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**Aesthetics of the Dancing Body in Myth
and Archetype:Universals in the Quest
and Journey in Bollywood's *Devdas*,
Nagina and *Krrish 3***

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The Bollywood super hits, ranging from the 1986 Harmesh Malhotra–directed *Nagina* to the Rakesh Roshan–directed 2013 *Krrish 3* through the Sanjay Leela Bhansali–directed 2002 *Devdas*, rehearse the hero journey and transformation of consciousness in myth and archetypes. The mythic resonance in these cinemas enacts the archetypal imagery in character representations since the dancing from stage to screen integrates the human and divine, and the primordial drive and individual consciousness. The body movement of the female dancer in *Nagina*, the dancing Devdasis in *Devdas* and the circular movements of the techno body in *Krrish 3* exposes the entertainment industry's cinematic spectacle of the shared classic and folk traditions in popular culture. In the modern time informatics, the Bollywood Hrithik Roshan–starred cyber hero along with Priya and Kaaya unfolds the genetically–engineered body and artificial intelligence combined with the computerized Chinese kung fu. Likewise, Sridevi–starred Rajni in her snake–like dance steps on the choreographic space reposes an idealization of the female body, coalescing an individual consciousness and the collective unconscious, the hero journey and the cinematic adaptation. In the same fashion,

in *Devdas*, female dancers, Paro and Chandramukhi, in dialogue through the visual spectacle of the body movement connect the profane and sacred in the celestial sphere.

Keywords: aesthetics, modernity, myth, archetype, the dancing body, the geometric circle.

Introduction: Myth and modernity in cinema

Like those dancers in the Sanjay Leela Bhansali-directed 2002 Bollywood *Devdas*, the Hrithik Roshan-starred cyber hero in the 2013 *Krrish 3* champions the cause of humanity with his genetically-engineered body and artificial intelligence combined with the computerized Chinese kung fu. Similarly, Sridevi-starred Rajni, in the 1986 *Nagina* in her snakelike dancing steps on the choreographic space, reposes an idealization of the female body, coalescing terrestrial and celestial, an individual consciousness and the collective unconscious, the hero journey and the cinematic adaptation. Already in love with Rishi Kapoor-starred Rajiv, Rajni in her dancing steps in *Nagina* unfolds the film industry's amalgam of individual conscious and collective unconscious, and sophisticated cinematic technique and inherent impulse to move, and thus, reinforcing the global cultural exchange through the Hollywood sci-fi action and the Bollywood visual fantasy. Like the dancer in the 1980s *Nagina*, the 2010s Bollywood sci-fi action hero in his exceptional feats exhibits the body movements in a geometric circular structure, an embodiment of an organic whole, medieval symbol of harmony and perfection. Toward the new millennium, the Bollywood film was thriving with India's emergence as a new superpower in cybernetics, a scientific study of information technology pertaining to an integration of human and animal brains with machines and electronic devices. In *Krrish 3*, the sci-fi action hero in his cultural embodiment of the Bollywood

musical invokes the mythic visual spectacle. Like the dancing girls in *Devdas*, the young woman in *Nagina* in the snakelike dance steps on the choreographic space blends the divinity and the humanity, and visual art and archetypal imagery, and ultimately myth and modernity. Released in a range of three decades, these super hit movies repose an amalgam of individual conscious and collective unconscious, and spectacular cinematic techniques and archetypal actions. Rooted in the tradition of classical kathak and Bharata Nāṭyam, these dance forms in the modern cine-world rework myth and archetype in their shared universal undercurrents and the visual spectacle of the moving body, imbibing western styles in an ever-enriching Indian Diaspora.

Most of the dance shots in Bollywood cinema rework myths of the body movement. The trend of representation of the dancing body on stage and screen can be retraced to an archetypal action to move inherent equally in humans and animals. Aesthetics of the dancing body is articulated in the term of *rasa* in the classical dramatic tradition in the eastern society. In the Indian Bharata Nāṭyam tradition, the visual performance shifted from the temple to the theater with patrons and custodians that entered the Bollywood cinema early in the twentieth century. In the Indian theatrical tradition, the modern Bharata Nāṭyam moved from the traditional/hereditary families to the educated elite. Originally in the theatrical tradition of Bharata Nāṭyam, the *Devadasis* in their performances blend profane and sacred, transporting the audiences from the mundane terrestrial to the divine celestial sphere. Anne-Marie Gaston, in Bharata Nāṭyam, unfolds connections between dance and drama in the Indian literary tradition:

Indian dance was created as an adjunct to drama (*nāṭya*). For that reason the expression of the

emotions remains an important component of the dance. The execution of the theatrical component of Indian dance (*nāṭya*) is more commonly called *abhinaya* and is expressed according to strict rules. What the artist projects through *abhinaya* is known as *bhava*; what the audience feels is known as *rasa* (literally, flavor). The ability to express feelings is often more highly regarded and stressed than the technical virtuosity of the abstract dance (*nritta*) when judging the excellence of a Bharata Nāṭyam recital. The delineation and appreciation of the nine emotions – *śṛṅgāra* (romance), *hāsya* (contempt), *bībhatsa* (disgust), *śoka* (sorrow), *bhayānaka* (fear), *raudra* (anger), *vīra* (bravery), *adbhuta* (wonder), and *śānta* (tranquility) is central to the presentation of Indian dance and drama. The depiction of *śṛṅgāra* or romantic love underlies most of the main themes in Bharata Nāṭyam. (262)

While the audience's perception of the beauty of dancing is aesthetics, the artist's expression of passionate intensity through the body is performance. The theatrical tradition in the East evolves from such an inherent bond between performance and aesthetics, and the artist and audiences.

An inherent impulse to move makes dancing in all the cultures. An inclination to move is inherent in all the creatures, including bird, animal and human, and thus justifying an idea that an art of dancing is a universal as well as primordial body art. An archetypal impulse to move inherent in human and animal got institutionalized in the dramatic performance in the Bharata Nāṭyam in the eastern world.

Contemporary dance forms share steps and choreography with the dramatic tradition of the Bharata Nāṭyam in the eastern society, including India, Nepal and Bangladesh. Further, various dance forms in the modern cinema rework man's impulse to move shared with all the species, including bird and animal in the natural geography through the Bharata Nāṭyam institution. Along this process of evolution of the theater, primarily musical and visual performance, the dance form enters the film industry early in the twentieth century. The film industry, Bollywood in the context of India, Hollywood in the West and Hong Kong in China, incorporates music, dance, theater, fashion and language. Bollywood has substantially linked aesthetics of the body art with the corporate world, based on the art institution of the Bharata Nāṭyam and the folkloric convention. Precisely, the cinematic aesthetics of the Bollywood product comprised of dance, drama and music resonate the Indian theatrical tradition that unravels myth and archetype.

Narratives of *Nagina*, *Devdas* and *Krrish 3*

In *Nagina*, Rajni's projection toward Amrish Puri – starred Bhairo Nath and his disciples dramatizes a reptilian cobra pose in the choreographic space. Rajiv's wealthy mother wants him to marry Thakur Ajay Singh's beautiful daughter, Vijaya. Contrarily, Rajiv passionately loves Rajni, an orphan girl with a low status in the Indian society. However, Rajni impresses Rajiv's mother to accept her into Rajiv's prestigious family. After their traditional wedding, they continue living together happily. But, the couple's happy conjugal life takes a different direction after a snake charmer, Bhairo Nath, tells Rajiv's mother that her daughter-in-law is a reptilian shape-shifter evil. In the background story, the snake charmer tells Sushma Seth-starred mother that Rajni weds Rajiv to avenge the death of her spouse. Eventually, Bhairo-led band plays

music that brings Rajni outside her home. She comes down to the yard from her room in the second floor of the house, dancing in the snake's pose and the reptilian steps, making circular movements. Eventually, the villain is bitten by two snakes. Then, Rajiv and Rajni live happily ever after the former's defeat of Bhairo. In *Nagina*, the hero's integration of the human and non-human recycles the archetypal imagery in the form of myth of Bollywood movie.

In the film world, the Bollywood *Krrish 3*, like the Hollywood *Terminator 2*, rework mythological theme and archetypal imagery of animal drive and modern cultural consciousness, and the body art and the cinematic space. In a similar trend, the Hong Kong action hero in *Enter the Dragon* moves in circle in the ring in his encounter with the villain. In Bruce Lee –starred *Enter the Dragon*, the warriors use their kung fu skills, primarily hands, legs and bodies, different from the Hollywood guns, knives and rifles. Like the cyber hero Krrish and the Hong Kong martial artists hero Bruce Lee, the dancing techno body in circular structure in *Krrish 3* amplifies the entertainment industry's collaboration of the indigenous ethnography and modern cinematography. Such geometric circular images in the group dance in the song “Raghupati ragham” as well as Krrish-Kaya combat scenes rework mythic symbols of eternal power, blending the humanity and divinity. All of these humanoid figures, partly human and partly machine, cyborgs in Donna Haraway's term, replay actions and movements of the archetypal characters in the cosmic space. In her “Cyborg Manifesto”, Haraway uses the term cyborg to mean a “cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as creature of fiction” (315). Krrish in Hollywood and Terminator in Bollywood are cyborgs, embodiments of modern men who cannot work without machines.

In Indian cinemas, the artists in their emotional relationships with their counterparts revive mythic and archetypal actions and characters. In her love for her Rajiv, Rajni expresses her intense passion through her body movements. Similarly, Devdas in his love for Paro intoxicates himself with alcohol while Krrish maneuvers the shift-shifting Kaaya. In *Krrish 3*, the Bollywood action hero exhibits his heroic spectacular feats in the rescue of his family and the entire humanity from Kaal-led gang. In his fighting skills and strategies, he adapts the steps of the classical Bharata Nāṭyam. Precisely, all of these heroes and lovers in their inherent impulse to love and actions immerse into the subconscious and unconscious psychic space.

In the Indian film, dance scenes that recaptured past and present emblem a trajectory of the classical Bharata Nāṭyam repertoire and the modern western disco combined with the indigenous Hong Kong Kung fu. In “Dancing to an Indian Beat: Dola Goes My Diasporic Heart,” included in *Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance*, Sangita Shresthova connects the Bollywood dance to the classical and the modern western:

Complementary to definitions of classical dance, folk dance forms became associated with specific costumes, group formulations, gestures, and movements. Signifiers associated with both classical and folk performance traditions and non-Indian dance styles have been selectively adopted in Hindi film dance and allowed the choreography to deploy, yet simultaneously evade and even transgresses these constructed classifications systems. (249)

The Indian cinema dance blends the classic Bharata Nāṭyam and modern folk tradition in the film industry’s

consideration of the modern audience. Such an integration of the past and present, tradition and modernity, appeals the modern audience-customer, the film industry's primary mission. With the same kind of commercial motivation, modern audiences witness popular practice of the Hollywood-Bollywood interface during their leisure.

The classic of Bharata Nāṭyam historicizes the archetypal actions of the journey and movement. Narratives of these archetypal characters, such as the hero and the goddess in their pursuit of transformation of consciousness appear in the theater and cinema. Modern men in their perpetual quest for the transformation of consciousness frequent the theater, dance bar and cinema hall in today's marketplace. The dance shots in cinema connect the performativity from stage to screen, and the ancient temple to the modern theater. The Bollywood film industry is rooted in the theatrical tradition of the Indian Bharata Nāṭyam, and various dance styles and movements in these cine-products are the reworking of those dance forms. Myths are, therefore, narratives with different forms, but with common patterns of the journey, movement and transformation in the deeper structure.

Concepts and Definitions: Myths as Narratives

Myth is fictional, and history is factual. I often hear this general remark equally from researchers and ordinary folks. Mark Schorer conceptualizes myths as inner meanings of the universe and of human life (29). Myths are narratives of cosmic experiences that integrate the diametrically opposites: past and present, matter and spirit, living and non-living, and human and non-human. Men of all times and cultures share profound artistic sensibilities that unfold inherent connections between the sacred and profane, and natural and supernatural in a higher level. In the similar way, myths unravel

inherent connections between man and animal and living beings and non-living things. In that sense, myths bind are “collective and communal, binding a tribe, community, nation, together in a common psychological and spiritual lines” (Wilfred Guerin xx). Myths explicate universally common structures of belief systems and understanding of life, existence and the world. Narrative representations of profound realities based on man’s experiences and ideologies.

Schorer elaborates myth as “fundamental, the dramatic representation of our deepest instinctual life, of a primary awareness of man in the universe, capable of many configurations, upon which all particular opinions and attitudes depend” (29). We have myths of the quest, hero, love, journey and transformation of consciousness, among others, both in the East and the West. In the eastern tradition, there are certain characters in narratives that embody specific ideas: Krishna with intelligence, Arjuna with action, Karna with loyalty, Ram with obedience, and Seeta with ideal. Similarly, in the western mythologies, Narcissus embodies self-love, Odyssey stands for journey, Achilles represents one weak spot in human, and Helen connotes beauty and grace. Some of the ideas are associated with certain characters in different genres and art forms, such as epics, theaters and cinemas similarly across cultures. For an example, Helen’s beauty in the Greek myth parallels Seeta’s ideal in the East. The Trojan War broke with Paris’s abduction of Helen: Ravana’s abduction results in the Lankan War. In other words, Ravana abducts Seeta in *Ramayana* while Paris kidnaps Helen in *Ulysses*. Likewise, Hector’s heroic actions equate Arjuna’s excellence in archery in the battlefield of Kurukshetra in *The Mahabharata*. Then, the thirteen days war between Rama’s army and the Ravana’s squad in Lanka for Seeta resemble the ten years war between Paris and Menelaus, represented

by Paris and Menelaus along their heroes and warriors in the Greek myth. The Trojan War broke between Menelaus and Paris, Helen's husband and the king of Sparta.

Myth can be historicized and history mythologized. Legend stands somewhere between myth and history. For an instance, the Greek myth of the hero can be retraced to the Trojan War and the ancient Olympics. In the Greek civilization, the hero worship cult and appreciation of physical beauty are rooted history and exhibited through arts and sports. It is both historical and universal. Narratives of Olympics can be retraced to 776 BC while the Trojan War of the thirteenth and the twelfth century. Moreover, the Greeks locate Troy to the Dardanelles, and the athletes as warriors prepared for the protection of the city-states. At the same time, the Trojan War embodies wars for love, food and reputation of all times and cultures, and thus, universal. Likewise, the beautiful woman Helen is emblematic of modern time Miss World or Miss Universe because of whom many of the heroes and noblemen, including Hector, Paris and Achilles have been recognized for their heroic deeds and exceptional sacrifice. Homer's *The Iliad* in its Books II through XXIII recounts heroic grandeur of four days and two nights in the decade-long siege of Troy while *The Odyssey* narrates Odysseus's journey back home from the battlefield.

Likewise, the War of Lanka of the Greek myth has been historicized to the Treta Yuga, preceded by the Satya Yuga and followed by the Dwapa Yuga. The Balmiki *Ramayana* recapitulates the noble prince Ram's obedience and ideal princess Seeta's voluntary acceptance of all the ordeals imposed upon her from the patriarchal royal. Narratives of these ancient worlds have been mythologized, dramatized and adapted into cinemas in recent decades. Once dramatized

in *The Ramayana*, these characters' heroic endeavors, tragic life and the father quest have already been adapted into cinemas. In recent years, these heroes and leaders have been brought into popular cultures, including comics and video games. The visual art form of dance, a vital part of the theatrical performance connects myth and movie, and all kinds of dances themselves form narratives.

The dancer connects the celestial and terrestrial in his actions and performances, performing in circular structures. In that sense, dancers rework steps and patterns of movements of birds and animals. Such a sharing impulse inherent in animals, including bird and human is natural. In *The Power of Limits*, Gyorgy Doczi considers such a natural pattern-forming process archetype:

The rhythms of writing are created by the same pattern-forming process of sharing that creates rhythms of dance, music and speech. Movements shared make dance, patterns shared make writing, and sounds shared make music and speech. It is also through a sharing process that we comprehend numbers. The fact that we all have ten fingers allows us to count the first ten numbers on our two hands. From ten, numbering becomes a rhythmically recurrent process: the tens make hundreds, the hundreds make thousands, and so on. (36)

Myths are generated from archetypes, and myths are narratives, ranging from oral to print, and visual to non-visual aesthetic practices. Stories of different times and diverse cultures, which are already rooted in archetypes shared equally by humans and animals, appear in multiple forms, such as writing, dance and cinema.

Myths are made up stories at certain times in diverse cultures. People share their mythological roots not only with their kinsmen and strangers but also birds and animals. Early in the human civilization, people expressed their artistic sensibilities in the forms of stories during certain occasions, such as feast, festival, ceremony and pilgrimage.

Dancing in the Jungian myth and archetype

Myths are based on inherent human impulses rooted in archetypes. In others words, myths are narrative constructs, a revelation of cosmic force in philosophy and constructive natural energy in physics. In Latin, arch means primitive, and type is form, then archetype implies primordial original form shared by art and nature. These universal forms of narratives are archetypal since myths are constructed with the dynamics of cosmos and human, i.e. macrocosm and microcosm. Different forms of narrative are built on archetypes, and these artistic genres and subgenres are myths: oral and print, and visual and non-visual. In the past, artists and philosophers constructed characters, such as Beowulf, Green Knight, Robin Hood and Sisyphus in the West. In the modern time, artists along with entrepreneurs develop comics, cartoons, cinemas and video games with those mythological heroes and legends. Heroes are, therefore, iconic figures in the sense that they appear and reappear in different narrative traditions.

Archetypes remain in the inner psychic domain in the form of creative forces. Revealing the collective nature of archetypes, Carl Gustav Jung, in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, underscores shared patterns of profound inherent impulses between humans and birds or animals: “archetypes are composed of primordial and archaic images that humans share with others, including ancestors, birds and animals. Such common unconscious contents of

conscious representations manifest differently in individuals across cultures” (5-6). Archetypes are the symbolic expressions of the inner psychic energy, an interface of the individual consciousness and the collective unconscious in an undivided time-space continuum. Archetypal characters like the hero, mother and child evolve from continuous interactions between the individual consciousness and the collective unconscious. In the Jungian archetype, there are the hero and the villain along with the journey and quest archetypes. The Jungian hero figures include god, goddess, mentor, outcast, trickster, angel and mother. Similarly, Jung’s villains are Satan, Devil and evil spirit. From the same archetypal sphere, Campbell invents the concept of the hero, the father quest and transformation of consciousness in his *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. In these illustrations, we underscore the archetypal actions, ranging from quest to transformation, and war to peace to war.

Nagina Sridevi in her body movements enacts the reptilian shift-shifting shots that revolve around the female protagonist’s hero quest for her lover. On the one hand, the Nagina heroine’s dancing steps on the choreographic space are further reinforced by her love for the hero. On the other hand, Nagina Rajni sustains the magical power to impress her ideal figure, animus –archetype, with her dance performance. At the same time, Rajni’s lover finds his anima –archetype in the dancing girl.

Nagina in the traditional Indian Devdasi dance girl’s attire performs the snake’s scrawling on the yard once she listens to the Sapera’s music. James Iaccino, in *Jungian Reflections within the Cinema*, reposes a similar kind of the hero-lover –mentor triangular configurations in the Star War narrative cinemas:

Just like its predecessors, the *Star Wars* story is a simple and highly entertaining one: it revolves around the heroic adventures of Luke Skywalker (portrayed by Mark Hamill) and his rag-tag team of resistance fighters, who must battle the evil forces of the Empire before the entire universe is enslaved by their dark power. Luke is aided by the “whitest” of magicians, Obi-Wan Kenobi (actor Alec Guinness), and a very spunky Princess Leia

(actress Carrie Fisher) but he finds his match in the formidable trickster, Darth Vader (muscleman David Prowse with voice supplied by James Earl Jones). By the end of the trilogy, goodness prevails and justice is finally restored throughout the galaxy. (3)

A wise old man as a mentor guides the hero while the archetypal goddess empowers him from within, the Jungian anima archetype. Precisely, the dancing in the choreographic space enacts an archetypal impulse to move, inherent character to action in the rhythm of music.

In the Jungian archetypal actions, such as love, war and quest, the underlying universal structures remain the same that integrate the diametrically opposite phenomena. There are binaries of the male and the female, the hero and the villain, and the divinity and the humanity. For an example, the hero's journey from his or her comfort zone home to the unknown world invokes a transformation of consciousness. The outward journey in the material world is a process of transformation of consciousness, from ignorance to knowledge, and disorder to order, and perplexity to illumination.

The Campbellian Hero's Transformation of Consciousness through Dancing

Joseph Campbell illustrates the monomyth hero's journey from his home to the unknown world and return to his or her original world with a message. Primitive men's pilgrimage to the holy site has now been replaced trekking, hiking, and camping in the modern day material world. Moreover, modern men's trip to the beauty pageant, shopping mall, fashion center, and musical concert has replaced the holy site. Youngsters' quest for their hero figure has replaced primitive people's god-figures in Church, Mosque and Temple, holy sites of Christians, Islam's and Hindus-Buddhists, respectively. The pilgrim hero's transformation of consciousness in the spiritual site is modern man's business fair, industrial exhibition, and sports tournament. Precisely, business in the material world parallels pilgrimage to the holy site.

In his video record with Bill Moyers, Campbell draws an analogy between the dancer and the athlete in the process of movement in circle. In her dancing steps, the dancer experiences revelation in the way the sportsman undergoes does while running on the athletic track. Both the actor, the runner on the athletic field and the dancer in the choreographic space, enters into a realm of *nirvāṇa* through the turmoil. In that sense, the artist and the sportsman in processes of transformation of consciousness experience what the hero realizes after the completion of the three-stage hero path.

Campbell's analogy of the dancing and running with resonance of the myth of movement unravels the Buddhist *nirvanic* experience over the *sansaric practices*. Any individual, such as the hero, the athlete and dancer in his or her athletic

field turns the performance into visual art, and so does the Hong Kong action hero.

The Hong Kong Connection of Hollywood and Bollywood

The Hollywood action hero generates exhilarating feats from the Hong Kong action hero. From the Hong Kong film industry, Hollywood takes fights and stunts in exotic settings: from the Hollywood film industry, Hong Kong adopts computer graphic effects to present spectacular feats of the techno body in the cinematic space. Next, the Bollywood film industry integrates the Hollywood sci-fi fantasy and the Hong Kong rigorously –trained body. David Bordwell, in *Planet Hong Kong*, examines Hong Kong's departure from its focus on magnificent physical actions. The East Asian film industry exports the swordplay and the kung fu style to Hollywood. In the 1980s, the Hollywood action-adventure boosted Hong Kong's blend of gunplay with acrobatics and martial arts (200). The Hollywood sci-fi action-adventure reworks the American frontier space in the 1960s. After its transition in the 1970s, it flourished during the 1980s and 1990s. The Hollywood connection of the Bollywood action movie transitions through the Hong Kong in the backdrop of higher production values, extensive media networks, and commercial bonds. The Bollywood action star takes insights from Hollywood and Hong Kong action heroes. Both provide an impetus to the Mumbai-based Indian cine-industry in the production of the robotic action hero.

In Cameron's *Terminator 2*, T1000 descends from the future to the present California to rescue Sarah and her son. Rising from the dark world of the tech-noir and the futuristic vision of sci-fi fantasy, the human-like T1000 replaces the

violent machine-like T800. Like T1000, Krrish in Roshan's *Krrish 3* saves his father, Rohit and spouse, Priya from recurring attacks of Kaal. He then rescues his scientist father and journalist wife, Krrish integrates the body and technology. A figure of myth, T1000 saves Sarah Connor and John Connor, embodiments of procreator and the future savior Messiah, and Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ. Similarly, the Hong Kong action hero protects the Shaolin monastery, using his kung fu skills.

The dancer recreates physical movements of birds and animals to express happiness and suffering, and initiation and celebration to entertain the audience. The dance can be both personal and collective because the dancer, through specific steps and moves, articulates cultural experience and individual expertise of certain ethnic community and social background.

The dancer's training to recapture the physical actions and the visual movements of birds and animals reveals psychic impulse inherent equally in man and animal, including swan, peacock, dog and horse. Some of these dances reflect social and physical conditions in which certain groups live by the shared values. Watching dance allows audiences to unite themselves with the dancer, and the dancer in the rhythm of music connects himself or herself to the celestial sphere, and so do the Devdasi dancers of the Bharata Nāṭyam. The dancing girls on the silver screen in *Devdas* rework the Devdasi dancers of the Indian classical theater, and so does Sridevi-played Rajni in the Bollywood *Nagina*. In these ways, the dancers in their dancing steps integrate the body and mind, the humanity and divinity while dancing on the stage or screen.

Dancing in circular geometric structures in the culture industry

Lines and circles are the geometric structures dominant in dance and movies. In *Nagina*, Sridevi-starred Rajni's dance steps in a snake's circular movements embody an integration of the girl and reptile, human and sub-human, and the humanity and divinity. In the eastern tradition, nag is a holy snake, an ornament of Shiva, the god of frenzy, equivalent to the Greek Dionysus. Nagina is the female holy serpent. In *Devdas*, Devdasi girls swirling on their white attires constantly move in circles, jumping backward and forward in linear orders. In one of the dance shots in this Indian movie, Aishwarya Rai and Mahduri Dixit, blending their Kathak and Bharata Nāṭyam dance styles perform the distinctive dance duet of "dola re dola" hit song in circular structure of the Devdasi dancing.

The professional dancers and the Nagina artist in their physical movements on the screen basically transposed from their movements on the stage which is already a reworking of the dancing steps of the Devdasi dancers in the Bharata Nāṭyam. The circular movement on the screen reworks the stage of the Bharata Nāṭyam tradition, and the latter reposes the archetype of movement. A similar circular structure is reposed in *Krrish 3* with Kaaya and Krrish in the combat scene, a mythological resonance of the Devdasi dancers and the Nagina dancer. In *Krrish 3*, the kung fu actions rework the dragon's movements in the wilderness. The Hong Kong-Chinese Kung fu actions reproduce the dragon's pose, actions, and movements which are later reproduced in the fight between Krrish and Kaaya. In the meantime, Kaya sometimes metamorphoses into Priya, Krrish's lover to dupe the hero.

The artists in their unconscious mind share archetypes of love, quest and transformation. Krrish's kung fu action reworks the Hong Kong film star's body movements while Nagina performs the snake's swift motion in the choreographic space. Actor and actress in *Krrish 3* and *Nagina* rework processes of the body movements of dragon and reptile, aesthetic resonance of myth and archetype in the East and the West. In Sapera's musical note, the heroine swirls in the reptilian pose on the ground. In her dancing steps, she blends the artist's adept in the snake's body.

In *Contemporary Indian Dance*, Ketu Katrak underscores the interdisciplinary mode of visual art. In connection with the power of art of dance in connecting India with the rest of the world, Katrak reaffirms that the interdisciplinarity of contemporary dance, across genres and subgenres – dance, theater, martial arts and visual cultures – invokes linear trajectories with the artists in their vertical, horizontal and diagonal moves on the choreographic space. Dancing girls in *Devdas* expose their sincere dedication to their Hindu deity in their vertical movement, forward and backward, on the stage in the narrative uses of stage space. Adapting dance shots with young beautiful dancers brings myth and modernity, dance and cinema, and indigenous art and the modern cinematography together. With the kung fu action, the Indian dance tradition adapts the Chinese Hong Kong indigenous body art. Precisely, the Chinese kung fu and Indian classic dance are indigenous to their original landscape.

The spectacle of dancing connects audiences to the indigenous ethnic root. In *Nagina* and *Devdas*, the dancers intermediate between the Indian folk tradition and popular culture. Similar kinds of swift movements of the body in the kung fu action in *Krrish 3* appeal the modern movie audiences under the spectacular visual effects. Dance performances in

cinema not only fascinate a larger audience but also promote both the visual art to diverse cultural settings. In the cinema hall, the film audiences often enjoy watching dance, listening music, and viewing multiple cultural practices. In that sense, the film products in the market prompts interdisciplinarity, bringing business, economics, sociology, anthropology, gender and technology in perpetual interaction.

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Exploring Therapeutic Counselling and Trauma Narration in *In Memoriam*

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Alfred Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1849) is not merely a sustained elegy on the loss of a dear friend, but a poem that also narrates, *inter alia*, the traumatized and tortured nature of human existence and the agonizing question whether science, nature or god will reign paramount and with what consequences. This thematic triad is further developed through a series of phases wherein the use of modern therapeutic counseling by the poetic persona cannot be ruled out. In sections that explore the acceptance of loss to that of a gradual mental metamorphosis that sees loss as a universal trait, there are many elements of modern cognitive therapy at work. It is indeed striking how the poem encompasses various strands of cosmological, psychological and geophysical spaces within this paradigm of feeling that registers bereavement. Coupled with all this is a narrative that in lines of a trauma narration encapsulates various processes of the unconscious and libidinal desires that is the forte of psychoanalysis. The paper, thus seeks to chart out such tendencies within the poem.

Keywords: Victorian, Cosmological, Geophysical, Trauma, Narration.

The tendency to regard trauma not only as an isolated psychological phenomenon but a coming together of many interdisciplinary concerns in a globalized world view is gaining ground, especially keeping in mind that the classical

examples of trauma narratives with recourse to either Vietnam War or the Holocaust are losing their relevance today. This is what Amir Khadem in his review of the book *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism* (2014) is quick to point out. The word “trauma” comes from a Greek word called *traumatizo* which means to inflict a wound and many ‘models’ of trauma explicate traumatic possibilities vis-à-vis rape, torture, war, genocide, the danger of nuclear annihilation, domestic and racial violence, *et al.* However, trauma studies as a separate discipline in its own right has its origins in the Crimean War (1854-56) and the American Civil War (1861-65) when soldiers began to exhibit behavioural disturbances including nightmares, nervousness, phobias and the like (Abdullah 2017: 80-81):

In the aftermath of World War I, a new term, “shell shock” was coined; during World War II, studies in the US started to focus on the term “combat fatigue”; finally, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, in the 1970s and the 1980s, this concept received growing interest among scholars various fields and led to the beginning of trauma research and theory. It was in the 1980s that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) – because of a consistent political campaign by Vietnam veterans – admitted a psychological condition prevailed in soldiers of the Vietnam War, calling it “posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).” (81)

While many models of trauma and trauma theory exist, many of the Western models of therapeutic discourse may not be valid in non-Western cultures as a prescriptive and universally valid practice, and that there is a need for a more comprehensive theoretical parameter to study trauma that does not “marginalize or ignore traumatic experiences of non-

Western or minority cultures” (Craps 2014: 46). At the other end of the spectrum, Dominick La Capra in his article “Trauma, History, Memory, Identity: What Remains?” argues that despite a considerable work has been already done on the interconnections between trauma, history, memory and identity, much remains yet to be investigated on empirical and theoretical levels. The author opines that a much neglected aspect of trauma narratives is the issue of “transgenerational transmission of trauma” to descendants of trauma victims (2016: 375). A perfect instance of this can be found in Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved* (1987) wherein the character Sethe is made to suffer by the succubus of her small, two-year girl, having now returned as a young woman named “Beloved” whom she had to kill in order to save her from being captured by slave hunters. This succubus-woman leads to the deterioration of Sethe’s household and especially to her insanity and physical deterioration.

In Franz Fanon’s classic *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), the author traces the post-traumatic aspects of trauma related with colonial wars and the “mental disorders” attendant on the same. This, as Fanon brilliantly shows, applies both to the colonized and the conqueror—in his analysis of the mental disorders that he speaks of, both these binaries are destabilized to an extent that forces us to look for traumatic incidents on a personal level that lie beyond the confines of race, duty and location. Trained as a psychoanalyst, Fanon had a first-hand experience of the colonial war going on in Algeria and the after-effects of the same. Yet, beyond these ‘classical’ models of regarding trauma narration, there is an increasing concern for the inclusion of the trauma narratives of the Other—people who have been often relegated to the fringes of human civilization. Mention may be made of LGBT and their traumatic associations penned

by people of that community and the like, to cite a particular instance.

Lord Alfred Tennyson's *In Memoriam, A.H.H.* (1850) is not only a sustained elegy on the death of a dear one, but a work of art that falls within the tradition of elegy writing at par with Milton's "Lycidas", and Arnold's "Thyrsis". Encompassing various strands of spiritual, cosmological and psychological parameters, it led T.S. Eliot in his *Selected Essays* to comment on the poem that it was "religious" not because of the quality of its faith in the ultimate evolution of human race, but because of the quality of its doubt with further comments that its faith is a poor thing, but its doubt [is] a very intense experience. On the other hand, commentators were more concerned with the fact that the themes that Tennyson used in the poem that had their roots in the various geological and scientific advances of the day. Victorian era was marked with a plethora of technological inventions and the poet does not miss to give a hint about the process of human evolution at work in the poem, coupled with the fact that his creative-spiritual odyssey was also to run along similar lines.¹ E.D. H. Johnson succinctly points out:

The tendency to regard *In Memoriam* exclusively as spiritual autobiography has obscured the importance of this work as a record of Tennyson's artistic development during the formative years between 1833 and 1850. Yet among the components of the ordeal through which the poet passed in his journey to faith was the search for an aesthetic creed answerable alike to his creative needs and to the literary demands of the age. (1958: 139)

Whatever be the critical commentary that exists on the poem, it is noticeable that the same is a sustained 'trauma' narration of sorts and embraces many strands of modern

cognitive therapy in verse. Though Freud's influential texts dealing with neurosis and the dream framework were yet to arrive, Tennyson uses many elements of modern psychoanalytic theory that impart the whole poem a unique characteristic of a counseling session in verse. Tennyson and Hallam met in 1829 and a steady friendship developed between them. Both of them were a part of a debating society called "The Apostles" who held intense discussions on the current problems and issues of the day. Tennyson invited Hallam to his residence at Somersby Rectory and the former's youngest sister Cecelia was to be married to Hallam. However, in 1833, during a trip to Vienna, Hallam suddenly died of a nerve burst and his body was brought to England soon. Tennyson was devastated. Just after a span of a few weeks, he started composing these lyrics that grew in number steadily until Tennyson had at last discovered that he had written "so many". In 1849, Tennyson showed the copy of these lyrics to his friends, intended to be a part of a private circulation only. On 1 June, 1850, the poem was finally published as *In Memoriam*, though Tennyson had thought of a yet another title called *Fragments of an Elegy*. The poem was an immediate success, though charges of homosexuality was leveled against him, notwithstanding the fact that it led Queen Victoria to comment that after the Bible, this poem was her greatest means of solace after the death of her husband.²

The central questions that the poem seeks to ask are whether Nature indeed has any sentient existence and if so, how can humankind's evolution be linked with the vast changes that have been wrought on earth due to geological and other such natural forces. Are God and Nature are at variance with each other? If so, is Nature "red in tooth and claw", and if this be the case, what future is there for the

ultimate human evolution and with what consequences? The centrality of the psychological drama is not merely that of faith versus doubt, but also how the poet will replace the lost object, i.e., Hallam with something as substantial as his poem that will be a bulwark against the ravaging questions of the day:

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

So runs my dream: but what am I?

An infant crying in the night:

An infant crying out for the light:

And with no language but a cry.

(Tennyson, *IM*, Section 54, 1-20)

The comments of Peter Conrad in this context of nothingness and the poet's valiant protest against the same seem worth quoting:

Ruskin in 1884 argued that nature had sickened and discoloured during the nineteenth century. Mechanism had sentenced it to death, and against this debility Tennyson's images make a valiant, vain protest. Simile and metaphor are recollections of a spent life, bequests of a meager vitality. Classical landscape was instinct with gods, alive with energy; though the vale where Enone wanders is lovely, everything in it droops or creeps or loiters in slow motion because it too, like Enone, is expiring... (1985: 525)

In the book *Trauma, Transcendence and Trust: Wordsworth, Tennyson and Eliot Thinking Loss*, it has been succinctly pointed out by Thomas Brennan that while

Wordsworth's gaze is structured by the "dead that he memorializes" that he lived out his verse in his "spots of time", Tennyson's structure of mourning in "In Memoriam" is marked by the fact that it did not break the bard at once, but came to him in stages or "waves":

In Kleinian terms, Tennyson loosens his control over his dead friend so as to bring him back into the living world as the creation of poetic language that remains very conscious of the emptiness out of which it emerges. He symbolizes this external world in a vision of physical Nature that seems to grieve with him. Nature protects Hallam's remains, provides a spot for his burial, and, in the climactic section 95, is ultimately the site for his reconstitution as a heavenly spirit and muse of the poem. Tennyson never forgets, however, that this reconstituting of Hallam is also a recapitulation of his traumatic loss. If Nature consciously speaks of carelessness in creation, Hallam, who visits Tennyson in a trance, perhaps represents the opening of the unconscious in protest against such inexorable change. (2010: 75)

The troubled relation between science and religion and the "Victorian compromise" associated with it may be a stuff of detailed analysis with many a writer in the Victorian era, but Tennyson, at least in his poem questions the very existence of man's origins and how can he survive the troubled geophysical forces that have been testified by the fossil records. The poet is more concerned with the very basic fact that if a man of such excellent gifts like Hallam may pass away so abruptly, can human race indeed have a reason to survive the cataclysmic forces of Nature. The beginning sections of the poem thus invoke a dark future of human predicament that is thoroughly coloured with an existential

anguish. The Prologue that begins the poem was added in the very end, and the note of hope that Tennyson paints in man's submission to "Strong Son of God" is in stark contrast to sections that begin the poem. The poet is thoroughly lamenting the death of Hallam and is in a condition that is both symptomatic of intense melancholia and the tendency to mourn after the death of a dear one. Thus, this phase of trauma and its subsequent later has to start with *this* realization that someone has passed away, a mental act that will prepare the poetic persona to overcome the sea of grief that he has fallen into:

Dark house, by which I once more stand
Here in the long unlovely street
Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, waiting for a hand.

A hand that can be clasped no more—
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door. (Section 7, 1-8)

The entire poem is structured into three parts³, viz. the first that deals with the lament on loss of a dear friend, or the loss of an 'object', here Arthur himself, the second that deals with the realization that the lost object cannot be brought back into the physical world, and the third that details how one can transcend this phase by detailing one's doubts and hopes into verse that will see its culmination in the description of how, through marriage and the resultant procreative act, the loss can be patched. Taken in the modern context of psychotherapy and the study of mechanisms connected with loss and attendant mourning, the comments of J. Bowlby in his study entitled *Attachment and Loss* (1985) is noteworthy. Says Bowlby:

Although we know that after such a loss the acute state of mourning will subside, we also know we shall remain inconsolable and will never find a substitute. No matter what may fill the gap, even if it be filled completely, it nevertheless remains something else. And actually this is how it should be. It is the only way of perpetuating that love which we do not want to relinquish. (1985: 27)

Bowlby's work seems to be an observation of the problem of melancholia and the resultant neurosis associated with it and gives a historical account of the problem. The work is seminal as before, little or no study had been conducted on the importance of "attachment" as the centre of human development and "that attachment theory identified a new basic motivational system to account for the missing link in the intergenerational chain" (9).

Tennyson's poem can thus be seen in the overall context of modern cognitive and therapeutic studies related to the problems of melancholia and depression connected with the same. True, when the poet was penning the narrative, modern psychoanalytic theories associated with the Freudian or Jungian schools were still far away, but what Tennyson was accomplishing in verse is nothing short of a self-therapeutic counseling that had well-marked stages. It would now be good to see how the poet achieves those stages, with some words on the CBT therapy, a therapeutic discourse that the poetic persona unconsciously engages into.

CBT or Cognitive Behavioural Therapy was first developed in the USA by Dr. Aaron T. Beck in The University of Pennsylvania in the 1960s and has been a very reliable, psychotherapeutic tool to treat depression and other anxiety disorders like GAD (Generalized Anxiety Disorder), PTSD

(Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) and other such related problems. CBT is basically a “psychosocial” intervention in the sense that this process believes that there is a direct relation between a human being’s thought processes/psychological processes and the environment in which s/he resides. The person may not be fully conscious as regards those processes, but a direct correlation indeed exists. While psychologists like Beck and Albert Ellis were questioning the limitations of traditional therapy practices and how despite the fact that unconscious forces (keeping in lines with Freud) may be the foundation of many disorders, they, especially Ellis could readily see how many people still kept themselves in a “trouble state” despite having good perceptions about their childhood experiences. Thus, this led Ellis to remark that people are not influenced by events per se but by their perceptions about those events.⁵ CBT believes that a person’s thoughts and his/her resultant actions may be reconstructed by recourse to that person being questioned about the viability of such a belief system. REBT or Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy developed by Ellis had its roots in reshaping the core beliefs of a person. The three tier system on which REBT rests are, namely, 1. Identifying the “situation or the event” that *triggers* negative thoughts/ and negative response, 2. The core beliefs related to the emotional and behavioural patterns need to be reassessed and identified, 3. The combination of such core beliefs and activating events will produce a negative outlook on life and that has to be deconstructed with a positive feel on day-to-day issues (“Cognitive Behavioural Therapy”). CBT has been performed in groups with people who have exhibited similar symptoms, and with the emergence of computer software, CBT tests can be administered via electronic fronts.

The beginning sections point a dark and dismal scene of loss and bereavement in the poem. The poet is still yet to come to terms with the fact that his bosom friend is not more, a fact that makes the poet oscillate between two extremes of the negation of the situation and the acceptance of the same. The poet still visits the house of Hallam at 67 Wimpole Street, London and awaits the hand of his dead friend to go for a sojourn nearby. But still, the element of melancholia and depression that would soon invite novel, self-therapeutic techniques later are too strong:

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me. (Section 9, 17-20)

However, as many commentators have adroitly pointed out, the “stages” into which this long poem may be divided commence from the three Christmases after Hallam’s death that also helps us ‘situate’ this discourse of therapeutic self-counseling in verse. The poet’s perception (or cognition) about the death of a near one thus takes the form of resultant behaviours that the poet exhibits as a poetic persona throughout the poem. Freud in his essay “Mourning and Melancholia” aptly sums up the case that confronts the poet in the poem:

The distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, abrogation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment. [...] Profound mourning, the reaction to the loss of a loved person,

contains the same feeling of pain , loss of interest in the outside world—in so far as it does not recall the dead one—loss of capacity to adopt any new object of love, ... (1917: 153)

This stage in the mourning mechanism has its exact corollary in the poem—in sections up to 28, that is considered by many to be the end of the first part and the beginning of the second, we have ample glimpses of such a morbid mood in the poet that sees little interest in the world of day-to-day affairs, and even considers life to be unsuitable and a privilege when his near one is in the vaults of death:

Old yew, which graspest at the stones
 That name the underlying dead,
 Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
 Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,
 Who changest not in any gale,
 Nor branding summer suns avail
 To touch thy thousand years of gloom.

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
 I seem to fail from out my blood
 And grow incorporate into thee.

(Section 2, 1-15)

In an exciting essay entitled “The Poetic Work of Mourning: Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* as the Freudian Trauerarbeit”, William Scott Harkley is quick to point out that the poet in the narrative comes to an understanding with the processes of flux and mutability through the subtle adoption of various psychotherapeutic stages that sees the loss of Hallam as devastating to that of the substitution of

that lost object through poetry that mourns that loss. The article documents how drawing from the idea of loss as a disruption of one's own self-love (narcissism), Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia" explicates the basic process of mourning and the dangers of lapsing into states of melancholia during that process. Mourning, as the essay points out, after Freud, is the result of loss, and melancholia is the possible outcome and "unhealthy tangent" that may be the result in one's process of lamentation. This loss can metamorphose itself as the lost person, "something more objectified, like a deeply personal item; or even something abstract, like the deterioration of an ideal":

Mourning is thus a response to loss, a call to fill the newly formed hole within one's psyche. [...] It is through the process of work (trauerarbeit) that the subject begins to loosen his or her attachments from the lost object and slowly move toward a successful substitution and consolation, an end in mourning. Through "working," the subject progresses toward this ending, and if moments of melancholia arise during this progression, the subject must defeat its arresting influence and continue along with mourning if the process is to end successfully. [...] It is with this form of material production, in verbalizing the feelings of loss and the endearment of a fragmented identity, that Tennyson begins working toward successfully substituting the lost aspect of himself with his trauerarbeit. In Freudian terms, Tennyson is working on negating the lost object of himself in order for a new substitute object to fill in the void, to negate with negation. (Harkley, "The Poetic Work of Mourning")

Within this paradigm of mourning and self-counseling, Tennyson's poem also pre-echoes many of the accepted

scientific advances of the twenty-first century; notable among them are the modern principles of geology and the long standing belief among geoscientists that the earth's crust has been subject to various natural processes and that species have died one after another due to catastrophic forces. Though Darwin's seminal texts like *Origin of the Species* (1869) and *The Descant of Man* (1871) were still yet to be published, many of such theories were still in the air. It is not surprising that Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830-1833), which appeared in three volumes shaped the pessimistic structure of Tennyson's thoughts in sections 55-56. Challenging Cuvier's hypothesis that the present earth's landscape has been the result of catastrophic forces, Lyell concluded that the same was the result of continuous forces of elements on earth's crust that led to the extinction of one species after another till entire life on the planet at one point of time stood the danger of being eliminated. This assertion is reflected in section 123 that echoes Lyell's findings:

There rolls the deep where grew a tree.
O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
There where the long street roars hath been
The stillness of the central sea (Section 123, 1-4)

Whatever be the assertions of the poet vis-à-vis geological forces at work and the prevalence of such theories during the Victorian era, the assertion of the poet in this section is reminiscent of Alfred Wegener's theory of earth crust's movement along tectonic fault lines popularly known as the "Continental Drift Theory" (1912) that hypothesizes that the same once supported a supermassive continent "Pangaea" and that later got separated to form different landscapes that we know today.

Lyell's theory was nothing new as a hundred years earlier, people like Joseph Butler and questioned the "reasonableness" of natural religion by pointing out that nature had no concern for every sentient creature on earth, and Hutton, in his *Theory of the Earth* (1795) has also pointed out in lines later proposed by Lyell that one could account for all the past changes on earth with reference to natural forces that were still in operation (in Ross, 2003: 121-23). Robert Chamber's *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (1844) provided a relatively more optimistic view of the natural processes on the planet by pointing out that whatever has been the result of such processes, they have aimed to create the highest form of organic life and that species have disappeared only so that higher life forms could arrive:

Robert Chamber's *Vestiges of Creation*, published anonymously, professed to be "the first attempt to connect the natural sciences into a history of creation", beginning with the formation of the solar systems, and tracing the mutations of the earth's surface and the development of life revealed by geologic evidence, up to the appearance of the "adult Caucasian"—the present highest form of organic life. (Mattes 2003:129)

This evolution of the lower life forms into the organic form of the highest order has echoes of modern transhumanists, a concept that the poem well seems to incorporate. Transhumanists were a loose group of scientists, sociologists and futurists who first met in the 1980s in The University of California at Los Angeles and prepared their manifesto on "H+", the symbol that is widely used for transhumanist thought. Ideas about this rather elusive species of posthumanist propaganda were probably first postulated by J.B.S. Haldane, the British geneticist in 1923 in his book *Daedalus: Science and the Future*, wherein he held the view

that substantial benefits would accrue from the application of scientific benefits to humanity. These efforts, nevertheless, at first would appear to be sheer blasphemy and gather substantial criticism. Julian Huxley is also sometimes considered a pioneer in this field. Coupled with these were also a group of computer scientists like Marvin Minsky, who, working from the vantage point of cognitive science believed in the integration of the mind and the computer, thus paving way to the concept of AI or Artificial Intelligence in the 1960s. Though transhumanism has its various ramifications, and its practitioners believe in divergent ways in which human biological limits can be superseded by the subtle alignment of the human with the machine, a common ground is that human growth and development can attain new heights by the application of emergent techniques in computer programming, genetic technology, unlocking of the neural networks and their underlying mechanisms, robotics and so on. However, such an application would also lead to the “trivialization of human identity”, a threat to democracy and contempt for God and spirituality. In a nutshell, transhumanist perspectives both envisage a utopia of sorts and a veritable dystopia, according to its detractors.

The Epilogue to the poem asserts this belief of the poet of the transcendence of human race into more perfect forms:

And, moved thro' *life of lower phase*,
Result in man, be born and think,
And act and love, a closer link
Betwixt us and the crowning race
No longer half-akin to brute,
For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed
Of what is them is flower and fruit.

(126-36; emphasis added)

Tennyson's poem encompasses many modern, novel applications in use today through the depiction of the grief at the loss of Hallam in his poem. These themes form the background of intense intellectual debate of the era. An extended counseling session in verse, a poem that foreshadows the debates surrounding cosmology and the creation of the cosmos today and a text that brings out various pre-Freudian facets of the human personality in times of a great loss, the poem indeed transcends the epithet "Victorian" and shows how certain thematic strands used in common parlance today have been extended from the poem that find diverse applications in our times in fields like anthropology, social psychology, cosmology and astronomy and psychoanalysis.

Notes

¹Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1869) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) came much later, but the poem foreshadows many such thematic strands introduced and popularized by Charles Darwin—concepts that were much in the air before due to an intense discussion of the same by people like Hutton, Lyell and Chambers, as it already has been pointed out in the essay.

²After the death of Queen Victoria's husband, the empress rarely visited London and shunned all public appearances. The magnitude of her grief can be gauged from the fact that she wore black nearly all through her life. After the Bible, *In Memoriam* was her greatest comfort, as she later pointed out. This attests to the psychotherapeutic qualities in the poem that is one of the points this paper wants to argue and thereby point out its "post-Victorian" qualities

³The structure of the poem has invited intense debate. While many consider the three Christmases after Hallam's death to be the ruling criterion, others feel that the poem has four parts. A.C. Bradley himself points to the poet's assertion in his Memoirs that the Christmas sections are a point to be analyzed. But the triad of "Inferno", "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso" as in Divine Comedy cannot be ruled out.

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Contextualizing and Contemoporising Nirupama Borgohain's "The Chaste Woman"

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Nirupama Borgohain is primarily a novelist and short story writer . She has bagged quite a good number of prestigious awards such as Sahitya Akademi Award (1996), Saraswati Award (1987), Assam Sahitya Sabha Basanti Devi Award (1988), Prabina Saikia Award (2000) and the Ambedkar Award (2002) . *Anyajiban* and *Abhiyatri* are two of her most noted and widely read novels. A prolific novelist, a brilliant short story writer and a splendid essayist, Nirupama is a much revered name in Assamese literature in particular and in Indian literature in general. Nirupama Borgohain registers a phenomenally powerful presence in South Asia. A self made prolific writer characterized by patriotic zeal, Borgohain is also a frontline social activist credited with enormous corpus of literary works foregrounding the pressing issues of perennial importance for the state of Assam in particular and India in general. Hers is an uncompromising pen with undeterred conviction that women create space for themselves in the present patriarchal social set up by crossing the boundaries and dismantling the barriers. At the same time, she underlines the chaos and unbridgeable gap created by women's attempt to negotiate space for themselves. The present research paper is an attempt to understand woman's scheming nature on the one hand and man's strategic suppression on the other. It throws concentrated reflective light on 'man's plight in the world of woman' and her strategic

exploitation of various situations in day to day life. The paper however owns the fact that women in patriarchal set up do find themselves subjected to patriarchal bias, prejudices, suppression and subordination. The paper also critically evaluates man's situation, status and position in a household where he encounters his wife as a 'patriarch' and his status is relegated to a hen-pecked, timid husband forced to work under wife's instructions. It deserves mention that the situation became more serious and grave after women organizations started getting extra sympathy and attention of the legal machinery and authorities. Various legislations effected in India have added to the strength of women and plight of men thus creating a situation where man becomes victim of female grudge, revenge and exploitation

The story titled "The Chaste Woman" has a great contemporary relevance and forges grounds for research and investigation in the area of family and conjugal life because this is a harsh reality that the society at present is face to face with. Nirupama Borgohain depicts Ananta's family life in the story underlining the compromises he makes with his wife to avoid conflict at least for the sake of his children. His wife Bimala developed a complaining nature advertantly to conceal her own deficiencies and apprehensions. Bimala's is a calculated and hypocritical approach who despite comprehending her inabilities, tries to force Ananta think that it is his incompetence, failure for which she is unhappy with him. Bimala's lordship over Ananta and mental dwarfing of the husband glaringly comes to light in her bumptious declaration, "If you are so afraid of my scolding, why don't you provide me with a servant who exudes divine aroma from her body? If the head of the household cannot get a good servant, he is not fit to be the head." (2004:29) Bimala makes it clear to Ananta that a husband must not fail to ensure his

wife's happiness. She magnifies the petty issue of a domestic help and paints it as Achilles's heel for Ananta.

A pragmatic Ananta shouldering the responsibility of children and wife, living in a rented accommodation away from home, gave up hopes of procuring a servant by paying exorbitant wage which his income does not permit. In response to the high wage demanded by a servant to Ananta's mediator, Ananta says, "If I had to give them such exorbitant wages, then I'd have to be a servant in someone else's house myself." (30) He looks at the mounting pressure of his wife from the feasibility and practicality point of view and decides not to hire a servant.

Bimala imposes herself on Ananta and proves it to him that she is more capable, smart and prudent in the matter of running the family than her husband by hiring a maid called Champa. Thus she holds him incompetent and boisterously claims that she succeeded where he had failed. Because the maid working for his family at present happens to be the outcome of his wife's efforts was a reason strong enough for the wife to make the husband stoop and remain mum about the maid's deficiencies. The author says about the husband, "Generally he did not complain about Champa's body odour because that would only provoke Bimala to assault him with the accusation that due to his inability to come up with a good servant every one in the house had to suffer Champa." (29) The author is emphatic about Bimala's diplomatic exploits in the story and in a tongue in the cheek manner derides her strategic subordination of the husband.

Nirupama Borgohain throws light on a discussion that transpired between Ratna Baruah and Bimala about 'Bihari' women, their life style and their sexual promiscuity. Ratna tells Bimala, " But I tell you Mrs. Saikia, many men would

like to go by that road even though they have no business to do so. And why wouldn't they? You know how men are. Why would they miss the chance of seeing such 'bathing beauties' of the kind that's rare even in Hindi movies? Oh, I tell you, those women are extremely shameless, those low -caste – sluts—they take their bath almost nakedH” (31) Nirupama draws attention to the denigrating attitude of one woman towards other women. Ratna is aware that the women in question are from out side states and crushing poverty is responsible for their indecent life. Bimala has been presented as a domineering and authoritative woman strictly managing the household. She hurls sarcasm at her husband who was a 'failure' in finding a maid for her. Bimala launches a scathing attack on Ananta which the writer expresses thus:”Ananta had to face the humiliating accusation from his wife that he was not worthy of being called a man: how can you be one when you could not get a mere servant? The sting of this accusation became very sharp when she herself managed to introduce Champa into the household as part-time servant” (2004:30).

It is only compromises that lent propulsion to Ananta-Bimala conjugal life. In the process, Ananta lost his individuality and self-assertiveness. The author says, “After marriage Ananta had been unable to assert himself before his autocratic wife because of which he was known as a hen-pecked husband” (33). The husband was made to realize that it is Bimala who makes a smooth sail of the family possible. His self-assertiveness disappeared before the artificial smartness of his wife—a smartness desperately she requires to conceal her own shortcomings. She comes down heavily on Ananta and says, “If the head of the household cannot get a good servant, he is not fit to be the head” (2004: 29). Ananta generally avoids debates with Bimala because

he knows, “Bimala would go on grumbling. Once she opened her mouth, it would not shut easily” (29). The maid servants are pretty much expensive in the city and Ananta was not in favour of hiring such costly maids. Therefore, despite getting information about Bihari and Nepali maids from Bhabani Khound, he did not tell his wife about it because, she “might be willing to hire a servant even by paying these high wages” (30). Bimala emerges as a character who fails to coup up with life independent of helpers, a habit she developed at her father’s house. It goes hard with her to manage household chores without help; but she wants to conceal it by saying that her husband is good for nothing because, he could not get a maid for her.

Bimala was full of self-praises when she brought Champa, the Bihari young but married maid for the first time and in an imposing manner she was trying to prove Ananta’s failure in something where she had succeeded: “You were a total failure in the matter of getting a servant, but today, I managed to get not just one, but two of them. Of course, I had to reject one,— I chose the young one over the old one. Being a young woman, she will be able to work more efficiently than the old woman” (34). But Ananta’s innocent glance at Champa makes Bimala feel shaky. Bimala helped Champa with a *sari* and wanted her to ‘come properly dressed’ because Ananta, the *sahib* is ‘a very strict man’—an appreciation which she never does in Ananta’s presence. However, it becomes increasingly clear from the way she warns Champa that she wanted Champa to come properly covered so that *sahib* does not get attracted to the youthful, attractive body curves of Champa. A great amount of jealousy and self-reproach also reflects in Bimala’s behavior. The writer explores Bimala’s stream of thought:

Bimala did not know how much more strictly to warn Champa. Champa's voluptuous body made her angry, surprised and jealous- was this the body of a half-starved woman? Who could believe that? In contrast to Champa, she ate the best of food, but her body was like a flat bamboo-leaf. She was attacked by countless small ailments all the time, because of which she could never put on some flesh on her frame which remained thin and wasted. Of course, Champa was younger than her but she was not an exactly an old hag at the age of thirty- seven. Girls no longer become old at the age of twenty as they were supposed to at one time. Why twenty, one remained young even at the age of forty and now a days girls actually married at that age; at least after thirty five they were considered to be marriageable. Bimala heaved a sigh. Unlucky as she was, her parents married her off at the age of twenty two and after giving birth to two children, her body had broken down. What tough luck she had! (33)

Bimala is psychologically sick since she feels that she suffered a defeat by entering into marriage at the age of twenty two and after the birth of two children she no longer has the body her husband would be craving for. Her frequent tussles with her husband are a means to keep him under some psychological pressure that as a husband he also has his failures such as managing household affairs. She nurtures an apprehension— being an able male, her husband might cast glance at the physically and sexually attractive Champa. She does have an internal realization that somewhere in their relationship as husband and wife, there is a gap and she is failing somewhere in the conjugal life. It is this realization that forces her to be stern with him and point out without purpose his inefficiencies, inabilities. She does all this simply

to conceal her own deficiencies. She is jealous of the well-formed body of the maid and espouses a wistful longing to be the owner of such attractive body as Champa possesses. Therefore, she wants to have a male servant lest her husband might get attracted to Champa. Bimala's effort to exert her control over everything including the behavior of her husband becomes blatantly clear when she outrageously reacted to Ananta's act of asking Bimala whether she had taken bath or not. (<http://www.assamtribune.com/horizon.html>)

Nirupama is a subtle humourist. Ananta's reaction to Bimala's frequently changing opinion about the maid is humourously portrayed. He says to his children, "You know Rintu and Montu, when we enter the dining room to have our food, we not only take bread, butter, and rice, we have to swallow two other things as well—your mother's 'loving' words and Champa's wonderful body smell" (29).

Bimala feels insecure after introducing Champa to the household. When she came the next day wearing the new *sari* given by Bimala, Ananta noticed that Champa was looking beautiful. As Ananta, referring to Champa, said that she looked "like a lady" Bimala could not tolerate this appreciation because, she did not want that Ananta should look at Champa. Bimala is terribly disturbed and comes down heavily on him, "Really, I still feel so exasperated when I think about the hopeless man with whom I am leading a conjugal life. I did not ask you to climb Mount Everest for me. All I wanted was a man-servant." Bimala tries to pour out all her wrath on Ananta projecting him as an unsuccessful husband who could not manage to hire a man-servant. She desperately wants a man servant now; because she feels that by bringing the female servant she has invited trouble for herself. The writer makes it clearer: "Actually Bimala was

angry with Ananta for a different reason—why should he gaze at Champa’s body at all? (34)

Bimala is acutely aware of her failure in keeping her husband committed to her because of her age and loss of physical glamour. She becomes cantankerous and even shouts at her children,” If your snub noses are so sensitive, then drive Champa away and do all the dirty work yourself. Everyone in this house specializes in finding fault but no one ever does any work.” (35) The feeling of psychological insecurity looms large and she behaves almost frantically when she remembers her own failures which she tries to hush up time and again. Borgohain thus, brilliantly portrays various dimensions and facets of Bimala’s psyche.

Bimala, however, till now remains much within control in her criticism of Champa. She still helps her and shows sympathy towards her. Her sympathy for Champa increases all the more when she learns from Maya, the mother of Champa, that she was married to a Bihari husband in her *desh*, but the husband could not give her financial support whatsoever. So, after the first issue, she was brought to Assam by her mother on the plea that she could earn a lot there. Maya was happy that her daughter had an attractive body and she expected that like other young girls of the slums she would also indulge in the ‘business of flesh’ and make money. Maya’s evil intention has a reflection on her poverty and also greed for money. But as Champa rejects Maya’s offer, Maya stops taking care of her daughter and Champa is now drawn to the present state of affairs. Maya curses Champa and *vice versa*. Champa curses Maya because she does not like her mother indulging in the business of the flesh. She develops intense hatred towards her mother and does not even want to hear her name. At the same time, Maya curses Champa because, she did not choose the life that she wanted

Champa to embark upon. She wanted Champa to make money by taking up the profession as a whore. Maya expresses her frustration, “With great hope I brought her here. I thought that she would earn more than anybody else. But ah, she has to act as if she was Sita incarnate! BitchH” (41) Maya goes on to say that she is ashamed of calling herself Cahmpa’s mother:

She wants to be a *Sati!* With an empty stomach she poses as a virtuous sati in a Guwahati slum! How ridiculous. I tell you, *Memsa’ab*, it is I who am ashamed to be the mother of such a dirty and untidy girl. In our *basti* not a single young girl is so poor and wears such shabby, torn clothes. They all know how to make money; they all know how to make hay while the sun shines. One is not young always, and *Memsa’ab* in our *basti* no young woman has such an attractive body as Champa has. (40-41)

The concept of *sati* in Indian tradition is of paramount importance. Chastity is considered to be the touchstone of measuring the fidelity of a wife to her husband. It is a condition where a woman remains sexually unpolluted by any male other than her own husband. Indian tradition accords prestige and adoration to such virtues. Chastity is the highest virtue a woman could possess. (2005:71)

Nirupama raises an important social issue here. Prostitution has of late been an alarming issue in Assam. The author cites examples of poor women coming to the state in search of livelihood from outside who try to make easy money by indulging in harlotry. Such young women are promoting the racket of prostitution in Assam affecting the young men and women of the state. Parents are generally responsible for inculcating moral, spiritual and social values in their

children. But Nirupama's mention of Maya, the mother of Champa encouraging her own daughter to participate in the business of flesh so that she could make money highlights the extent to which poverty and greed could push an impoverished underdog. The moral degeneration of the poor woman has been hinted at. It is not only cruel but unthinkable as well to come by a mother persuading her own daughter for sexual promiscuity. The writer intends to throw light on the direction the modern society is heading to. However, Champa defies Maya's exhortations and remains unmoved from her stand thus implying the importance she attaches to moral values. The author portrays Champa as a foil to Maya.

Bimala was much moved by the details given by Maya and remained "transfixed to the stool" being thunder struck at a mother's advice to her own daughter to take up prostitution as her profession. She confided the entire story of Maya and Champa in her husband with extreme solemnity and tenderness: "Champa may be dirty in appearance, but she is so pure and noble from inside that she can really be compared to Sita and Sabitri. Those characterless creatures may cast lecherous eyes on her body, but to no avail—she'll never encourage them" (41).

Bimala is happy beyond measure that Champa prizes chastity above everything and despite hard time she has respectfully adhered to her chastity as a treasure. She admires Champa's stance and feels that she deserves kudos. At the same time, Bimala's act of narrating Champa's strength of character could possibly be an indirect hint to Ananta that although he casts his eyes on Champa, she is not easily attainable. She appreciates Champa and her chastity. Champa's *sati* image earned a soft corner in the heart of

Bimala. Therefore, she grants small favours to Champa whenever she needs.

However, Champa's chastity could not keep Bimala attracted for long. She feels that Champa should manage her expenses on her own. By obsessively clinging to her chastity, Champa is depriving herself of earning money for her own maintenance. She would not have been required to ask for help and favour from people if she took her mother's advice. Bimala now strongly feels that her chastity is the principal reason that kept her in paucity and dearth.

The same sympathetic and appreciative Bimala has an all together different opinion about Champa as she demands and begs one thing after another from her and she gets tired of Champa and expresses her mouthful dissatisfaction. Bimala now feels that in the name of preserving her chastity, Champa is taking undue advantage of her employer. She reacts to Champa: "Have I kept this woman for helping me or for maintaining her? Always begging and begging- ah, she will make me a pauper, really. She is ashamed to listen to her mother's advice, but has no shame in begging, my precious *sati* of *Kalyug!*"(43).

Bimala goes to the extent of ridiculing Champa. She feels that instead of begging around for help, Champa should have acted upon her mother's advice. The materialistic view of Bimala is in harmony with how she thinks about the world. Nirupama purports to mean that even virtue comes to be regarded as trifling and a draw back when one's interest clashes with the other's needs. There is a shade of doubt in Bimala's mind about the character of the chaste Champa. This being *Kaliyug*, one cannot be Sita or Sabitri in the strictest sense of the term. Champa's chastity ultimately came to be suspected and mocked at. Her chastity is now deemed to be

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a cover up for her idleness, inertia and parasite nature. The writer exposes the shallowness of Bimala's initial appreciation for Champ'a chastity and accentuates the veracity of the debunking statement 'my precious *sati* of *Kaliyug*' in the sense that in this age of extreme materialism, there are few people who could appreciate virtue, because people are 'out of tune' with virtue.

The story ends with Ananta's comment, "Oh Champa, at this moment I am sure, you can't distinguish between your *mamsa'ab's* accusation and your mother's accusation." (43) Ananta's comment opens avenues for crucial questions like why chastity which is considered as a great asset for a woman came to be dismissed as something trivial and trifling in the face of poverty and greed for materialistic prosperity. Borgohain emphasizes the fact that self centeredness of the members of the society prevents them from seeing the truth.

Nirupama argues that the society as a whole has all appreciation for a chaste woman. Infact, happy social and conjugal life of a woman depends largely on the virtue of being chaste. An unchaste woman is loathed and looked down upon in all societies. Assamese society also attaches much importance to chastity. But what happens to Champa for being chaste is reflective of the degeneration of human thoughts prompted by materialistic inclinations. Bimala represents the degenerated human thoughts and thus she becomes an embodiment of self-centeredness and worldliness. (www.arunikashyap.com p.3) She is always preoccupied with her household chores, her children and husband forgetting her duty to a maid who is reduced to extreme poverty only due to her respect for chastity. She could have had a posh, luxurious life if she abandoned chastity, but instead, she chose to suffer and preserve it because she considers it a rare virtue a woman could ever have. Bimala herself being a woman

should have been considerate to Champa instead of criticizing and leaving her in the lurch. Nirupama foregrounds the callous behavior and inhuman nature of Bimala who has no respect for a fellow woman endowed with a rare virtue. Thus, Nirupama Borgohain shows the enigma of chastity in the story of 'The Chaste Woman' employing stream of consciousness technique. Besides exploring the psychology of the characters, the story gives an insight into the way the female psyche works.

'The Chaste Woman' unravels two important issues: (i) Bimala's strategic subordination of Ananta to hush up her own apprehension and misgivings (ii) Chamapa's chastity, otherwise highly valued in the society, dismissed as a mere strategy for thriving on her idleness and inertia. However, it becomes evident from the story that Bimala's insecurity is the insecurity of many women in the society. Bimala's is not a hopeless case, she still respects conjugal sanctity. There are instances of Bimalas in the contemporary society who go to an unthinkable extent to subordinate and harass Anantas. In the age of technology and cyber revolution, many educated men and women are seen frequently hitting newspaper headlines for being involved in immoral, licentious activities through facebook, instagram and other ultra modern facilities devastating their family. The tendency of a married man or woman to establish relationship outside marriage at the slightest excuse should not be mistaken as a sign of modernity or smartness. Blaming a wife or a husband and immediately deciding to fiddle around with another man or woman and then filing law suit implicating domestic violence or cruelty or infidelity should not be made the order of the day. Nirupama Borgohain's story 'The Chaste Woman' thus bears immense contemporary relevance and serves as an eye opener for those who, often take undue advantage of the

legal provisions to avenge with a view to hide their own deficiencies.

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Narrative Style of M.G. Vassanji's *The Gunny Sack*

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The study highlights the narrative style of M.G.Vassani and the influence of his movements on his works. It also deals with the character he has adopted in his works and life like experience of his character too. Vassanji is South Asian descent author who spent almost two decades in East Africa and then moved to U.K and finally landed to Canada. The movement which he experienced and the process of assimilation he is experiencing from the beginning of his life is well articulated in his works and also use of some words and the phrases shows that there is some sense of belongingness he feel from his ancestors past and his past. The undermining of history is repeatedly done by Vassanji very creatively and proficiently in his works. He has his own use of the language and has standpoint that can be assumed as counteract of English. His works are full with the account of Gujarati words and the idioms. He vividly tells the story; the language which he uses is influenced by the colonialism, with diminutive and straightforward sentence. With the narrative language technique, he preserves the historical, cultural and religious inheritance.

Keywords: Native, adopted, homeland, history, experiences.

The study will highlight the modes of writing adopted by M.G.Vassanji. Vassanji is South Asian descent who spent almost two decades in East Africa and moved to U.K and then

finally settled in Canada. In his writings the influence of all these places can be seen with a vivid description of the characters and the places. There are many contemporaries of Vassanji like Michael Ondaatje, Rohinton Mistry, Uma Parmeswaran, Anita R Badami, Fred Wah, Shani Mootoo, Yann Martel and many others who gained reputation worldwide. Though all these writers are presently in Canada but most of their works deal with their homeland, they try to deal with their native history. Vassanji states that if you don't tell your stories, nobody else is going to tell them for you. He believes in writing your own experience rather than creating work on other experience as no one is there who can feel your pain until and unless suffered from the same and also cannot express the same feeling as the person who has suffered the same in the past or suffering right now.

The undermining of history is repeatedly done by Vassanji very creatively and proficiently in his works. Vassanji use to express him as "other" in the social and cultural position. He feels dejected in the new land and feels culturally and spiritually isolated and connects himself with the character Salim from one of the novel from V.S.Naipaul who experience identity loss in amid the Indian communities in East Africa. He states, his Indian is just like someone from the Carribean, almost from nowhere. His writing gives account that his techniques and style are purely based on his experiences. His emphasize is mainly due to the aftermath of the colonialism that has entirely changed the culture of the slave country and because of the colonialism everyone tried to copy them and after some times their children were unable to differentiate between their own culture and the culture of the Britishers. They efface the culture they stand on. It is the effect of the colonialism on the countries that are being ruled by the Britishers. Vassanji adds, he remembers every detail

of British geography, but we didn't even know the names of the flowers that grew in our gardens, that's what colonialism does.

Vassanji use language that cannot be described as the English of the colonial. He uses language English to give an instance of his culture and the experience of South Asians through articulation of the same. He finds it the best way to communicate his experience in a best possible manner through his articulation. The idea to express the experience of emigrant is more reflexive through the medium chosen to the language, it is the language that most diasporic writers has been used to convert the culture of homeland to mark the distinction of their identity. The Indian author P.K.Varma has very different theory of writing in English as the language of "The great myth is that 'great' languages are infinitely malleable, that you can indigenize them with impunity, speak them with any inflection, break and make words in any way you want. Yes, languages do acquire local colors, but there are limits to their mutilation and to what they can accommodate without loss of meaning and significance... Many of us have mastered it now, and 'read, speak and dream' in it, but which one of us did this as a conscious choice"? Vassanji brilliantly use the English language with his adaptation to reach near his own language by giving the lexicon at the end of his novels. He has his own use of the language and has standpoint that can be assumed as counteract of English. He asserts that:

I have a much more aggressive view towards language; if we were invaded, then I now see myself as part of an invading force, or part of an invading culture from the Third world, which is now helping to transform the cultures that invaded us. So what I do is use the language,

but changes it and adds on to the literary traditions here. What I attempt is to bridge different literary traditions. I see the whole process as much more positive. (Kanaganayagam 24)

The language which Vassanji use in his work is not English it can be considered as Hinglish as it not only full with the words of Hindi but also with Gujarati. It shows that some sort of relation is there in his words that connect him with the culture spiritually without touching the borders. His works are full with the account of Gujarati words and the idioms. He vividly tells the story; the language which he uses is influenced by the colonialism, with diminutive and straightforward sentence. With the narrative language technique, he preserves the historical, cultural and religious inheritance. Vassanji is the repository of traditional culture in the new land, as a child he is escorted with the feeling of culturally handicapped to the far off land from the land of his ancestral *karma-bhumi* which made him more devoid to Hindu home but songs of soil remain in his heart and slop about in his works later in his life through his works. Pawan Varma asserts: "People don't make cultural choices in vacuum. There is a context, a background, a set of circumstances that influence the options before us and what we pick from them. Each choice then unleashes a consequence, inexorable, concrete and long lasting". It is the consequence of the colonial rule that robbed the educated elite of India of its organic unity. But the diasporic writers have good catch over the culture this is the good consequence of leaving the country beforehand when it was enriched with its entire cultural heritage. In short, one can say that there is a very deep agreement on the link between language and culture. Therefore, in spite of writing in perfect English they frequently use the native dialect and other language in diasporic novels

are representative of their shift from the point of origin. The language plays a vital role in deciding the identity of the person as it show some part of you is somewhere where it belong to. And it is the major element which framework in reforming the diasporic identity. It is the thing which gives some sense of satisfaction to the diasporic author that in some way they are connected to their roots. Vassanji is displaced from the applied norms and put himself in hybrid nature of living being and hybridity defies the unity of nationality, identity and language. Accordingly, these varieties of the dialects of modified English is not only to make safe for the language of ethnic-identity but to transform the sphere of English into 'englishes' as it emerges in "Re-placing Language: Textual Strategies in Postcolonial," in *Empire Writes Back*. In this concern, dismantling the hegemonic English language is a noteworthy factor in deconstruction of the official language and reconstruction the ethnic or diasporic language (37-40).

The narrative technique of diasporic writers are not purely comic, feminist, tragic, romantic, pastoral, historic but a combination of all these modes to create the diasporic genre. Vassanji don't pay much attention to the plot because when he creates the stories and interconnects them that itself develop the main plot and sub-plots with the work itself. The writings of diasporic authors are based on consciousness of their hyphenated identity, with awareness of two or more different cultures they have adopted. Vassanji's presentation of past does not stares from his writing as there is something loss, something not in continuity which affects the same. "The past in [*The Gunny Sack*] is deliberately murky to some degree. I did not see, nor wanted to give the impression of, a simple, linear, historical truth emerging. Not all of the mysteries of the past are resolved in the book. That is

deliberate. It's the only way" (Kanaganayakam 22). Another major issues related to the technique of Vassanji that his works play with the time that drive home the idea the past affects the present, and some sort of strong link between what comes in present as reflection and a consequence of the past. "I knew that even Nur Fazal, our Pir Bawa, had fallen once, given in to the charms of a heavenly temptress; the result had been a calamity for the fledgling community of Patan, in which my ancestor Arjun Dev had been killed; and the Sufi... his link with his spiritual master blocked by an implacable wall. That could happen to my father, I thought, watching his head relax to the tender touches of a woman, close to her chest. I should pray for him (*The Assassin's Song 129*).

The first novel, *The Gunny Sack*, is Vassanji's first novel that gives the experiences of the South-Asians who emigrate from India to East Africa and then to Canada. The narrative which he use to describe the life like characters based on the real life experience, there is some sort of relationship to the culture which is beneath the subconscious mind of the author, the selection of the characters are based on familial closeness and ethnic focus. Characters such as Dhanji Govinji and Salim Juma who defines the different generations and through Salim's character the history of the family is revealed vividly. He not only plays the role of himself but also acted as the counter narrator of his ancestors past. He gives each and every instance from his family clearly in a loud manner which describes the in-between position of the narrator, created years ago. The narration is mainly focused on the Ismaili family's character through four generations which is opposite to the colonial characters. *The Gunny Sack* is the first novel of Vassanji in which the name itself tells the mystery is in the sack when opened will help others to understand it. It was the first novel that give his experience of the South-Asians

who emigrate from India to East Africa and then to Canada. In the beginning of the novel narrator is very curious to know about his past through the gunny sack which his grand aunt has left for her. It offers him a process to “excavate the past, the family roots of Salim Juma, the Ismaili community, and along with that the past of the East African nation of Tanzania.” (Harb 182). Many parts of the Africa has been touched by the author in description of the places and the character. Dhanji Govindji arrives in Matamu in present day Tanzania from Zanzibar, Porbandar and finally Junapur in Western India. The change in places shows that the family is being dislocated from one place to another, basically from original homeland in Junapur, Gujrat to East Africa. The third generation also faces the dislocation while moving from Tanzania to Kenya. The narrator after his father’s death moves to Dar-e-Salaam with his family. In the end of the novel it reflects different parts of Dar-e-Salaam and Northern Tanzania. In the novel it echoes the narrator’s quandary of knowing himself.

Thus the novelist’s idea of choosing the narrative locations and the character moving from one place to another is to foreground the journey of the characters who are search for their own people. He uses various locations in order to show the in-between position of his community, which neither completely belong to India, nor to East Africa and Canada. Also through his work he supposes to show the real setting which also shows the movement of the novelist in several places. Therefore, the imagined geography or setting has a supported element to bring the inner conscience of its inhabitants. The different location in his novel also supports the author to unfold the life experience of the emigrants whose identity is hyphenated, described in *The Gunny Sack*.

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Definitions and Classifications of Indian Folktales

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Folktales are important pedagogic tools for generations. Folktales are part of folklore. Folklore is oral tradition of a particular society or community or a group of folks. Folktales are as important as any other artistic or literary work. This paper aims at defining folktales from Indian point of view. We intend to understand how scholars have categorized folktales. It is important to understand the perspective on which the classification is based. While one classification bases itself on psychological types; the other relies on cultural types. When we study folktales as a literary genre, we need to understand all perspectives. Various scholars have given classification and definitions of folktales. But these classification systems alone seem to be insufficient. The study of folktales is important to understand their place and significance in society. Researchers and scholars are working on re-establishing venerable place of folktales in modern times. This paper aims at defining and classifying folktales. This paper focuses at comprehensive study of folktales as a genre.

Key words: culture, oral traditions, folklore, folktales, classification, India, society.

In modern times oral storytelling has become a thing of past. Middle aged people may remember oral stories being

narrated to them by their grandparents. But today's generation, the millennial may not remember any such thing. All that they remember is watching You- tube and online videos. Oral storytelling was an integral part of life in good old times. It used to create and nurture a deep bond between grandparents and grandchildren. So many values, wise thoughts, *sanskars* used to go down from one generation to another generation through oral storytelling.

The Royal Institute Dictionary (1999) gives definition of "Tales" as the "stories that are passed down orally for generations such as, *Jataka Tales* and the *Tales of Aesop*." There are definitions of tales given by scholars, like King Attakorn (1976). They tell us that tales run through generations. They are passed down from parents to their children and grand children. These tales are an important part of our culture. They are part and parcel of our traditions. Most of the tale traditions are oral in nature. The basic nature of folktale is reflected through the spoken word. Now today in the age of digitalization these tales have been written and preserved for posterity. The origin of tale is not very important. Everyone can take liberty with the storyline. Folktales are flexible. In folktales details are less important, only message is important. The main aim of a tale is to entertain. They create an atmosphere which brings joy, enhances happiness and lessens the day to day burdens of life. The purpose of tales is to bring fun and enjoyment. The other aim of tales is to train young minds and set the standards of morality. Its moral function sometimes comes naturally. Sometimes it is added to the tale intentionally. Tales are not meant only for children. They are designed for the grownups as well. The tales of grownups are apt only for them.

Kulrab Millikamas (1975) said that the "Tales" are the stories that are oral. They are narrated by the people to

provide entertainment. They are part of our traditions. They are our heritage literature. These are stories which help in strengthening faith in divinity. They are holy in nature and bring mankind closer to God. They serve various purposes such as giving moral lessons. They help us to develop better coordination with environment and laws of nature. The tales are stories which offer different moods and shades of human nature such as adventurous, jealous, comic, superhuman or supernatural. There are varieties of characters in folktales. Folktales have humans as characters. They also have supernatural characters. There are kings and queens, prince and princesses on one hand. On the other hand, there are common labourers, workers and housewives. Then there are ghosts, witches, angels, gnomes and mermaids. Each character is unique. The characters behave as per the setting of the story. They have their own code of conduct. A psychological study of the mentality of characters would be interesting. Sometimes they behave like ordinary human beings and yet sometimes they outperform themselves. They become extraordinary. Folktales reflect the atmosphere in which the narrator lives. Folktales also strike a common cord with the audience. In this way they are close both to the narrator and the audience. It becomes a cosy circle where emotions and passions are shared. The narrator and the audience become one. Folktales are all about erasing boundaries. They reflect all aspects of the human minds, its foolishness as well as its sharpness. Like a river flowing down the mountains, folktales splash humour, irony, joy, pain, challenges, ambition, anguish and suffering. Folktales become synonymous with life. The outer details may differ from region to region, culture to culture and faith to faith but the deep emotions are the same. Folktales tell us that all human beings are alike. The joys and sorrows of humanity are the same.

Sumamal Pongpaiboon (1997) pointed out that “Tale” is a Bali word and it means “story-telling”. Folktales are strictly oral tales. The tales in written form share lot of commonness with the oral tales.

To put it simply, the tales are the proof of the human intellect. The tales are tools invented by the human brain to establish morality in the family and community. The stories are told by using power of word without using any material thing. The tales become a powerful medium to transmit values like brotherhood, kindness, honesty, compassion and love for nature. It is done in a very spontaneous manner. The tales are devices to put things in order, to maintain mental hygiene of a community and thus become part of oral traditions. The tales can serve variety of purposes depending on the demand of time and place. The tales are designed by common people called as folk. The tales which belong to common people are called folktales

Folktales are influenced by the specific culture. They are used to record events, important people and places. Folktales give information about religious rites and ceremonies of a particular region. They are entertaining and fictional. They embody fundamental teachings about human life and nature. They contain belief system by which people have lived for centuries. They are considered as formulaic narratives as they include traditional expressions and repetitions like seven sons, seven queens or seven fairies. They are simple as well as imaginative. All these things make folktales popular among children as well as grownups. The characters are imaginary with focus on action. Supernatural elements provide thrill and amusement. The folktales result in justice both for the good and the evil. The good is rewarded. The evil is punished. Most of the folktales are an

effective lesson in the law of “karma”. Many times a person is served with the same gloves with which s/he treats others. They teach wisdom. Folktales may be defined as short stories of unknown authorship which are transmitted orally for centuries and during their journey some of them are recorded in text form. Folktales are stories of people and they narrate how folks live and learn. Imaginative power of folks gives the stories better form and content.

According to William Bacsom “Folktales are prose narratives which are regarded as fiction. They are not considered as dogma or history... although it is often said that they are told only for amusement but they have other important functions, as the class of moral folktale should have suggested. Folktales may be set in any time and any place, and in this sense they are almost timeless and placeless.” (www.patheos.com/blogs/foxyfolklorist/folklorethursday-folktale)

A.K.Ramanujan gives a unique definition of folktales in preface to his book *Folktales from India* “a poetic text that carries some of its cultural context within it; it is also a travelling metaphor that finds a new meaning with each new telling.” Folktales are fluid in nature. Ramanujan says that no selection can truly represent the multiple and changing lives of Indian tales. His definition of folktales does not limit the tales to oral or written forms. He frees the tales from oral and prosaic forms and presents them as our Indian folktales truly exist. He goes on to tell us that folktales are “literature of dialects of villages, street, kitchen, tribal hut and wayside teashop.” They are common to rural folks. Folktales travel by themselves. They help in cultural exchange. They travel when they are told. Folktales cross linguistic boundaries when a bilingual person tells it or hears it. The structure of folktales

does not change from teller to teller but cultural details get changed.

However, there are no watertight compartments or categories to classify folktales. Efforts are made by various scholars to classify and categorize folktales in various ways. Classification of folktales can be done on patterns, themes, content and purpose of tale telling. Folklorists have contributed a lot to define and classify the folktales. Indian folktales are unique. Their classification must be done accordingly. Indian folklorists have contributed a lot to classify Indian folktales.

A.K. Ramanujan is well known as a poet, translator and humanist. He received the prestigious *Padma Shri* award from the Government of India in 1976. He inspired a generation of scholars in Indian literature, folklore and linguistics. Ramanujan was born in 1929 in Mysore city of Karnataka. Karnataka is a Kannada speaking state. He got his primary education in Mysore. He received B.A. and M.A. degree in English literature from the University of Mysore in 1949 and 1950 respectively. After 1950 he started his career as college lecturer. He taught at several colleges of south India. In Belgaum during his teaching career he started collecting folktales from various resources. Any person like his mother, a teacher, school children, house maids, servants, aunts, men and women of his village who could tell him a story became his source. He continued collecting folktales until about 1970. His passion and interest for collecting folktales was extraordinary. Whenever he was invited to give lectures somewhere he used to collect the tales from school teachers, carpenters, tailors etc. He recorded the tales by using pen and paper as well as a tape recorder. Ramanujan, as we all know is one of the celebrated poets of Indian writings in

English. His poetry is known for its symbolism and imagery. He has dealt with highly philosophical concepts in his poems. He was awarded *Padma Shri* for his contribution to poetry. Collecting and classifying folktales was his hidden love. Folktales always fascinated him. He never knew that posthumously his works on folktales would be considered seminal. In this sense his work on folktales is unintentional. Ramanujan read folktales extensively. He read *Tales of Grimm Brothers*, *Tales of Aesop*, *Panchatantra*, *Boccaccio*, *the Ocean of Story (Katha Sarit Sagara)* and tales that appeared in any children's magazine. In 1956 Ramanujan met Edwin Kirkland who worked in University of Florida and came in Mumbai. This meeting proved to be very important. Kirkland suggested to Ramanujan to translate the Kannada tales into English. Kirkland wanted them to be published in the United States. This recognition and appreciation motivated Ramanujan to study folklore at Indiana University, Chicago. Later he joined Department of South Asian languages and Civilizations as teaching faculty. He received his doctorate from Indiana University of Chicago in 1963. He taught there for thirty years. During this period his love for Indian folklore and folktales flourished. Ramanujan studied folktales as a scholar. He wanted to clear the confusion and present a neat classification. Ramanujan considered folktales as a complete universe within themselves. He studied the structural aspects of folktales. He also studied the thematic aspects of folktales. He did a psychological and cultural patterning of folktales. It was Ramanujan's firm belief that folktales are not secondary to devotional or mainstream literature. He underlined the cultural importance of folktales. His classification, therefore, is unique and detailed. Ramanujan's classification is also important because it is a complete Indian point of view. India has a wide, complex and diverse culture. In maintaining

traditional languages and customs from different region, religion and groups, we need a clear understanding of folktales. Folktales have a very powerful influence over popular imagination. The heroes of folktales are worshipped in villages. Ramanujan was particular about the context of a tale. As we know flavour is more important than accuracy. As the tales get retold in villages, streets, kitchens, tribal huts, wayside tea shops, market places and friendly chat rooms. They change colour. Most of the tales have rural setting and describe common people. Even the tales where queens and kings are involved, the masses have a strong role to play. There are many repetitions and similarities in folktales across the Indian sub continent. Ramanujan says, “It is well known that such folklore items, like many other sorts of items in cultural exchange, are autotelic: that is, they travel by themselves without (often) any movement of populations. A proverb, a riddle, a joke, a story, a remedy, or a recipe travels every time it is told. It crosses linguistic boundaries any time a bilingual person tells it or hears it.” The structure remains the same but cultural details change. (www.jstor.org/stable/1062747)

Male- centred Tales

The male is the doer in such tales. A man usually leaves his native place in search of job or some hidden treasure or just to complete a responsibility. In the process he faces many challenges. He overcomes the problems and is successful in the end. He is rewarded by wealth. Often he is rewarded by a bride in the end. Many folktales end in marriage. “In *The Barber and The Brahman Demon*, (Bengali) an idle barber does no work all day but sits in front of the mirror and preens. One day, scolded by his mother, he decides to leave home to try and amass some wealth.

In *A Musical Demon*, (Tamil) a very poor Brahman grows sick of his poverty and sets out on a pilgrimage to the holy city of Kashi. In *Outwitting Fate*, (Tamil) a young Brahman sets forth in search of a great sage who he hopes will impart knowledge. In *Winning A Princess*, (Tulu) the youngest of three sons leaves home to try and win a princess who has thus far refused all suitors including his older brothers.

In these stories, the journey is long and hazardous, and the way is beset with perils in the form of wild animals or supernatural beings. While the men end up succeeding in their near-impossible missions, the women in these tales are typically just pawns or prizes or, at best, helpers.” (scroll.in/article/801280/why-these-shape-shifting-indian-stories-need-to-be-read-all-over-again)

Women- centred Tales

In these tales women outshine men. Women are shown active, brave and intelligent. They often help men who are in trouble. In these tales roles are reversed, men are stupid and women are wise. One example is of the clever daughter in law who escapes tyranny of her mother in law and establishes her place in family. In another Kashmiri folktale named “the wife who refused to be beaten” a young woman deftly tackles marital conflict by her wit and intelligence. She refuses to be ill treated. They have control over the situation. They rescue males who are often stupid and weak.

Family-centred Tales

Indian society has always been about family. Ramanujan says that a psychological reading of these tales reveals about Indian family structure, competition, love, hatred, cooperation, incest and betrayal within family. The family is

the world. The setting is patriarchal, therefore a feminist reading is also imperative. In the end these tales are all about benevolence within family. The story of *Savitri* is relevant in this regard. As a young woman she goes out and finds her man *Satyavan*. She marries him against the stars. Finally she wins him back from the clutches of death, by her single minded devotion and purity of heart. These tales are about siblings, parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents. The relations portrayed in these tales are vivid. They portray bonds of affection and care as well as rivalry and betrayal. These stories offer psychological insights that how families share love and hate relationships. Mothers, step mothers, wives, fathers, step fathers, husbands, brothers and sisters- all relations are interwoven with variety of human nature. These stories help us to understand the social system regarding practices of marriage and other beliefs as well. These family tales offer insight and understanding of conscious and sub-conscious human mind. The family tales offer stories of kings, queens and struggles inside their family to gain power or love.

Divinity-centred Tales

In these tales magic, supernatural beings, forest spirits, demons, brahmarakshas, magical pots and plants are there to provide awe and amusement. In these tales gods appear living and behaving like human beings. They perform all bodily functions. In these tales supernatural beings are defeated and befooled by ordinary humans. Indians have their theory of fate (bhagya) and human efforts (karma). Many of these stories tell us that a human cannot fight against the fate but many tales affirm that we decide our own fate by hard work and effort. This reaffirms Indian philosophy of *Swā + bhava* (to each his own). Indian philosophy gives the individual the freedom to choose his/her *Ishta* (god) according his/her nature, circumstances, time and place. We

can also choose our theory of life. We find that in these tales depiction of gods and goddesses is raw. When these tales enter the realm of mythology, religion and history, they became polished and lose their wild colours. In folktales we find the characters near to life and even full of follies. For example the character of *Bheemsen* in the epic *Mahabharat* is different from Bheem of folktales. In folktales he is shown as a tribal. His wife *Hidimba* also belongs to tribal community. In many folktales he said to have changed his rural appearance and disguised himself as a woman. So much so that in tribal groups of today's India the first salutation is *Jai Bheem*.

Animal-centred Tales

Ramanujan goes further into his classification with animal centred tales. There is a huge treasure in the form of *Jataka tales* and *Panchatantra* which humanize animals and pass on eternal values in an interesting manner. The story of The Monkey and The Crocodile, The Tortoise and The Geese, The Cave That Talked are some popular examples.

Humorous Tales

As the name suggests these tales make us laugh and enjoy the flavor of the story. *Tenali Rama* and *Akbar Birbal* are some of the well known examples. *Gopal Bhar* was one of the nine gems of the court of *Raja Krishna Chandra* of medieval Bengal. Stories of *Gopal Bhar* are witty and comical. They amuse children.

Stories about Stories

We can also call them stories within stories. A fine story in this section says that a farmer had many interesting stories with him. But he did not share his stories with others. The stories got angry with him and left him. Stories must travel

from place to place and time to time. Another story says that a woman was very lonely. She was full of the burden of untold stories about her troubled life. She grew fat and fat with stories. She had no one to share her stories with. One day she decided to tell her story to her favourite wall. She poured all the stories on the wall. The wall fell with the burden of stories. The lady felt light and happy. This is a deeply psychological tale. Untold stories cause misery, pain and heart burn. Chatting, laughing and sharing stories are essential for healthy human life. Walls are broken when stories are told. These walls can be walls of self, identity, territory, languages, nationality, gender or class. (Mukherji, 2016)

Another important folklorist Prof. K.D. Upadhyaya has given another classification of Indian folktales. He founded Indian Folk Culture Institute at Allahbad. The purpose of the institute was a systematic and scientific study of folklore. He wanted a coordinated study of different wings of folklore namely folktales, folk music, folk songs, folk dances and folk painting. Various scholars were working on the subject across India. Professor Upadhyaya wanted to bring the contribution to one forum. The institute coordinated well with many Asian, European and American folklore institutes. Professor Upadhyaya had presented his work at Indiana University around 1963 (Dorson,1963).

Religious Tales

These are tales which have fructified from core religion. They may not be part of Vedas and Upanishads but they are popular among the masses. These stories educate people with a sense of authority. For example there is a story of two brothers Lord Ganesha and Lord Kartikeya. The two brothers

enter into a competition where they run around the whole world. The one who completes the race first would be the winner. Kartikeya starts his journey on his vehicle peacock. Ganesha goes to his parents Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati, walks around them in a circle and sits. When Kartikeya comes after completing his journey, Ganesha says that he covered his world earlier. His parents are his world. This is how Ganesha wins the competition. This is religious folktale which imparts family values.

Didactic Tales

Jatak kathas which are about the previous births of Buddha are examples of didactic folktales. Here the element of entertainment or *Rasa* is less. The element of giving a lesson and imparting a moral message is more important.

Love Stories

K.D. Upadhyaya has given a category to all great love folktales of India. Love has always been a strong motive of expression and literature in general. Saleem and Anarkali, Sohni and Mahiwal, Bajirao and Mastani, Prithvi Raj and Sanyukta, Shivaji and Saibai, Dhola and Maru, Mirza and Saahiba and Sassi- Punnu are some of the popular and important love folktales of India.

Tales of Entertainment

Certain folktales are created just for the sake of entertainment. It has no purpose other than giggling, tickling and connecting with the folks. In north east there is a folktale that a sage wanted to wake up to meditate but he fell asleep again and again. He got angry with himself and plucked his own eyelids. As the eyelids fell tea plants grew up. This is how tea became an invigorating and awakening drink.

Local Legends

India is a land of local legends. Every nook and corner has local heroes. For example Alha and Udal the two brave brothers are local legends of Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand. Pahalwan Gama, the fabled servant of Royal household and Ghag, Dak are local legends of north east and surrounding areas.

Myths

The last category given by Prof. Upadhyaya is that mythical folktales of India. This is where the boundary between folk and myth is merged. Vikram and Baital, Salsa and Satuka and stories of various dreams of kings and queens constitute mythical folktales. The story of Savitri and Satyavan can also be clubbed in this group. (Upadhyaya, 181-196)

To conclude, we can see in modern India serious attempts have been made to understand and explain folktales. The simplicity of folktales has attracted scholars as well as common readers. Folktales do not demand much intellectual exercise and still convey the essence of living beautifully and simply. Preservation of the folktales of India is our responsibility. Stories grow our hearts. Folktales enhance our personality. We need to tell and retell these wonderful tales. They cover many aspects of life and provide simple solutions. The world of folktales is that of easing the senses and soothing the mind.

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Reading the Socio-Political Unrest: A Critical Inquiry into the Shared Space of Third World Literature

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The daring to perceive and inscribe optimistically, even in the midst of sheer violence and hopelessness, takes a narrative to another level where it becomes perennial and acknowledged. Identifying writers who are the ambassadors of different cultures and nations, (un)noticed at times, this paper undertakes an attempt to link the select works of Gabriel García Márquez (Latin America) with that of the Political Modernist Fictions from the context of Kerala. The texts opted from two different cultural backdrops have made “perceptible impact on their cultures, i.e. reflect the socio-political conditions or transformations of their societies, rather than those whose works are primarily valued as literary artifacts” (Sherrif 6). When Márquez drew the most intricate and atrocious picture of Latin America’s omnipresent demon of patriarchy, within the Kerala context, the works of writers like Pattathuvila Karunkaran, U.P. Jayarajan, V.P.Shiva kumar, John Abraham and P.K. Nanu realistically dealt with the political environment between the 1960’s and 1990’s.

This paper seeks to compare the two works of Márquez, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (AP) (1975) and *The General in his Labyrinth* (GL) (1989) with the short story collection of the above-mentioned writers from the context of Kerala,

published collectively as *Reverberations of Spring Thunder* (Trans. 2000). A study of the aesthetics of these narratives that deal with the political atmosphere within two different continents, alongside modern elements would help re-draw the shared experiences and its varying versions.

Keywords: Shared Space, Third World Literature, Latin America, Political Modernist Fictions.

“It was like entering the atmosphere of another age, because the air was thinner in the rubble pits of the vast layer of power, and the silence was more ancient, and things were hard to see in the decrepit light” (AP 2). One can experience the same, as the narrative kick starts in the opening passage of AP. This magical aura created by the narratives of Gabriel García Márquez’s works is so tremendous, that it turned out to be a universal phenomenon. Diverse situations and characters with irreplaceable traits, one among the several features of Márquez’s works, places each of his narratives several steps ahead of other writers, subsequently making his works challenges to be studied and explored. Why/what is it that one can relate between Márquez and Kerala is a possible question that can be raised by any reader. The comparison between the selected works in this paper, to an extent, is a venture to address the above mentioned inquiry.

Making an allowance for several literary works after the Second World War, Márquez’s “solitude, power and love” remain stirring; the trinities that were least deliberated, and that never would be figured out again so profoundly and differently. The supremacy of these human emotions is equally romantic and opinionated, grounded in stark reality. Here the liberty that Márquez exhibits through magic realism stands apart. The characters within his narratives are the embodiment of varying emotions, capable enough to make each reader addicted to the situations portrayed. By painting

the whole life of Latin America on a single canvas, Márquez could draw the attention of readers across globe.

In the same way, in the political modernist fiction writing of Kerala, a parallel trend is marked between the 1960s and 1980s. Besides, the writers of the same age estranged themselves from the predetermined ideologies of modernist approach on art and culture. In its place they carved out a path of their own, affirming the social commitment that a writer needs to have to one's society one belongs to. Exploring the literary movements of this period, a tendency of drifting apart from the earlier works and moving towards a new ethics is noticeable – an engagement with a constant struggle against the consumerist and capitalist ideologies.

Especially, the plays staged were intermingled with day-to-day affairs of ordinary life, with their sorrows and joys. Two major works which brought out path-breaking results were Thoppil Bhasi's *Ningalenne Communistakki* and K. J. Baby's *Nadugadhika*. In the collection of short stories titled *Reverberations of Spring Thunder*, we come across the writers who have seriously negotiated with the socio-political issues within the context of Kerala during 1960- 90. Pattathuvila Karunkaran, U.P. Jayarajan, V. P. Shivakumar, John Abraham, and P.K.Nanu brought into the limelight several issues with related class and caste issues, which were ignored by the general public.

Political Unrest

Through his Patriarch, general and the assorted voices within the narrative, Márquez identifies the very existence of the ordinary Latin American life. Nonetheless, at times the history drawn through the narrative seems entwined with several events. A clear decoding helps in analyzing the interplay between the game of 'power and language' that is transfused all over the Latin American society. It urges one

to revise and scrutinize the cultural phenomenon of power/patriarchy and language. History is overturned by power, worded differently; we see how history is re-written with the subtlety of power and language.

... he would shut himself up in his office to decide the destiny of the nation with the commandment of the forces of the landing and sign all manner of laws and decrees with his thumbprint, for in those days he did not know how to read or write, but when they left him alone with his nation and his power again he did not poison his blood again with the sluggishness of written law, but governed orally and physically, present at every moment and everywhere ... (AP 6-7).

The ruler within the narrative encapsulates all other rulers within history where supremacy has preceded everything that existed. Márquez could universalize his monarch and his ordinary folks, which has paved way for a wider understanding about the unusual perception of power. Not only does Márquez discuss about his monarch, but also recreates the history of Latin America. Concurrently, a purposeful effort is made by Márquez to code and decode the power system that has distorted history to an extent making the people confused. This is palpable within the narratives.

The chain of power drawn within the two selected novels of Márquez's *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1975) and *The General in his Labyrinth* (1989) explores how it gets expanded further, to such a degree where despotism even subverts history. Both these novels become supreme examples of autocracy where they display the malice of power and its manifestation within all arenas of life. The narratives seem to re-assert the lost linguistic identity of the region when he condemns the use of Latin language in

ordinary discourse. The language that prevails within these two narratives takes it to a different realm which goes beyond the scope of this paper.

“Bendicion Alvarado didn’t bring me into the world to pay heed to basins but to command, and after all I am who I am, and not you, so give thanks to God that this was only a game” (AP 16). At this point it can be stated that, the patriarch addresses himself as I, not by any name, where he accentuates his difference from others determinedly. The basic nature of the Patriarch within the narrative is that he carries no name. His nameless nature sketches the decisive position that he is above all title and supremacy. It becomes obvious that the system of politics trivializes the very presence of the other, were by the existence of the other remains in question. The same is done by the patriarch in this context. “I am not you”. The phenomenon that becomes evident here is the patriarch despite his namelessness becomes part of the history. His namelessness along with his attires, his attitudes, and finally his whole life generates a myth within the language and culture of society. A striking fact about the Patriarch is that, he is not only a part of history but also his historicity. Though the Patriarch in his old age is alone and vulnerable, his very being and abhorrent nature is an unending annoyance. Thus the monarch becomes an archetype who is capable of consuming everything within his vicinity. The fact that is marked here is the impact of power in redrawing the system of a nation’s culture. For instance, the celebrations following the funeral ceremony becomes a public occupation.

In a very deplorable state we notice the Patriarch writing his name Zacarías, re-reading it, but being unable to accept his name, he tears the paper and proclaims to himself that “I am me” (AP 82). This substantiates the infinite power of the patriarch. From the very moment of the death of the patriarch, one can see how the common people begin their

life from the present moment. Nevertheless, due to the dreadful nature of power, it functions mechanically and turns out to be natural. Sáenz de la Barra, the ruler who followed-the-leader subsequently was more vicious.

Márquez, through his Patriarch, illustrates the political picture of Latin America, efficiently universalizing the agony undergone by people under despotism and autocracy. The narratives emerge as an influential apparatus where Márquez converses about the history of power and the code of violence. For example, Thousand Days' War of 1899-1902 is the crux of *No One Writes to the Colonel* (1968), which is very evident within the narrative. Likewise, through the misrepresentation of the history of colonialism and imperialism, Márquez engenders within the readers the need to examine the policy of power that has annihilated the legacy of Latin America, which is familiar to other countries with a colonial past. Power being established through several autocratic methods turn up to be natural. The final result would be the way in which power becomes a reality or a truth that is apparent in this narrative. Gradually, it gets absorbed into the way of life, and a generation falls victims to this everlasting violence. This is the mechanism of power –to permeate into all segments of life.

Under the clutches of privatization, we witness the monarch even selling the Caribbean Sea. This privatization, that is to say, the process of denationalization leads to a general hostility and abhorrence towards the Patriarch, as benevolence falls short. As a consequence, violence becomes an apparatus for the monarch that facilitates in asserting the whims and fancies of the system. In totality this becomes the code of living of a nation, when despotism reaches its climax. In another incident it is seen that how the patriarch manipulates the culture and replaces it.

... everything had been a farce, your excellency, a carnival apparatus that he himself had put together without really thinking about it when he decided that the corpse of his mother should be displayed for public veneration on a catafalque of ice long before anyone thought about the merits of his sainthood and only to contradict the evil tongues that said you were rotting away before you died, a circus trick which he had fallen into himself without knowing it ever since they came to him with the news general sir that his mother Benedic on Alvarado was performing miracles and he had ordered her body carried in a magnificent procession into the most unknown corners of his vast country ... (AP 98-99).

Considering Pattathuvila Karunakaran's *Akbar's Upanishad*, the first story from *The Reverberation of Spring Thunder*, what strikes a reader at the outset is the perceptible ideological eruptions within the narrative. The events are linked meticulously to the history, where the assertions of distinctive events drawn from the past are coupled with the events with utmost accuracy. For instance, the narrator reads about Lenin in a particular situation:

Listen to this! I read aloud from the book about the revolution of the Russian *Sudras*: It was just 8.40 when a thundering wave of cheers announced the arrival of a short, stocky figure with a big head, set down on his shoulders, bald and bulging. Little eyes, a snobbish nose, wide, generous mouth and heavy chin, clean shaven now, but already beginning to bristle with the well known beard of his past and future. Dressed in shabby clothes, his trousers much too long for him. Unimpressive to be the idol of a mob, loved and revered as perhaps few leaders in history have been (Karunakaran 18).

The narrative dwells upon the issue of *Sudras*, where it is discussed within the context of Russian ideologies and that of *Manusmriti*. An open discussion occurs throughout the narrative about Veda, *Sudras* and Lenin.

Lenin said: November 6 will be too early...on the other hand November 8 will be too late. We must act on the 7th, the day when the Congress meets so that we must stay to it, here is the power! What are you going to do with it? [...] Shall I read from the Veda? [...] The soul has no sex, but the body is male or female. In the Vedas the soul is referred to as 'it', not 'he'. 'He' would signify that Divinity is male. 'It' is unqualified and neutral. This is *advaita* (19).

Accordingly with the day-to-day events, Karunakaran mixes the historic details of the Russian revolution, where the narrative moves back and forth between the present and the past. Though narrator tries to detach from what is happening around in order to fully involve in the revolutionary aspects of life, it is apparent that the optimism which the narrator had about the revolution is waning and he is on the verge of an outburst. The story is intertwined in such a way that that reader is able to figure out the mental state of the narrator.

Again, Karunakaran's *Divine Dispensations* deals with the code of power that slaughters those within the margins of life. The narrative is oscillating between the present and the past and the narrator's voice shifts at diverse points in time. As the title itself explains, the speaker experiences and narrates the events within the present and past simultaneously, within his 'divine dispensations'. Nowhere is it apparent that the narrator has witnessed the past event, and the same is narrated as if it is a continuing process:

That was almost five years ago. On the first day in custody, nothing dramatic happened, apart from the usual

injuries. His new guardians—both the uniformed and the plain clothed variety—treated him politely, almost affectionately. That was the new sophisticated technique! Hot and cold! Please sit down. He sat down [...] there was no reply from Ayyappan. He looked stone deaf. Hours passed [...] you were in college for two years, weren't you? You have some sense [...] there can you hear? (31-32).

The narrative hinges round the plight of Ayyappan, a revolutionary, trampled under the power system. In the present the story begins through Kaveri (the first person narrator within the story), which is later carried over by Pater and ends with Ayyappan in the past. But when the story ends, it is a collective voice.

Something was wrong, they felt. Let's try one last method. They brought some soap [...] some hopeful signs appeared at last. He went into a coma. Later, he opened his eyes for a moment with, what sounded like, a question on his lips. Ayyappan has passed into a long, painless coma. A living corpse, a vegetable! (34).

Both the above-mentioned narratives are the examples of the lives of two revolutionaries. Despite the fact that no hope appears within the two contexts, they cannot be stated as failure. The texts chosen from both the contexts turn out to be a model of its culture and tradition. Márquez within his narratives unmistakably depicts the cultural practices happening in the country; the feats, the celebrations, the fights etc., and the extent to which power can alter these cultural and traditional set-up of a nation (all over again a subject of argument). The manner in which power manipulates the life of people is palpable in and out both the contexts; even religion is not spared. Here it can be surmised that the narrative substantiates how culture gets distorted and undergoes a continuous course of action towards its resumption.

Even the religious norms get overturned as the power becomes so dictatorial and paramount.

The Paradox of Power and Freedom

An additional detail that is marked within the narrative is the dearth of general advancement within the life of the people or the nation; nothing seems advancing within the narrative, neither wealth nor life. People being away from politics can be a reason or the Patriarch being such a tyrant has not allowed growth. To have all the power can be the autumn for the patriarch. “Long live the stud, they shouted, blessed be the one who comes in the name of the truth, they shouted” (AP 88). At another situation, one can again notice the triviality of the deeds of the patriarch. “They had paid eighty pesos to a gypsy woman who pretended to give birth in the middle of the street to a two-headed monster as punishment for having said that the miracles had been set up by the government” (AP 98).

Within a different perspective, it can also be stated that, to a great extent, it was the people who venerated and glorified the Patriarch to a level that he was accepting the need to be an autocrat. He was left with the undeserved burden of truth, “[...] in this nation which I didn’t choose willingly but which was given me as an established fact in the way you have seen it which is as it has always been since time immemorial with this feelings of unreality, with this smell of shit, with this un-historied people who don’t believe in anything except life [...]” (AP 100).

Thus it is clear that not only is the Patriarch responsible for the oppression undergone by the people, but also the people themselves. Although the Patriarch dies, the people are in a dilemma to accept the fact that they are free to live their life. A world devoid of the whims and fancies of the Patriarch seems unusual for them. At this point the code of

culture facilitates them to evoke and revive the history which benefits the people for a change that awaits them. Wherein the politics fail, the cultural codes play a vital role in revamping the situation. It can also be argued that, it is the culture that in actuality turns the Patriarch to a myth.

Similar to the above context, John Abraham's *Feline Sorrow* discusses the existential crisis faced by the narrator along with the cat in the story. "Neither the kitten nor I had any foreboding of what was to befall us. I lived in the midst of arrack barons who had no qualms about adulterating the stuff they sold and giving unsuspecting revelers their queries as long as they donated generous sums to orphanages" (Abraham 38). These thoughts of the narrator symbolize the crisis that common people underwent during that era. The uncertainty that remained within the lives of people is the motif around which the story revolves and the narrator is addicted to liquor to escape the realities. "The arrack was consumed to wash down the sorrow of taking up other people's guilt without committing a single sin, mortal or venial. As the drinking progressed, my social commitment and sense of justice became more and more pronounced" (38).

The vagueness of life undergone by the people during the Indo-China War is the centre of *Broken Glasses* written by M. Sukumaran. The day when the narrator's glasses break, concurrently the same happens with many other people around him, where they lose their "long sight". When the narrator within the story loses his glasses, he shows a lackadaisical approach towards everything, symbolizing many others of his society. The manner in which the common man trembles under the national unrest is rendered within the narrative. At times people lose their faith in the future, and leaves them in utter frustration and bleakness. But their

story also gives the hint that there “were young men who had not yet been troubled by long sight” (Sukumaran 49).

When the story ends, we witness the Central Committee member’s speech in order to trigger off the spirit within several others similar to the narrator who seems devoid of hope. The committee member used no glasses, and represented a different section within the society looking forward for a better tomorrow albeit everything seems unfavorable.

Comrades, as we all know, a number of people here have had the experience of their glasses breaking, getting scratched or suddenly giving them a blurred vision. This may have been due to the sudden, brief tremor that was felt in these parts few days ago. However, a plot hatched by one of the monopolistic cartels of lens manufactures cannot be ruled out. Whatever the cause, the need of the hour is to overcome the crisis at any cost. Keep your prescriptions safely with you. Remove your glasses and put them away at the slightest hint of a tremor. Keep the glasses in their cases when you are not wearing them. And don’t forget to wipe them clean regularly (49-50).

From this point of time the narrator regains his spirit and gets back to normalcy. It symbolizes the clear vision that is attained by a group of people. The narrator sits back to apprehend what has happened for the past days, and at the particular point when the narrator recognizes the past and comprehends, it is almost dawn. This symbolizes the new beginning where the people are able to survive the adversities. The newspaper of the same day carries the news that the Indo-China has come to an end. “I was reading the last lines of the previous day’s paper when the paper-boy appeared at the gate. The rolled-up paper came sailing through the air and landed at my feet. I picked it up, unrolled it and read the headlines in bold letters with joy: Peace returns to Indo-China. End to Vietnam War” (50).

By adhering to the North Malabar dialect, P. K. Nanu's *Alternatives* gives authenticity to the narrative. The narrative deals with the situation where the society is faltering, unable to speak as "the chain of sounds was broken abruptly" (Nanu 68). It's a collective "us" where the whole society is falling into the plight of speechlessness. "Nobody spoke a word. All they could do was to make signs at one another [...] but speech seemed to have deserted them" (Nanu 71). The narrative implicitly depicts the circumstances where even the thought process of each individual is conglomerated. "Libraries have degenerated into joints where you can just drop in to have a chat..." (69). A condition where everyone was searching for 'alternatives' so that they can consciously disregard/ run away from truths.

Writing as a Tool

At this juncture it is apparent that the writers have deliberately brought out the role of culture in re-drawing or re-shaping the history of a nation within both the contexts. Márquez deals with the mechanism of myth to fill the gap between culture and politics. At the point when the connection between history and power seems lost, myth takes over the errand by referring to the origins of the nation's culture. In a particular instance the Patriarch himself asks:

What was going on in the world because it's going on eight and everybody's asleep in this house of scoundrels, get up, you bastards, he shouted, the lights went on, they played reveille at three o'clock [...] and there was the noise of startled arms, of roses that opened when there was still two hours left until dawn time [...] while he opened a way lighted by the day through the persistent adulators who proclaimed him the undoer of dawn, commander of time, and repository of light (AP 45).

It can be comprehended from the above passage how the patriarch re-orders the natural order. In many other instances, we see the Patriarch “stopped time by his orders on the abandoned streets” (AP 154), he imposed “state of plague by decree” (154) and even again “Sundays were suppressed” (154). As power manipulates the myth to such a great extent, the common people visualize the Patriarch as the ‘alpha and the omega’. Accordingly when the Patriarch dies all these codes of myth get disrupted where the people get a re-birth, “it was like entering the atmosphere of another age” (2).

Márquez through his narrative portrays how the people of Latin America are in their pursuit to re-create their historicity that was seized by power. In the beginning of the narrative one can perceive the voice of a collective narration, “only then did we dare to go in without attacking the crumbling walls of reinforced stones [...]” (2). Here Márquez is speaking about the whole Latin American context where everyone longs for a revival of cultural and traditional norms of life that was lost under the Patriarch. Following the death of the Patriarch, collectively, a whole nation shows the urge to reclaim freedom and peace. Along with this collective voice, it is evident that the voices are changing at times, from collective *we* to *I* and again *we* which includes the Patriarch too. Accordingly through the assorted voices, Márquez affirms the need of Latin America.

Despite the fact that a new perspective is brought out, *The General in his Labyrinth* is a further extension or an elaboration of what has happened in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*. The General is presented as an elaborative study of the other (the Patriarch). One compliments the other, through explanations and examples with diverse techniques and circumstances, providing us with information necessary to prove the history. Through *The General in his Labyrinth*

by dealing with the history of more than forty five years and the uneasy life of the Latin Americans, Márquez portrays the whole Latin American life in its labyrinth. Dealing with the extensive and unrelenting years of political unrest, the narrative explains the inconceivability of life all through that period. The characteristic attribute that marks out the Patriarch from that of the General is the series of events depicted in AP. Those events are about the distant past which prefigured the contemptible future that the nation had to encounter. As the title itself suggests, the narrative deals with the game of power, a topsy-turvy world where nothing is permanent. “Weary of searching for a ray of hope on this blind men’s journey, incapable of living bereft of a soul, he had decided to flee to Venezuela and lead an armed movement in favor of integration” (GL 83). Even the General seems at times unable to have the command over the whole situation, “I am no longer myself” (GL 27). *The General in his Labyrinth* portrays the solitude existing within the General’s journey towards his death. “As said by Gerald Martin, the novel can be described as the ‘death of another patriarch’ or ‘the solitude of seven months’. Power, solitude, and death are again the theme reverberated within the novel” (Jeevankumar 80). Similar are the cases of the General and the Patriarch, at a point of time both of them seem to be powerless to admit their dissolution of power. Even the name Bolívar is hardly ever used within the narrative.

In the fourth chapter of *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, there is an instance where the term ‘General’ is used to refer to the Patriarch. “[H]e he was alone in the shadows looking for himself in the brackish water of his tears general [...]” (AP 105). These interconnections of the incidents are strikingly evident within these two works. Garcia Marquez tells Maria Elvira Samper in an important interview published in the Colombian weekly *Semana* (20 March 1989)

El general is more important than the rest of my work put together. It demonstrates that my work as a whole is founded on a geographic and historical reality. That reality is not that of magical realism and all those other things which people talk about. When you read [this novel], you realize that everything else in some way has a documentary, geographic, and historical basis that is borne out by El general... all over again, but historically grounded this time” (Palencia, Michael, and Roth 56).

Each of the situations and characters is carefully chosen to convey in a specific way the underlying the political situation within both the contexts. The works in entirety makes the readers to look into the real world, and at the same time to the world of fiction that deals with things unimaginable. The upheavals are not only that of Latin American and Kerala context, but are relevant to the whole of the Third World, where slavery/oppression of the common man is still being practiced, in various forms.

Collectively, from both the contexts, the narratives deal with the disintegration of power. The common connecting factors evident within the works from both the contexts are the shared experiences of the crisis encountered within the economic and political arena. Though differences are obvious within the political circumstances of the two contexts, the economic status can be viewed in parallel. Though the frame of “third world” has several short comings, in “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism,” Fredric Jameson presents a theory of the then current state of world literature.

In the essay “Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism”, Fredric Jameson argues that all third world texts are to be read as “national allegories” (Jameson 69) because “the story of the private individual

destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third world culture and society” (67). For Jameson, the denial of a “placeless individuality” to the third world leads to “the allegorical nature of third-world culture, where the telling of the individual story and the individual experience cannot but ultimately involve the whole laborious telling of the experience of the collectivity itself” (85-86). This paper keeps Jameson’s view in the background, giving a clear notion featuring the fundamental changes that differentiates the third world’s literature from that of other literatures. The narratives chosen from both the contexts are meant to awaken the common people to the alternate possibilities for social structures that they might pursue.

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