husband. Here, Jaya's search for identity reaches the peak point. She decides to break this silence, makes a search for her husband and takes a practical decision of leaving for Churchgate. After she reaches there, she receives a phone bell from Ashok and Rupa informing that her son, Rahul, who along with his sister Rati had gone for a trip, is missing. Now she feels disturbed and more miserable almost at the verge of madness. She goes back to Dada, she restores herself only when she comes to know; Rahul is at Saptagiri and is coming back. She also feels much calm after reading Mohan's telegram of coming back. She analyses and decides:

It is true. We don't change overnight. It's possible that we may not change even over long periods of time. But we can always hope. Without that life would be impossible. And if

there is any thing I know now it is this: life has always to be made possible. (*That Long Silence*, 193)

The ending remarks in the novel suggest that change in the lives of women is likely to come, it may take time. Its fair reflection is their increasing sense of awareness towards their individuality and liberty by keeping balance between traditionality and modernity.

Shashi Deshpande is said to be writing about middle class educated women but we find that these women with their displacement from the semi rural to the urban settings also reflect the author's environment concerns. Though these ecological issues remain peripheral to her feminist concerns, they form an important aspect of Shashi Deshpande's feminist vision. In *That Long Silence*, novelist's ecological concerns are reflected in beautiful images taken from natural world and some prominent incidents relating to life at Saptagiri, Ambegaon, Delhi and Bombay. Mohan's reference to Delhi life speaks for change in the existing environment full of injustice, dirt and squalor.

Shashi Deshpande brilliantly delineates the linkage between oppressed sections such as woman and nature, holds male domination and patriarchal setup of Indian society responsible. The images in the novel vitally point this out. The scene, when Mohan and Jaya ascend the stairs, exposes the filth lying behind the curtain. As it has been depicted:

A trail of garbage on the soiled cement stairs, cigarette butts, scraps of papers bits of vegetable peel and red stains squirt of paan stained spit-on the wall, macabrely brightening up the dinginess. (*That Long Silence*, 7)

Such ugliness, dirt, squalour and garbage is a common sight in the cities like Bombay. The novelist also shows how nature has been given artificial shape-a piece of decoration. Kushum's brother Dilip has been in this very habit. It has been commented in the novel: "A

large photograph of her mother hangs in the hall, a garland of fresh flowers festooning it. He gets fresh flowers every day, however expensive they are.”(*That Long Silence*, 23)

It is pointed that man has cultivated an artificial relation with nature for material gains and show off. The most prominent image used in the novel is that of sheltering tree for husbands. It has been ironically deployed by the novelist. The image characteristically and satirically delineated the mother nurturing the tree which in turns provides patriarchal shelter to the weaklings:

After so many years, the words came back to me. A sheltering tree. Without the tree, you are dangerously unprotected and vulnerable . . . , so you have to keep the tree alive and flourishing, even if you have to water it with deceit and lies . . . , in Saptagiri we had a creeper that was watered and manured assiduously; yet it died- of- too much water, of white ants in the manure that destroyed its roots, and so...? (*That Long Silence*, 32)

The novelist’s use of satire confirms her rejection of such patriarchy that needs to be strengthened with lies. The novelist points out that despite being caretakers and nurturers nature and women are being abused and exploited to the maximum. The causes behind it are their docility, submissiveness, patience and gender inequality. It has been suggested that undue love, respects and patience to endure injustice is spoiling the male members of the society and these qualities of women keep the males unaware and indifferent to their grave problems. And the same thing is happening to natural objects. The second image of the creeper is a sharp contrast to the masculine image of “the sheltering tree”. The creeper died without an established reason, in spite of being watered and manured, while ants’ eating its roots is one of the possible causes. The enigmatic imagery is incorporated clearly with a deliberate purpose to show the fate.

Briefly speaking, the novel centres on man-woman relationship. In order to explain the traditional view of husband- wife relationship, the novelist uses two popular similes-that of “two bullocks tied together”, and that of a “sheltering tree”. There is a sense of compulsion and of mechanical movement: just as the tied bullocks cannot move separately, the wife is compelled to follow her husband without grumble. Everywhere in India the picture is more or less the same. Be the woman is a maidservant trailing from door to door or a happy house wife. She goes to the Dadar flat with Mohan, following the footsteps of the mythical Sita and Draupadi. She does not ask her husband any question, and the image of two bullocks comes to her mind automatically:

A pair of bullocks yoked Together . . . that was how I saw the two of us the day we came here. It was an eerie sensation I had while climbing up the stairs with him, as if there was for that one infinitesimal moment a pause in my being, and I, detached from my self, saw this . . . a pair of bullocks yoked together. (*That Long Silence*, 7)

The novel also depicts want of singing voices in cities. Instead there are sound of hammers and traffic causing noise pollution. The novelist draws the comparison between village scene of sweet sounds and polluted sounds of Bombay “In Saptagiri, our house had stood well back from a little used road, so that even the rare sounds—the creak-jingle of a cart, the ping of a cycle bell, the cry of a watchman from an adjoining fruit orchard-had come to us muted. . . the diverse sounds Bombay to what had seemed to me an endless assault on the earth.”(*That Long Silence*, 56) The sleep here is disturbed by beating of a wife and her cries. Natural calamities and famine are also depicted in the fiction which compel rural people move to cities to sell their cheap labour. Famine in Jaya’s mind evokes the images of scarcity as she depicts: “. . . of parched lands, bloated corpses and hovering vultures, no those macabre pictures belong to famine.” (*That Long Silence*, 71)

The protagonist Jaya realizes that there is a lot of difference in the peaceful life of Saptagiri and disturbed life of Bombay. Whenever she finds herself disgusted with the city life she gets lost in the natural world of Saptagiri that is missing in Bombay. She comments:

Our house had been surrounded by fruit orchards and the clean little ribbon of tarred road leading to it had been bordered by tamarind trees and gutters in which nothing ever ran but rain water. But Bombay ... was nothing but a gray uniform ugliness. The buildings had seemed terrible to me, endless rows of looking exactly alike, ramshackle drab buildings ... (*That Long Silence*, 54).

One side of these metropolitan cities is glamorous whereas the other side is gloomy and desperate. Along with it, a crude picture of the workers is painted in the episode related to 'news reel.' It is depicted workers do hard work of constructing the roads which are never completed and blindness comes to them 'by tiny chips flying into their eyes.' (*That Long Silence*, 74)

It can be inferred that this degradation can be overcome by awareness. The novel also refers to the importance of fearlessness and communication that can help to mitigate the dominated mode. Moreover Jaya feels that city life is devoid of emotions and pity. Jaya deeply feels "And yet the truth was that Rupa and I were strangers. We never talked to each other, not like Seema and I had done in School." (*That Long Silence*, 47)

That Long Silence is replete with environmental issues. In this novel the novelist shows her concern in the form of references to Saptagiri, Ambegaon and the dusty life of metropolitan city, Bombay. Jaya, the protagonist in the hours of mental disturbance seeks solace and calm in the natural world of Saptagiri. In the nostalgic moments, she keeps analysing those past memories of her childhood and her paternal house. When Jaya refers to Kusum's death by drowning in to the 'dried well', the novelist seems to be suggesting acute water

problem in the urban areas. Along with it there is also reference to the natural surroundings of Saptagiri which are nowhere to be seen in Bombay. The reason behind dry and indifferent nature of city people is their separation from nature. That is why the people in the urban area do not enjoy peace of mind and remain the patients of loneliness and stress.

Although there are instances of environmental issues in the novel, the novel has a fabulous feminist framework as it deals with the complex issue of identity crisis in the lives of Indian women. Jaya, the protagonist narrator of the story feels deeply shocked at the sorry state of women in middle as well as in lower class. As a Civil Engineer, Mohan represents the process of urbanization and so called civilization and culture. The alienation between man and woman is also linked with alienation from nature and environment. At Mohan's desertion, Jaya decides to break the silence and regain her individuality. Thus the brilliance of the novel lies in the fact that Shashi Deshpande explores a search for possibility of social situations where women can attain distinctive identity and fulfilment without disturbing family and community. In a review by Rajani Neelore, it has been analysed:

Shashi Deshpande is well known in literary circles for depicting the quotidian life of the average Indian. What has earned her respect is her uncompromising stance as an Indian writer who writes in English, but steadfastly resists the malaise that seems to have afflicted the current crop of Indian writers. She refuses to embellish and package her writing to portray India as an exotic land, full of magic and mysticism—a formula that has succeeded in gaining international readership for other authors. I have personally admired Deshpande for choosing to tell stories about ordinary people playing out the script of their lives quite unseeing perhaps of the grand scheme into which their mundane actions fit. What I find remarkable is the way she questions our every day existence and helps us see through the evolution of well-etched characters, the frailties and

possibilities of human life. (http://www.indianetzone.com//6/that_long_silence...)

Thus the story of the novel remarkably shows Shashi Deshpande's ecological insight besides bringing the novel as a feminist frame work as outlined by critics like Elaine Showalter, Toril Moi, Kate Millet and Simon de Beauvoir. Ajji and Jaya, reveal the truth of Simon de Beauvoir's statement that one is not born a woman but becomes a woman. Toril Moi's assertion that the female voice is missing in literature which has all along been dominated by male writers has been validated by Shashi Deshpande for the only language which the women in the novel have accessible to them is the language of silence. Elaine Showalter's belief that woman is regarded as "the other" is proved by the treatment of women in the novel. The feminist, Kate Millet is of the view that Shashi Deshpande is not a believer in fiery rhetoric. She is first and foremost an artist and she lodges her protest most artistically through the silent non-conformism of her protagonist, Jaya. The novel remarkably shows women's search for identity and exploration of female psyche by giving a peep into the state and condition of the present day woman who is intelligent, articulate and aware of her capabilities but thwarted under the weight of male chauvinism. The novelist seems to be emphasizing the fact that spiritual and respectful attitude towards woman and nature is required for the survival of humanity. She is of the view that it is imperial to demolish discriminatory gender roles and root causes of degradation in nature.

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Shrawan K Sharma

The Soul of Kāvypuru-a (Literature): A Holistic View of Indian Poetics

In Indian tradition, *kāvya* (literature) has been conceived as Kāvypuruca having both body and soul. Rajshekhara anatomises Kāvypuruca in his *Kāvya Mīmāṃsā* through a discourse between Bāhaspati and his disciples. The disciples ask Bāhaspati, “who is Kāvypuru-a”? Bāhaspati informs them about Kāvypuru-a to be the son of Sarasvati. He holds that *úabdārtha* (words and meanings) form his body and Sanskrit is his mouth. Here Sanskrit does not mean Sanskrit language but *aprāñjal bhā-ā*, language used by the poet. Further, *prākĀt* (dialects) are the limbs or arms, *apabhra , æi* (tribal or folk) the legs, *piúāci* (languages of illiterate) the feet and *micærit* (mixture of all languages) the large bosom. His speech is elevated. Here metrical composition is the pores, questions and quizzes the forms of discourse, and figures of speech the ornaments. Kāvypuru-a transcends time and place. Thus he is linked with past, present and future and so is complete, happy, sweet and large hearted. Bāhaspati thus describes Kāvypuru-a with all details but does not talk about his soul. The reason is that the soul is a fluid concern as it rests in body (word/language and meaning) but independently. The present paper aims at presenting a wholistic view of Indian poetics, focusing on the soul of Kāvypuru-a. Keeping the approach of the theories to this soul in view, the paper has been divided into two sections. The first section deals with *dhvani*, *rasa* and *ala , kâra*, focussing on meaning and the second part consists

of *vakrokti*, *rîti* and *aucitya*, focussing on the creative use of language. Chronologically the order of these theories is *rasa*, *ala , kâra*, *rîti*, *dhvani*, *vakrokti* and *aucitya* but I intentionally change the order. In the first section of my paper, I take *dhvani* first because it is impregnated with *rasa* and *ala , kâra* and in the second section I choose *vakrokti* first because it is the practical side of *dhvani* and consists of *rîti* and *aucitya* in it, to a great extent.

Before we deal with the soul of Kāvypuru-a, it would be in the fitness of things to know why some Indian theories are known as *siddhânta* (theory) while some of them *sampradâya* (school). In Indian poetics *rasa*, *ala , kâra*, *rîti* and *dhvani* are *sampradâyas* because there are scholars/thinkers in later periods who have thought independently about these concepts in their own ways and have written full fledged texts. *Vakrokti* and *aucitya* are only *siddhântas* because the concepts of *vakrokti* and *aucitya* have not been thought variously and no full-fledged texts were written on them in later periods.

As proposed, let us begin with the theory of *dhvani* as given by Anandavardhana (9th Century) in his *Dhvanyâlôka*. He considers *dhvani* (suggested meaning) to be the soul of *kāvya*. To him, *dhvani* is that type of *kāvya* where the word and the *vâcyârtha* lose their independent entity and suggests meaning i.e. *vyangârtha*. This is of greater content and possesses greater *cârutva* (beauty) than the *vâcyârtha*. This lies in *kāvya* (poetry/literature); its *æabdârtha* (word and meaning) are the agents ; it conceives *æabda dhvani*, *artha dhvani* and *ubhaya dhvani*; and its function is *vyanjanâ* that unfolds it. Its nature is unique like that of *rûpa* (form), *saundarya* (beauty) and *lâvaGya* (charm).¹ It depends on word and meaning but is without

them. Hence it transcends time and place. For this, the writer needs to recognize as to which word is primary and which word is secondary. The poet has *pratibhijñân* (power of recognition) by which he chooses words. The critic also needs to recognize them.

Dhvani is based upon a three-fold division of meaning, emanating from threesome of word –powers–*abhidhâ-abhidheyârtha* or *vâcyârtha* (primary meaning), *lakṣa^aâ-lakṣyârtha* (secondary or derivative meaning), and *vyanjanâ-vya ; gârtha* or *dhvanyârtha* (tertiary or suggested meaning). *Abhidhâ* is the chief power of words. Mahimabhata, the protagonist of the school states that *vyanjanâ* is always latent in *abhidhâ*. As we delve deep into *abhidhâ*, we get the meaning of *vyanjanâ*. Just as an arrow penetrates into the skin, the flesh and reaches the heart, the literal meaning ultimately goes deep beneath its surface meaning to convey the *vya ; gârtha*. The suppression of *mukhyârthabhidhâ* (literal meaning) is the main characteristics of *lakṣa^aâ*. The best example of this to be found in Antony's words in *Julius Caesar*: 'Brutus is an honorable man'. Like *lakṣa^aâ*, *vyanjanâ* is also opulent and plays a decisive role in language. It mysteriously exposes a new sense other than the conventional one. This new sense is *rasa*. In the play, *Hamlet* when Hamlet says that a hedge-sparrow has been killed by a young one of a cuckoo, his imagination preconceives the mental picture of taking revenge. Here *vyanjanâ* works as a warning of the ensuing horror in *Hamlet*.

Broadly *dhvani* is of two kinds: *lakṣa^aâ-born dhvani/avivak-ita^vâcyâ* and *abhidhâ-born dhvani/vivaksitavâcyâ*. *Lakṣa^aâ-born dhvani/avivak-ita^vâcyâ* is called so because here *vâcyârtha* (conventional meaning) is *avivak-ita* (not intended) to

be spoken, partially or completely. When the conventional meaning, remains in the background or in a subordinate position partially, it is *arthântarasa ; kramita* (transformed partially) and when the conventional meaning, remains in the background or in a subordinate position completely, it is called *atyantatiraskṛta* (transformed completely). In *Julius Caesar* Antonio's address to Romans: "They (Brutus, Cassius and other conspirators) are honorable men /And Brutus is an honorable man." Is an example of *arthântarasa ; kramitavâcyâ* (partial transformation). Similarly in "Ode on Grecian Urn" "Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard are sweeter" is an example of *atyantatiraskṛta vâcyâ* (complete transformation).

As far as *abhidhâ-born dhvani/vivaksitavâcyâ* is concerned, it is called so because here *vâcyârtha* (conventional meaning) is *vivak-ita* (intended) to be spoken. The following conversation between Brutus and his servant Lucius aptly exemplifies this *dhvani*:

Brutus: Give me a taper in my study, Lucius
When it is lighted, come and call me here.
Lucius: (After sometime enters)
The taper burneth in your closet, sir
Searching the window for a flint.

Vivaksitavâcyâ/abhidhâ-born dhvani imparts meaning in two ways. One is *sanlak-yakrama-vya ; gya* or *kramadyotita* or *anura^aanopama-vya ; gya* when the process of transition from the *vâcyârtha* to the *vya ; gârtha* is clearly noticeable. It is of two kinds *vastudhvani* and *ala , kârdhvani*. And second is *asanlak-ya-krama-vya ; gya*, when the process of transition from the *vâcyârtha*

to the *vyangârtha* is so quick that it is not clearly discernible. It is called *rasadhvani*. In all there are three main kinds of *abhidhâ dhvani*: *vastu dhvani* (suggestion of fact), *ala ,kâradhvani* (suggestion of poetic figure) and *rasadhvani* (suggestion of aesthetic sentiment).

Vastu dhvani is the suggestive power, which operates to arouse the suggested idea, which refers to all that goes by the name of *vibhâva* and *anubhâva* . This power

- a) may arouse a negative meaning when the statement in conventional language is positive or vice-versa.
- b) may give rise to meaning, which is neither positive nor negative when the statement is clearly positive or negative.
- c) may give rise to a meaning quite different from that which the statement has for the addressed. Now the statement is meant for not the one, to whom it is addressed, but for the other with the person addressed.

The following verse from Shelley's "To a Skylark" is a good example of this *dhvani*:

With thy clear keen joyance
Langour cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's satiety.

After reading the stanza a reader can easily question the poet's seemingly solemn affirmation . Does the skylark never get tired with its ceaseless exercise of singing a melody in the heavens? It is a matter of question that no languor ever affected the bird's "keen

joyance." How is it possible that the invincible singer never felt any mood of depression? A reader cannot easily accept the poet's conviction that the skylark was never visited by any "shadow of annoyance". Shelley seems to have only one explanation for his assertion: "Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's satiety." But then, evidently, he transgresses into occult, unverifiable regions when he assures himself that the bird is a perennial lover, never experiencing the tiring surfeit which often overtakes the earthly lovers. We are cognizant of Shelley's wayward amorous life. Nurtured by bright silver dreams and resolved to attack the citadels of customs, he failed to achieve the fulfilment of his inner longings for ideal love and beauty in this lack-lustre practical life. That provides us the key to unravel the sentiments, enshrined in the present he poet's really intended meaning is reverse of what is obviously conveyed. The reverse, of course, applies to human beings. Human music and human love are subject to depletion, providing tiring in the long run in the whirling of chequered experiences. Shelley has here given vent to a truth which runs counter to Shakespeare's verdict that "Love is not Time's fool." It can therefore be predicated that the *dhvanyârtha* of the above stanza is the evanescence of human love as contrasted with the supposed permanence of the skylark's love which accounts for its incessant downpour of mellifluous music. The image therefore is an example of *svataṅ sambhavî* or possibility based fact suggestion, inasmuch as the conditions, ascribed to the bird, fall within the province of possibility, no matter delicately imagined and the *vyâgartha* has taken the form of a contrasted reverse.

Ala ,kâra dhvani is based on the theory of *ala ,kâra* of Bhâmah (6th Century) who considers *ala ,kâra* to be the soul of *kāvya*. *Ala ,kâra* has been translated as poetic figure but, with the

first constituent *alam*, it is understood on the authority of *Agnipura*^a as a synonym of the Brahma. When we say that a piece of fine art is *ala ,kât*, we mean that it is informed of the cognition potential of the Brahma. In *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* Brahma is understood as *ânand*. Thus Brahma and *ânand* (pleasure) have been understood as one and the same. The function of *ala ,kâra* is to increase beauty, enhance qualities, depict nature, heighten feelings, delineate action or activities, circumstances, expose internal state, delineate character, describe physical beauty, exhibit objective, depict scene, characterize spontaneous movements, and put thoughts in tune with feelings. *Ala ,kâra dhvani* underlines the integral part of literal meaning to nourish the literal meaning to its climax, to beautify the expression and give a different meaning to achieve excellence by its own splendour, and to express some impossible meaning. In all the functions of *ala ,kâra* is impregnated with a kind of charm which gives *ânand*.

When Bhâmah defines *kâvyâ* as ‘*ûabdârthau sahitau kâvyam*’ (togetherness of sound and meaning) in his *Kâvyâla ,kâra*, it is possessed of some charm created by the *ala ,kâra*. According to Bhâmah, *ala ,kâra* is the most essential element of poetry and it consists in the striking manner of putting a striking idea in a equally striking words. Ânandavardhana’s in *Dhvanyâlôka* views that “*ala ,kâras* (poetic figures) are those elements which, depending upon word and meaning, minister to the generation of poetic charm”. Thus poetry possesses some charm created by *ala ,kâras*. *Ala , -kâras* have been classified on the basis of *æabdaparivâṭisaha* (the nature of the word). According to this classification, the *ala ,kâras* (poetic figures) fall into three categories: *ûabdârthâla ,kâras* (figures based on sounds or verbal figures), *arthâla ,kâras* (figures based

on meaning) and *ubhayâla ,kâras* (hybrid figures). *Ala ,kâras* have been further classified by Rudrama in the following way: *ûabdârthâla ,kâras* ((figures based on sounds or verbal figures and meaning)), *sadrâiyamûlakâla ,kâras* (figures based on similarity), *virodhagarbhâla ,kâras* (figures based on difference), *nyâyamuûakâla ,kâras* (figures based on logic), *æa ,khalâmûlakâla ,kâras* (figures based on chain), *gudarthapratitimûlakâla ,kâras* (figures based on inference or hidden meaning), *vargîkara^a -bahirgatâla ,kâras* (admixture of figures), (*ubhayâla ,kâra* (hybrid figures)).

Vastu and *ala ,kâra* share the same nature. They may be *vâcyârtha* and *vyngârtha*. In relation to *vastu dhvani/ala ,kâra dhvani*, *kâvyâ* has been classified in three ways:

Uttama : when *vâcyârtha* being secondary enhances the *vya ;gârtha*, it is called *uttam kâvyâ*.

Madhyam or *gu^aîbhûta*: if *vâcyârtha* and *vya ;gârtha* are of equal prominence, it is *madhyam* or *gu^aîbhûta kâvyâ*.

Adham : if *vâcyârtha* is more prominent than *vya ;gârtha* it is called *adham kâvyâ*.

The following relationships between *æabda* and *artha* (word and meaning), which change a *vâcyârtha* into *vya ;gârtha*, define their nature.²

1. *Sa ,yoga* (association)

Long legged Crane. Crane is a bird and crane is a machine. But here the suggestion caused by the association of crane with long neck helps us knowing that it is a bird.

2. *viprayoga* (Separation)

Crane without legs . Crane is a bird and crane is a machine.
But here the suggestion caused by the absence of legs helps us knowing that it is a machine.

3. *sâhacarya* (concomitant)

Rama Lakshmana: Rama is Parshurama and Lakshmana is the name of a bird. But *sâhacarya* suggests that they are Dasharatha's sons.

4. *virodhita* (opposition)

Rama and Arjuna: Beside their original identity, Rama is Parshurama and Arjuna is sahasrajuna Kartaviryas due to suggestion caused by *virodhita* .

5. *artha/prayojan* (purpose)

Sthâ^au means fallen tree but it is suggestive of Shankar also (bhâvaccheta sthâ^au)

6. *prakara^aa* (episode)

Saindhava means salt but in a particular episode of war it means horse

7. *linga* (symbol)

Rose means a flower but it symbolises love also

8. *œabda sannidhi* (word proximity)

Pur kâ uatru means Shiva and suggestive of deity

9. *sâmarthyâ* (capability)

In Madhu mâsa, the voice of cuckoo bird is suggestive of play

10. *aucitya* (propriety)

Emelia tells Iago that Othello has called Desdemona a whore. But Desdemona does not repeat the word 'whore'. Instead,

she says "Am I That". This is suggestive of propriety of character.

11. *deœa* (place):

Change of meaning of a word with a change of place.

12. *kâla* (time)

Conventionally Chitrabhanu means sun but in night it is suggestive of fire

13. *vyakti* (person)

Mitram means friend. It also means sun.

14. *Svara* (intonation)

The nature of *vacyârtha* and *vyangârtha* also depends on the ways as given below:

bauddhi : Two different audience: One knows *vâcya* and another *vyanga*

sankhyâ : number: *vacyârtha* is one but *vya ; gârtha* may be many

swarûp : nature of intonation

âûaya : intention

nimitta : purpose or sentiments

kârya : actions and gestures

pratîti : indicative

vicaya : Object

kâla : time, first *vâcârtha* and then *vya ; gârtha*.

Let us now have an account of *rasa dhvani*. It is that suggestive power which floods the mind with a host of ideas, not always clearly definable, which are necessary for such completion of the aesthetic image as is necessary for suggesting *sthâyîbhâva* (the basic mental state) at a high pitch and bringing about complete self-forgetfulness in the hearer in which the aesthetic experience consists. It is noteworthy here that the ideas suggested by *vastu dhvani* (suggestion of fact) and *ala , kâra dhvani* (suggestion of poetic figure) somehow admit expression in conventional language but those aroused by this power can never be so expressed. It is noteworthy that *rasa* is always *vya ; gârtha*, unlike *vastu* and *ala , kâra dhvani* which may be *vâcyârtha* and *vya ; gârtha*.

Abhinavgupta explains it by giving an example of the beauty of a girl which we can be discussed but cannot be pinpointed it as it lies elsewhere. That's why, the appreciation of her different parts gives a sense of pleasure. They may lead to the appreciation of higher reality but not its revelation because they are offshoots of the process of codification of higher reality and not its direct comprehension. The parts which lead to the main stream are *laukik* (worldly) and therefore, their manifestation is classified as *sa , lak-yakram* or traceable by the mind of the *sahÂdaya* while the manifestation of *rasadhvani* is like *sahÂdaya's* coming face to face with poet's universalised apocalyptic vision and is therefore instant and overwhelming. This is a realm of *vidyâ* where all logic dissolves into revelation. This high state of aesthetic sublimation is arrived at by the extraordinary or the latent power of the world *vya ; janâ*. Abhinavgupta even goes into the detail of this "instant process" as he points out first the *sahÂdaya* receives the impact of *vâcyâ* (statement) then his mind tends to universalise his experience to draw general

conclusions, then his self enters the universalised experience which is parallel to poet's universalised experience. This sublimation of the *sahÂdaya* can be caused through *vyanjanâ* when it reveals *alaukika dhvani* or the *sahÂdaya* is able to grasp it. At this moment a single word, a sentence or the impact of the entire composition may link him with the higher reality and lift him to the consummate level of poetic experience or *mahârasa*. D.G. Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel" exemplifies experience:

There will I ask of Christ, the Lord
Thus much for him and me :
Only to live as once on earth
With Love –only to be,
And then a while for ever now.”
“(I saw her smile . . .)
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers
And laid her head between her hands ,
And wept. I heard her tears”

Here the sound of the tear-drops as they fell on the ground suggests a poignancy to the whole situation.

Let us now see how Bharata (2nd Century BC) propounded the theory of *rasa* in his *Nâ-yaiûstra*. He considers *rasa* to be the soul of Kâvyapuruca. According to him, *rasa* is based on *kâra^a a* (causes of permanent sentiments) *kârya* (acts of sentiments) and *sahakâri* (accompanying sentiments) which in *kâvyâ* are known as *vibhâva*, *anubhâva* and *vyâbhicâribhâva* respectively. Bharata defines *rasa* by focusing on the integration of them. He holds that “*vibhâvanubhâvavyâbhicârîsa , yogâta rasanicapattih*” (the

savouring of the emotion is possible through the combination or integration of these elements: *vibhâva* (causes and determinants of the rise of an emotion) *anubhâva* (gestures expressive of what is going on in the heart or the mind of main characters), like casting a terrified glance, heaving a sigh or involuntarily shedding a tear) and *vyâbhicâribhâvâs* (transitory emotions which go along with and consequently reinforce prevailing mood or emotional disposition). The *vibhâvâs* (causes and determinants of the rise of an emotion) are of two kinds: *âlamban* (supporting causes, usually the hero or the heroine or such objects) and *uddîpan* (features or circumstances that accentuate the feelings of *âlamban* (hero or heroine). The *âlamban* (supporting causes, usually the hero or the heroine or such objects) are again of two types—*vi-ayâlamban* (person or object of the rise of an emotion or the person or object for whom the emotion is awakened) and *â-râlamban* (person in whom the emotion is awakened). Through the conjunction of language used by the poet, he activates, with some kind of empathetic induction, the propensity of *sthâyîbhâvâs* (basic sentiments) in the reader and the movement it is consummated, the *sahâdaya* (sensitive reader) experiences an afflatus or transport which is designed as *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment).

There are eight *sthâyîbhâvâs* (basic sentiments) which are the modified forms of basic drives or instincts as a result of centuries of evolutionary process of humanization and social living. Each basic sentiment is an ocean in which various waves arise in the forms of *vyâbhicâribhâva* (transient emotions). These *sthâyîbhâvâs* (basic sentiments), which are chiefly eight in number—*rati* (erotic love), *œka* (grief), *krodha* (wrath), *utsaha* (energy), *bhaya* (fear), *hâsa* (humour), *jugupsâ* (disgust), *vi-maya* —are heightened to *rasadâûâ* (a relishable state) by the poet so that we have one *rasa* (aesthetic

sentiment) corresponding to each of them. The corresponding *rasas* (aesthetic sentiments) of the *sthâyî bhâvas* (basic sentiments) are *œrangâra* (erotic), *karuṣa* (pathetic), *raudra* (anger), *vîra* (heroic), *bhayânaka* (fear), *hâsya* (laughter), *bîbhatsa* (disgust), *adbhuta* (wonder) The poet succeeds in doing this by resorting to the devices of concretization.

There are *vyâbhicâribhâvas* (transient emotions) which are the waves in the ocean of *sthâyîbhava* (basic sentiment). These include *nirveda* (discouragement indicated by tears, sighs, pensiveness, etc), *glâni* (internal weakness by weak voice, lusterless eyes, sleeplessness, gait), *œnkâ* (apprehension by unsteady looks, hesitating movements), *âsûya* (jealousy by decrying others' merits) *mada* (intoxication by laughing, singing, sneezing, hiccough), *œrama* (exhaustion by heavy breaths, twisting of limbs), *âlasya* (sloth by moroseness, sleeplessness, disinterested in work), *dianya* (depression by dullness, absentmindedness, negligence of cleanliness), *cintâ* (anxiety by deep breathing, meditation, sighing, agony), *moha* (distraction by reeling sensations and staggering looks), *smÂti* (remembrance by knitting of eyebrows, nodding of head), *dhÂti* (composure by general indifference to grief or passion etc.), *vrîdâ* (bashfulness by dullness of eyes, scratching of nails, *capalatâ* (inconstancy by harsh words, rebuke), *har-a* (joy by brightness of looks), *âvega* (agitation by distress in limbs, tightening of clothes), *ja@atâ* (stupor by loss of movement and energy, blank gazes), *garva* (pride by irresponsiveness, haughty manners. Sarcastic smiles, *vi-âda* (dismay by deep breathing, loss of energy), *autsukya* (eagerness by sighs, drowsiness, thinking), *nidrâ* (sleep by obvious gestures), *apasamâra* (catalepsy by throbbing, tremor, perspiration), *supta* (dreaming by obvious ensuants), *vibodha* (wakefulness by

yawning), *amar-a* (anger by evident gestures), *avahittaha* (dissimulation by break in speech, feigned patience), *ugratâ* (vehemence by acrimony, scolding, threatening), *mati* (rationality by coolness of behaviour, ascertaining meaning), *vyâdhi* (sickness by evident symptoms), *unmâda* (insanity by evident behaviour), *mara^a* (death by evident symptoms), *trâsa* (terror by evident symptoms) and *vitarka* (reasoning by evident symptoms).

This theory is based on the four kinds of *abhinaya* (acting/ expression) – *ângika abhinaya* (voluntary non-verbal expression) to depict emotions/feelings of a character being played by the actor, *vâcika abhinaya* (verbal expression) to express emotions/feelings, tone, diction, pitch of a particular character, *âhârya abhinaya* (costume and stage expression) to enhance expression, *sâttvika abhinaya* (involuntary non-verbal expression) expressed by *stambha* (stupefaction), *pralaya* (swoon), *sveda* (perspiration), *vaiva^a* (pallor), *svarabha; ga* (change of voice), *kumpa* (tremor of lips, nostrils etc), *aœu* (tears) to express the deepest emotions of a character.

In his *Nâtyaûâstra*, Bharata holds that dramatic presentation primarily aims at giving rise to *rasa* in the *sâmâjika* (aesthete) and later this experience is followed by moral improvement. He further says that dramatic presentation imparts *har-a* (pleasure) to all who are unhappy, tired, bereaved and ascetic. The disciples of Bharata after witnessing the drama, and analyzing the effect it has on them, they realize that it brings about identification with the focus of the dramatic situation, to the effect that the audience realize through experience (because of generalization).

In Indian aesthetics this experience has been understood as *kâvyânand* or *rasânand* or *brahmânandsahodara* which can be translated as aesthetic experience of divine nature. It is because of this experience that *kâvyajagat* (the world of poetry) is different from *jagat* (the human world). It is noteworthy that unlike the world of poetry, the human world lacks this experience. There is only either *sukh* or *dukh* (pleasure or pain) in the experiences of the world. The aesthetic pleasure is above the experience of pleasure and pain caused by the worldly experiences of life.

There are primarily four theories which include *utpatti-vâda* or *upacaya-vâda* (theory of production), *anumitivâda* (theory of inference of aesthetic sentiment) *bhukti-vâda* (theory of taste) and *abhivyaktivâda* (the theory of manifestation).

The theory of *utpattivâda* or *upacaya-vâda* (production) of *rasa* propounded by Bhatta Lollata based on *Mîmânsâ* philosophy. Lollata explains that there is a relationship of cause and effect based

—the *sa, yoga* (meeting) of *sthâyî* with *vibhâva* which is *utâpâdya* or *utpâdaka bhâva* (cause of arousal of *rasa*) and now *rasa utpatti* (production) takes place.

—the *sa, yoga* of *sthâyî* with *anubhâva* which is *gamya* or *gaman bhâva* (indication of *rasa*) and now *rasa pratiti* (recognition) takes place.

—the *sa, yoga* of *sthâyî* with *vyâbhicâribhâva* which is *po-ya-po-aka bhâva* (nourishing) and now *upciti* (confirmation of *rasa*) takes place.

Lollata holds that the author's character is primarily the locus of the *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment), but it is super-imposed on the actor, who, with his histrionic talent, creates a make-believe situation on the stage.

The theory of *anumitivâda* (inference of *rasa*) propounded by Shankuka, a logician, is based on Nyaya philosophy. He holds that *rasa* is not produced, but inferred by the spectator. The permanent mood of the hero is inferred to exist in the actor and sensed by the spectator which develops into the relishability of *rasa*. Shankuka explains how the reader comes to regard the actor as the real hero/heroine and associates *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment) with him. The answer to this question can be given on the basis of the role of *jñâna* (knowledge) in the experience of the reader. There are four kinds of *jñâna* (knowledge) familiar in worldly experience. The first is *samyaka jñâna* (exact knowledge) in which there is absolute certainty as to the object of knowledge. The second is *mitthyâ jñâna* (false knowledge) in which the actual object of knowledge is repudiated. The third is *sa, âxya jñâna* (doubtful knowledge) in which there is no definite apprehension of the object of knowledge. The fourth is *sâdâxya jñâna* (resemblant knowledge) in which resemblance of the object of knowledge is recognized in another object. In a poetic composition, these four kinds of knowledge fail to explain the nature of aesthetic experience. In order to explain the nature of aesthetic experience, Shankuka has pressed into service the analogy of the *citratura ; ganyâya* (the picture-horse logic). He holds that looking at the picture of a horse, one does not assume that it is a real horse; one does not fail to understand that it is a horse; one does not, further, harbour any doubt whether it is a horse; and likewise, one does not think that it resembles a horse. All that suggests that, despite the

perception of the picture—horse not confronting to any of the four types of knowledge, it strikes as real or living and thus creates delight in us. Accordingly, the *sâmâjika* (reader or spectator) comes to regard the actor/character as the real hero and associates *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment) with him on the line of *citratura ; ganyâya* (the picture-horse logic). That is the secret of his aesthetic experience.

The theory of *bhuktivâda* (taste), propounded by Bhattanayaka, is based on Sâ, khya philosophy. He postulates that there is the relationship of *bhojaka* (the enjoyer) and *bhojya* (the enjoyed). Here the characters are viewed not individuals but as characters in general without any encumbrance of an individual or agent. It is this, a specific delectation which leads to *rasânubhûti*, distinct from the worldly levels of happiness and something almost at par with *brahmâsvâda-sahodara* (pleasure of divine nature). He explains *rasa* experience with the help of three functions of *kâvya*: *abhidhâ* (primary meaning), *bhâvanâ* or *bhâvakatva* (the process of impersonalization) and *bhoga* or *bhojakatva* (tasting). *Abhidhâ* conveys the primary meaning. *Bhâvanâ* or *bhâvakatva* is process of impersonalization by virtue of which *vibhâvas* become generalized. It liquefies *rajas* (mode of passion) and *tamas* (mode of dullness) and adds uniqueness to *abhidhâ* (primary meaning). As a result, the generalization of *vibhâvas* and *sthâyîbhâvas* take place and internal crisis due to selfish interests, is dissipated. As far as *bhoga* or *bhojakatva* (tasting) is concerned, it is a virtue of tasting of pure joy. It liquefies *citta* (mind). This process, connected with three word-functions, happens internally, imperceptibly, without letting the *sahâdaya* (reader) realize the subtle stages of the transition from the first to the second and from the second to the third. Thus this aesthetic experience is *bhagnâvara*^a *acittavasthâ* (a state of cumulative

experience of mind). It creates internal repose which is accompanied with aesthetic experience.

The theory of *abhivyaktivâda* (manifestation), propounded by the celebrated Kashmir writer Abhinavagupta, is based on Vaïceïka philosophy. His *Abhinavabhâratî*, a commentary on the *Nâ-yauâstra* is a landmark in the field of Indian poetics. He holds that *rasânubhûti* takes place through *sâdhâra^a ikara^a a* (generalization). Through *sâdhâra^a ikara^a a* (generalization) the reader transcends his subjective, objective and neutral states and has *ekâkîbhâva* (single sentiment). Here *vibhâva*, *anubhâvas* and *vyâbhicâribhâvas* and *sthâyîbhâvas*, all abandon their local, individual or temporal associations or limitations and acquire a sort of *sâdhâra^a ikara^a a* (generalization) rather universalization. Accordingly, the *sthâyîbhâva* becomes the respected sentiment of ordinary men and women. It is after this *sâdhâra^a ikara^a a* has taken place in the mind of the *sahâdaya* that the *rasa* experience takes place, giving rise to repose in the mind of the reader.

In the process of *rasa* experience the *sahâdaya* turns from *laukik* (worldly) into *alaukik* (supra-human) and hence now he experiences aesthetic pleasure even in weeping. At this juncture the *sahâdaya* is neither subjective, nor objective, nor neutral. Here it is noteworthy that the reader /spectator transcends the world but does not enter into a divine world. Here *citta* (mind) has two states: *dîpti* (state of luminosity) and *pighalanâ* (state of liquefaction). The former state arouses the *rasas* (aesthetic sentiment) of *bhayânaka* (the terrible), *vîra* (the heroic), *hâsya* (the comic) etc. while the latter arouses *karu^a a rasa* (sentiment of pathos), *sâjîgârarasa* (erotic sentiment) etc. It is noteworthy here that *citta*

(mind) is like sealing wax which gets melted in the company of heat and finally turns into a liquid form. Now *rajas* (mode of passion) and *tamas* (mode of dullness) are also liquefied and so *citta* (mind) experiences universal rhythm followed by *rasa*. Now *citta* (mind) transcends the worldly limits. It is *rajas* (mode of passion) and *tamas* (mode of dullness) that makes *citta* (mind) have different experiences of life. They limit the realization of *citta* (mind) but the moment these *gu^a as* (modes) are melted, the limitations of *citta* (mind) are removed and we have *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment). The liquefaction of *citta* (mind) takes place after *rajas* (mode of passion) and *tamas* (mode of dullness) get subdued for the time being, affording scope for the *sattva* (mode of goodness) to inundate the inner consciousness.

The second part of the paper aims at giving an account of *rîti*, *vakrokti* and *aucitya* in which Kuntaka, Vâmana and K-emendra like modern theorists emphasize on the creative use of language.

Kuntaka (11th Century) propounding his theory of *vakrokti* in his treatise *Vakroktijîvitam* considers *vakratâ* to be the life of *kāvya* as unfolded by the title of the text itself. He says that *vakrokti* consists in the delightful union of word and meaning which is characterized by the infusion of unique poetic art which is capable of affording pleasure to the *sahâdaya* (reader). According to him, *vakrokti* is the oblique use of language and it operates at six levels.

The first is *var^a a-vinyâsa-vakratâ* (phonetic obliquity or obliquity in the arrangement of phonemes or consonants or syllables). It has various kinds. The first kind of arrangement is the free and irregular repetition of similar or identical *var^a as* (phonemes or consonants) at varying intervals and this arrangement gives texture

and beauty to the expression. Kuntaka further divides it into three sub-varieties – repetition of one *var^aa*, repetition of two *var^aas* and repetition of more than two *var^aas*. The second kind of *var^aa-vinyâsa-vakratâ* too has three sub-varieties : (i) when stops are combined with their homorganic nasals; (ii) when liquids are doubled and; (iii) when consonants become conjunct with ‘ra’ etc. Kuntaka also includes the arrangement of *var^aas* without any interval employed artistically by the writer for a high poetic charm. He calls it the third sub-variety of *var^aa-vinyâsa-vakratâ*. The fourth sub-variety, according to Kuntaka, is the repetition of new *var^aas*. He holds that a discontinuance of earlier repetition of *var^aas* and choice of new ones also impart beauty to the expression. Mentioning the sub-varieties of *var^aa-vinyâsa-vakratâ*, Kuntaka remarks that chime also falls under it, and adds that chime should be affected without extra effort; it should be adorned with syllables which are not harsh; it should be in consonance with feelings conveyed; and lastly it should be with propriety. In this way, Kuntaka, not considering chime independently, includes it among the sub-varieties of this *vakratâ*.

The second level is *pada-pûrvârdhha-vakratâ* (Lexical obliquity), which is found in the basal forms of the words. According to Kuntaka, it comprises all effects based on the writer’s choice of the words – the choice which is guided by strangeness, evocativeness, commonness or freshness of words. There are words that can impart strangeness and freshness to a writer’s utterance. There are other words which make *kâvyâ* one of the joys “in widest commonalty spread”, by their very plainness and commonness. There are yet other words which make *kâvyâ* richly and deeply evocative – one with the soul-stress that lies in the music of the words. Finally, there

are words which become luminous centres of transfigured meaning and of imaginative association – quintessential words. Such words are the wealth of the vocabulary of poetry. It is a kind of divine sureness of instinct that enables a writer to select the appropriate word from one of these categories. The temperament of a writer has also some affinity with certain categories of words and this is one of the bases on which poetic styles are formed. One has only to examine the poetic vocabulary of poets in order to realise the affinity that exists between certain types of poetic temperament and clusters of poetic vocabulary. Kuntaka defines that when the words of common usage are employed so as to include an attribution of associate meaning other than the primary ones, we have *pada-pûrvârdhha-vakratâ*. This includes various sub-varieties : *rû@hi-vaicitrya-vakratâ* (obliquity of usage), *paryâya-vakratâ* (obliquity of synonym), *upacâra-vakratâ* (obliquity of transference), *vicœ-a^a-vakratâ* (obliquity of adjective), *sa, vÂti-vakratâ* (obliquity of concealment), *vÂtti-vakratâ* (obliquity of indeclinable), *li; ga-vaicitrya-vakratâ* (obliquity of gender), *kriyâ-vaicitrya-vakratâ* (obliquity of verb).

In *kâvyâ*, Âcârya Kuntaka holds, poet is also guided by the consideration of special tense, case, number, person, voice, prefix, suffix and particle. He discusses these various sources in his treatment of *vakratâ* in the inflectional forms of substantives. This variety of *vakratâ* includes all possibilities of varying the grammatical constructions of an expression and most of them have been included by Ânandavardhana in his treatment of *dhvani*. Defining it, Kuntaka says that when several forms of literary turns occur together in such a way as to enhance the beauty of one another, they produce artistic charm, reminiscent of myriad-faced beauty. According to Kuntaka, this charm is termed as *pada-parârdhha-vakratâ* which bears many

sub-varieties like *kâla-vaicitraya-vakratâ* (obliquity of tense), *kâraka-vakratâ* (obliquity of case) *sâ*, *khyā-vakratâ* (obliquity of number) *puru-a-vakratâ* (obliquity of person), *upagraha-vakratâ* (obliquity of voice), *upasarga-vakratâ* (obliquity of prefix), *pratyaya-vakratâ* (obliquity of suffix), *nipâta-vakratâ* (obliquity of particle).

The fourth level is *vākya-vakratâ* (sentential obliquity), as the name itself expresses, operates at the level of *vākya* (sentence) to deal with *vastu* (contents or subject-matter). Defining it, Kuntaka writes that when the *vastu* is described in a way conducive to beauty by virtue of the charming words, we have *vākya* or *vastu-vakratâ*. Kuntaka holds that *vastu*, replete with beauty, serve an integral purpose in a poetic composition. The *vastu* of the composition may be *sahajā* (natural), *âhârya* (imposed). On the basis of this division of *vastu*, Kuntaka has divided *vākya-vakratâ* into two sub-varieties : *sahajā-vakratâ* (natural obliquity) and *âhârya-vakratâ* (imposed obliquity). When the *vastu*, replete with innate beauty, is described without heavy embellishment in a simple style, it has *sahajā-vakratâ*. Now the poet, by his natural power of contemplating the natural objects lively, allures the heart of the sensitive reader. When the expression attains a heightened beauty due to the use of skill, we have *âhârya vakratâ*. Here the skill means technical art acquired by the poet. This excels the beauty of individual elements such as words, meaning, attributes and embellishment. The subject-matter is not entirely an imaginative matter, rather it has its own power in it but with no attraction. The poet, by his art, imagines a divine beauty in it and its character becomes potent and prominent, manifesting a new form of beauty. Thus the subject-matter and the poet's art are complementary to each other to arrive at the same end. According

to Kuntaka, art is not different from *arthâla*, *kâra* (figure of sense). It transforms the subject-matter and describes it in various ways. In other words, the poet describes the subject-matter in many ways based on the kinds of this obliquity produced by *arthâla*, *kâra*. Kuntaka admits a thousand varieties of it and includes the whole lot of *ala*, *kâra* in it.

The fifth level is *prakara^a-vakratâ* (Episodic obliquity), which deals with the oblique use of *prakara^a* (episode). Kuntaka says that when the intended object is capable of maintaining suspense all along and is the product of the unique, boundless poetic skill underlying it, we have *prakara^a-vakratâ* (episodic obliquity). Here he means to say is that the poet, overwhelmed with the zest of creation, creates an alluring charm in the subject - matter. According to him, this very charm is nothing but *prakara^a-vakratâ*. He describes the following nine sub-varieties of this *vakrata* : *bhâvapûr^a-asthiti vakratâ* (obliquity of emotional states), *utapâdya lâva^a-ya vakratâ* (obliquity of modified source story), *prakara^a-a upakârya-upakâraka bhâva vakratâ* (obliquity of episodic relationship), *viçā-^a-ha prakara^a-a vakratâ* (obliquity of particular event and episode), *a ; girasa ni-yandanikasa vakratâ* (obliquity of dominant *rasa*), *apradhâna prasa ; ga vakratâ* (obliquity of secondary episodes), *prakara^a-â-tara vakratâ* (obliquity of play within play), *sandhi viniveûa vakratâ* (obliquity of juncture).

The last level is *prabandha-vakratâ* (compositional obliquity), which is said to bear the beauty of the combined complex of the five varieties – *var^a-a-vinyâsa-vakratâ* (phonetic obliquity), *pada-pûrvârdhha-vakratâ* (lexical obliquity), *pada-parârdhha-vakratâ* (grammatical obliquity), *vākya-vakratâ* (sentential obliquity),

prakara^a-vakratâ (episodic obliquity). These sub-varieties may be stated in the following way :*rasântara-vakratâ* (obliquity of changing the *rasa*), *samâpana-vakratâ* (obliquity of winding up the story), *kathâ-viccheda-vakratâ* (obliquity of intending end), *anusâ ; gika-phal-vakratâ* (obliquity of contingent objective), *nâmakara^a-vakratâ* (obliquity of title), and *tulya-kathâ-vakratâ* (obliquity of identical subject).

Vâmana (8th Century) considers *rîti* as the soul of poetry by saying *rîtirâtmâkâvya*. He defines it as *viçei-ta padaracanâ rîti* (the specialty of organization of words and phrase, or the specialty of the framing of phrases). To him, *viçei-ta* (specialty) is the *gu^a* (excellence) of *æabda* (form) and *artha* (content). In other words, the *gu^a* (excellence) is the producer of beauty in poetry. We can further understand this by saying that it is *viçei-og^a* (specialty of excellence) which brings about an appeal and *ala , kâras* (figures) enhance it. Thus Vaman here also includes *ala , kâra* (figures) which according to him makes the poetry acceptable. His treatise, *Kâvyala , kârasutra* opens with the aphorism, “*kâvyam grâhyam ala , kârât*” (that is, poetry is acceptable due to *ala , kârâs* (figures). He also adds that *rîti* is the benefactor of *rasas* (aesthetic sentiment) and *bhâvas* (emotions) He states that when the *kâvya* (poetry) has a union of sound and meaning or sense, cultured with *gu^a* (excellences) and *ala , kâras* (figures), *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment) automatically takes place in it. Thus, according to Vaman, the phrasal organization of poetry should be impregnated with the *gu^a* (excellence), *ala , kâra* (figures) and *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment). Here it is important to note that the *gu^a* (excellence), *ala , kâra* (figures) and *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment) are not isolated units of poetry; they are assimilated with one another and it is this assimilative

character that makes an expression poetry. In a word the *rîti* leads to the use of language of poetry by emphasizing on the phrasal and verbal organization of literature.

Vâmana considering *rîti* as the crowning principle in poetic expression, has elevated this *rîti* concept to the level of full-fledged theory of style known as *rîti siddhânta* in his treatise, *Kâvyal , kârsutra*. It is based on three types of styles of the creative use of language.. The first *rîti* is called *vaidarbi rîti*, a diction based on the use of the *asamâs* (the phrasal organization, devoid of compounds). It has *mâdhurya* (sweetness) which generates special delight by liquefying the reader’s psyche. It also includes the use of phonemes and syllables to produce rhythmic effect, especially the repetition of the same vocal class – nasal, semi vowels and short syllables with a total absence of hard consonants. It is experienced more and more in compositions delineating the *sambhog æÂngâr* (erotic sentiment due to union), the *vipralambha* (erotic sentiment due to separation), the *karu^a* (sentiment of pathos), and the *hâsya rasa* (sentiment of laughter). The second *rîti* is called the *pâncâli rîti*, a diction based on use of the *madhyama-samâsa* (phrasal organization, made up of small compounds). It pervades the entire mind of the reader immediately even as fire catches the dry fuel. It is called *prasâdgu^a* (excellence of perspicuity or lucidity). Phrases which are easily understandable produce this excellence. It well accords with all *rasas* except *æ ; gâra* and *karu^a*. The last type of *rîti* is *gaudi rîti*, a diction based on the use of the *dîrgha-samâsa* (the phrasal organization made up of long compounds). It has *ojas* (elegance and emotionality) which excites and inflames the psyche, expanding it. It attains prominence in the delineation of *vîra* (heroic sentiment), *bîbhatsa* (sentiment of disgust) and *raudra*

(sentiment of anger) and *adbhuta*. It is generated by the repetition of plosive bilabial /p/, /b/, affricate palato-alveolar /d_ç/tʃ"/ plosive alveolar /t/, /d/, fricative dental /è/ /ð/, fricative alveolar /s/ /ʃ"/.

The *aucitya siddhânta* (theory of propriety) propounded by K-emendra (11th Century) approving the view of the creative use of language in his theory of *aucitya*, propounded in treatise *Aucityavicâracarcâ* considers *aucitya* to be the soul of poetry. According to this theory, *kâvya* is a placing together of different parts of language which are mutually agreeable or in harmony. K-emendra says that it is the linguistic creativity that binds the parts of a piece of literature together. Defining *aucitya* (propriety), K-emendra mentions twenty seven places in which propriety should be present. All these proprieties may be divided into five major proprieties : *bhâ-â aucitya* (propriety of dictional aspect), *saundaryaucitya* (propriety of aesthetic aspect) *vyâkara^a aucitya* (propriety of grammatical aspect), *sa , skÂti aucitya* (propriety of cultural aspect), *pratibhâ aucitya* (propriety of creative genius). Each of the five categories includes various constituents of language in them.

Bhâ-âucitya has *pâdaucitya* (propriety of word and phrase), *vâkyaucitya* (propriety of sentence) and *prabandh-ârthaucitya* (propriety of meaning in narrative). *Saundaryaucitya* focuses on *gu^a aucitya* (propriety of excellence), *ala , kêraucitya* (propriety of poetic figure), and *rasucitya* (propriety of sentiment). *Gu^a aucitya* (propriety of excellence) bears *prasâd* (perspicuity or simplicity), *mâdhurya* (melody) and *ojas* (elegance or emotionality), which can be divided into two: *æabdagu^a a* (excellence in word) and *arthagu^a a* (excellence in meaning). *Ala , kêraucitya* (propriety of poetic

figures) includes all proper use of figures of speech. Similarly *rasaucitya* (propriety of sentiment) also includes the proper use of all possible *rasas*. *Vyâkara^a aucitya* like Kuntaka's *pada-parârdha-vakratâ* (grammatical obliquity) acts at inflectional level of substantives i.e. tense, case, case, number, person, voice, affix and particle. *Sa , skÂti- aucitya* is impregnated with *deœaucitya* (propriety of language with reference to place), *kulaucitya* (propriety of language with reference to the status of characters), *vâtaucitya* (propriety of language with reference to prevailing customs and practices). The last category of *aucitya*, *kâvyapratibhâucitya* too focuses upon the creative use of language. It deals with *tattvaucitya* (propriety of truth), *sattvaucitya* (propriety of goodness), *abhiprâyaucitya* (propriety of purpose), *svabhâv- aucitya* (propriety of nature), *sârasa , grahaucitya* (propriety of essence), *pratibhâucitya* (propriety of talent), *awasthâucitya* (propriety of age), *vicâraucitya* (propriety of thought), *nâmaucitya* (propriety of title), *âûirvâdaucitya* (propriety of message).

It is by the use of the prescription of proprieties, that poets become the institutors of laws, founders of civil society, investors of the arts of life and teachers who draw into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true. With propriety of creative genius, the expression takes need of nothing but flows forth of the poet's soul. Now the expression is the result of its own promptings and bounds along without thinking and the mind melts the ideas into one golden stream which imparts an unspeakable joy. Thus the propriety includes all possible aspects of language of literature.

To conclude, Indian poetics, which prominently consists of *rasa* theory, *ala , kara* theory, *riti* theory, *dhvani* theory, *vakrokti*

theory and *aucitya* theory, has assimilative and complementary nature impregnated with insights, responsible for pronouncement of new theories each time. Bharata, Bhâmah, and Vâmana have the empirical and external comprehension of poetry; Ânandavardhana is concerned with metaphysical basis of *dhvani*; and Kuntaka, accommodating Ânandavardhana's different sources of exposure, talks as a practical critic. To some extent, Kcendra also focuses on practical aspects of language. No theory of Indian aesthetics negates or dismantles other theories in order to build new structures. Despite differences in their priorities and approaches, these theories treat the same aesthetic phenomenon in literature. One theory seems to be plugged into another and this certainly helps the reader to evaluate and understand the aesthetic transportation and the creative use of language of a text and its meaning methodically.

Notes

¹*Rûpa* is complexion seen by eyes and it does not depend on ornaments. *Saundarya* stands for physique of a person, or parts of the body. And *lâvaGya* (charm) is the consequence of *rûpa* and *saundarya* and depends on them but it is without them as light depends upon electricity, bulb etc but is without them.

²*sa ,yogo viprayogaûca sâhacaryam vorodhita
artha, prakara^a a, li ; ga úabdasyânyasya sannidhiâ
sâmarthyamauciti deûaâ kâlo vyaktiâ svarâdayaâ
sabdârtasyaânnavacchede viûe-a smÂtihatvaâ*

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CONTRIBUTORS

- S.K. Agrawal**, Deptt. of English, MGS University, Bikaner (Rajsthan)
- A K Chaturvedi**, Govt SLP (PG) College Morar, M.P.
- Navjot Khosla**, Deptt. of English at University College, Ghanaur, a constituent college of Punjabi University, Patiala.
- Reena Dhiman**, Deptt. of Humanities, COER, Roorkee, Haridwar, Uttarakhand.
- Sunita Jakhar & Devika**, 107AWHO colony, Ambabari, Jaipur-302039, Rajasthan.
- Deepak Kr. & Shagufta Naj**, Deptt. of English H.N.B.Garhwal Central University Srinagar, Uttarakhand.
- Mudita Agnihotri & Dipika Bhatt**, Deptt. of English, KGC, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar.
- Ajay Kumar Sharma**, Deptt. of English, Maharaj Singh College, Saharanpur.
- Mohammad Kamran Ahsan**, Deptt. of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Murshidabad Center West Bengal.
- Sumana Mehendale**, Deptt. of English, Tarana, Ujjain, M.P.
- B.K. Anjana**. School of English, Vikram University, Ujjain, M.P.
- Sapna Panwar**, Deptt. of English, Guru Ghasidas Central University, Bilaspur Chattisgarh.
- Shruti Agrawal**, Deptt. of Language, Barkatullah University Bhopal, M.P.
- Kavita Tyagi**, Deptt. of English & Other Foreign Languages, Dr. Shakuntala Misra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow.
- Shrawan K Sharma**, Deptt. of English, KGC, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar.