



ROOTS

International Journal of Multidisciplinary Researches

A Peer-reviewed, Refereed & Quarterly Journal

Vol. 11

No. 4

May 2025

ISSN: 2349-8684



**CENTRE FOR RESOURCE, RESEARCH &
PUBLICATION SERVICES (CRRPS)**

www.crrps.in

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09944212131

ROOTS
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCHES

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A Peer-reviewed, Refereed & Quarterly Journal

ISSN: 2349-8684 | www.rootsjournal.com | 0452-4395131

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ROOTS International Journal of Multidisciplinary Researches (RIJMR) is a peer reviewed, refereed and quarterly journal. The journal provides a space for academics, researchers and professionals to share the latest developments and– advances in Multidisciplinary Subjects. This journal is an excellent forum for intra disciplinary and interdisciplinary study of various aspects of Arts, Science and Professional Studies as intellectually stimulating open platform for academicians, consultants, researchers, and business practitioners to share and promulgate their research works. Journal of Roots seek to publish research findings and articles that would promote research awareness and understanding dissemination.

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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCHES

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Vol. 11

No. 4

May 2025

ISSN: 2349-8684

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UNPACKING THE “BLACK BOX” OF AI IN EDUCATION

Dr. LAKSHMI KANTHA RAO GARAGAPARTHI

Faculty, Department of English

University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Nizwa, Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

Recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) have sparked renewed interest in its potential to improve education. However, AI is a loose umbrella term that refers to a collection of methods, capabilities, and limitations—many of which are often not explicitly articulated by researchers, education technology companies, or other AI developers. This paper seeks to clarify what “AI” is and the potential it holds to both advance and hamper educational opportunities that may improve the human condition. This paper also offers a basic introduction to different methods and philosophies underpinning AI, discuss recent advances, explore applications to education, and highlight key limitations and risks. It concludes with a set of questions that educationalists may ask as they encounter AI in their research and practice. Effort and hope are to make often jargon-laden terms and concepts accessible, so that all are equipped to understand, interrogate, and ultimately shape the development of human-centered AI in education.

Keywords: *K-12 education, artificial intelligence in education, educational data mining, learning analytics, natural language processing.*

Introduction

Rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) over the past several years have raised new questions about the role that machines might play in both promoting and impeding humanity. The field of education has been no different. Emerging AI capabilities are enabling machines to fuse and make sense of larger, more diverse datasets in increasingly efficient ways. While these affordances of scale, diversity, and efficiency might help generate insights and guide actions to improve educational opportunities and outcomes, they also come with several technical limitations and related practical risks—like failures to generalize and identify causal relationships—that threaten to perpetuate unfair or harmful applications. Thus, and rightfully so, the re-emergence of AI has sparked new debates about the political, pedagogic, and practical implications of its application in educational contexts (Shum & Luckin, 2019). These debates are critical, especially if we wish for machines to be able to better-serve the human actors—teachers, learners, administrators, and others in education—who may benefit from their emerging capabilities.

Engaging productively in these debates, however, requires one to understand some of the methodological paradigms and practices specific to Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED). However, researchers and practitioners not trained in computer science or engineering may find the rapidly advancing field of AI inaccessible. This article, tries to address this gap, providing an overview of the meanings, methods, and limitations of AI as a re-emerging field and how these intersect with AI's applications in education. In doing so, it hopes to build on previous introductions to this topic (e.g., Luckin, 2018; Holmes et al., 2019) and critical works that connect data models with ethical and social debates (Perrotta & Williamson, 2018; Perrotta & Selwyn, 2020). By opening up the “Black Box” of AI for those outside of the field, we hope to further human-centered AI in education by empowering all stakeholders, regardless of disciplinary background, to contribute to the development of AI that recognizes and champions human capabilities (Li & Etchemendy, 2018; Yang et al., 2021).

Defining “AI”

As Artificial Intelligence evolves, the term “AI” has acquired mystical and rhetorical qualities (Eynon & Young, 2020). Some recent advances are impressive: we now have machines that can discover new drug formulas (Popova et al., 2018), predict elusive protein structures (AlphaFold Team, 2020), generate full-length written stories (Brown et al., 2020), and beat world-class performers in games like Starcraft, Go, and Chess (AlphaStar Team, 2019; Silver et al., 2018). Still, demystifying AI is an important first step towards understanding its inner workings and applications. While the capabilities and performance of today’s AI systems are unprecedented, many of the core algorithms that govern how they work are rooted in methods dating back to the early 20th century (Tuomi, 2018). Furthermore, while current incarnations of AI have achieved unprecedented degrees of sophistication, the “I” of AI systems remains quite rudimentary—as evidenced by how poorly these systems often perform on tasks that humans find intuitive. Such technical limitations entail important risks and ethical considerations which have significant bearings on the application of AI to the field of education. Before delving into these risks, the paper expands on two schools of AI that are frequently used in education—machine learning and rule-based AI—and outline some of their common applications.

Machine Learning-based AI

Machine Learning Paradigms: Supervised, Unsupervised, and Fortified Learning

Machine learning algorithms are designed to mine large datasets to uncover—or “learn”—latent rules and patterns that may help inform some future decision. For example, imagine a large school system has asked a research team to develop a tool that accurately predicts what a student’s GPA will be at the end of a given school year. “Supervised learning” is one approach to machine learning that

could help them tackle this problem. With supervised learning, machines are provided a historical dataset of inputs, or features (e.g., student-level characteristics like demographic data, attendance records, test scores), along with a target output, or attribute (e.g., GPA). A model is then applied to the dataset to learn how these features map to the target attribute by testing out different hypotheses about the relationship to or path from student-level characteristics to GPA. The labels (historical GPAs) of the data in the set help “supervise” the model by indicating how far off its predictions are from the observed or existing (i.e., ground-truth) values. This occurs iteratively for each data point, eventually “training” the model by updating the weights it attaches to the inputs or other variables it uses to make predictions. These weights are often the quantities “learned” by the machine (hence, the term “machine learning”). Linear regression offers a classic approach to supervised machine learning. In fact, many modern approaches using neural networks (described in more detail below), while often described in quasi-mystical terms in press articles, operate in fundamentally similar ways and seek to achieve similar outcomes as linear regression. The scenario in the Supplementary Materials offers additional details about these similarities and differences.

In contrast to supervised learning, “unsupervised learning” is a process by which a machine performs statistical pattern recognition without access to ground-truth labels for the desired output. A common application of unsupervised learning is clustering. Say a school system asked a research team to develop a “typology” of students based on their different characteristics, to help design and target student supports. They could use a standard clustering algorithm (e.g., the popular “k-means” algorithm proposed by Hartigan and Wong, 1979) to learn a grouping of students that differentiates them from other (also automatically inferred) groups. Our

resultant groups—or clusters—may comprise students who perform similarly; who take similar classes; live in similar parts of the city; or have some other set of related characteristics.

A third paradigm of machine learning is “reinforcement learning,” which has recently been used, among other applications, to develop powerful gameplay systems (e.g., Mnih et al., 2015; Silver et al., 2018). In education, some researchers have started to explore applications of reinforcement learning to intelligent tutoring systems (Reddy et al., 2017). At its core, a reinforcement learning algorithm accepts as an input the state of the world (e.g., the questions a student has answered correctly or incorrectly in an intelligent tutoring environment of a game) and uses this to decide upon some action (e.g., which question to ask the student next). The action—either immediately or over the course of time—eventually contributes to some outcome (e.g., mastering a concept). The value of this outcome is then used to assign positive or negative rewards to the algorithm to encourage or discourage similar actions when faced with similar states of the world in the future. Reinforcement learning algorithms have been around for several decades (Kaelbling et al., 1996), but have resurged over the past few years with large quantities of training data and computational resources more readily available.

Machine Learning Philosophies: Frequentist and Bayesian

The paradigms above reflect a “frequentist” philosophy of machine learning: inferences (like predictions, cluster assignments, and other insights that inform decisions) are made largely based on the frequencies of patterns revealed in the training data (Bayyari & Berger, 2004). By contrast, “Bayesian” machine learning models explicitly incorporate pre-existing beliefs (“priors”) alongside the patterns revealed by training data to produce some posterior “belief” or inference about the world (Bayyari & Berger, 2004).

Say, for example, a biased coin is tossed 100 times and yields heads on 30 instances. Two friends make a bet that they can infer the true bias of the coin and predict the next 100 tosses. One trains a frequentist machine learning model on the observed coin tosses, which simply factors in the observed data. The model infers the bias as equaling a 30% likelihood of landing on heads. The other friend, however, devises and trains a Bayesian model: in addition to factoring in the observed number of heads, she also factors in a prior belief drawn from most normal coin tossing activities: that there is distribution of possible chances that the coin will land on heads (centered around what we usually expect from coins, 50%). On the next 100 tosses, both observe 40 heads. In this instance, factoring in prior beliefs into the model—instead of simply trusting the observed data—produced an inference of the coin’s bias as falling between 30% and 50%, which was more accurate than trusting only the data from the initial set of coin tosses.

Since they rely on both observed data *and* prior beliefs, Bayesian methods can sometimes help overcome sparsity in datasets—like our limited number of coin tosses—in order to make more accurate predictions. In other cases, such prior beliefs may themselves be biased and therefore make models less accurate than if they were trained only on observations. Whether a Bayesian or frequentist model is more appropriate to use depends on the nature of the problem at hand. Interestingly, many believe that the rich structure of Bayesian models reflects aspects of human cognition (Tenenbaum et al., 2011), making them “truer-to-nature” AI. However, many methods for conducting Bayesian posterior inference do not scale well to large datasets, making them difficult to deploy in several real-world settings. In practice, many approaches to machine learning can be implemented from either a Bayesian or Frequentist point of view.

The Rise of Deep Learning

Deep learning—a popular approach to machine learning—has become the dominant school of AI in recent years owing largely to a resurgent interest in neural networks. Neural networks take inspiration from connectionist philosophies of cognitive science (Elman et al., 1996) and generally operate by learning (possibly nonlinear) relationships between several input variables in order to produce predictions as accurately as possible (see the machine learning scenario in the Supplementary Materials for more details). They are the core, modular building blocks that make deep learning systems “deep”: combining smaller neural networks together to form larger ones by feeding the outputs of one as inputs to another can enable the discovery of more complex and granular relationships between these inputs and outputs (LeCun et al., 2015). Neural networks can manifest through a number of different algorithmic architectures, e.g., Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs (Goodfellow et al., 2016)), Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs (Goodfellow et al., 2016)), and Transformers (Vaswani et al., 2017)—which underpin recent advances in natural language processing like the popular BERT model (Devlin et al., 2019). Each of these architectures differ in how they process and transform inputs into outputs. Furthermore, RNNs and Transformers are generally better-suited for tasks that involve time-series data, whereas CNNs are often applied to image processing problems. Still, while their precise structures and implementations may differ, many of these architectures are trained, evaluated, and eventually used in similar ways.

Deep learning has been driven by advances across three major areas over the past several years: data, algorithms, and hardware. Large, easy-to-access datasets have enabled, for example, the recent “GPT-3” language model— which is trained on over 570 gigabytes of text found across the open internet (Brown et al., 2020). The model is simply

trained to predict the next word in a corpus of text given some sequence of preceding words. The result is a powerful system that can generate entire believable stories—an exciting possibility, but also of particular concern in our current era of misinformation (OpenAI Team, 2019).

In cases where large datasets are not available for a specific task, algorithmic advances like “transfer learning” can help (Pan & Yang, 2009). Transfer learning enables a model to “pre-train” itself—i.e., initialize its parameters—using the outputs of a training process conducted for a separate but related task for which enough data *is* available. The model can then “fine-tune” on—or adapt itself to—a smaller dataset that more closely represents the task at hand. For example, early warning systems to detect students likely to drop out may be developed for places that lack a breadth or depth of historical data by “borrowing” the predictive capacities of models pre-trained on data from larger school settings as a starting point (Coleman et al., 2019). Pre-training, however, may also contribute to the amplification and propagation of biases across models.

Finally, recent hardware accelerations like Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) and Tensor Processing Units (TPUs, Hennessy & Patterson, 2019) are enabling more time-efficient computation, yet their energy demands and associated costs have raised concerns about their potential environmental impacts (García-Martín et al., 2019) and contribution to widening divides between the AI capabilities of large companies and smaller research groups (Hao, 2019).

Rule-based AI

Machine learning systems can be powerful, particularly for problems where the “rules” needed to produce certain outcomes (e.g., the weights to be applied to students’ characteristics in order to produce GPA predictions) are not known and hence must be inferred from data. However, there are also

problems for which the rules *are* known, but applying these rules can be cumbersome or time-consuming. For these types of problems, “rule-based” approaches to AI—in which computers manipulate data based on a set of pre-defined logical propositions, instead of ones inferred from patterns in the data—are often used.

One such problem in education is school bus routing. Large school districts often have fleets of school buses that must be scheduled and routed to different stops in order to ensure students get to school on time and safely (Bertsimas et al., 2019). In this problem, the rules an AI would consider might include: different carrying capacities for each bus; times by which certain groups of students must get to school; or specific roads buses can and cannot take. A social planner implementing this algorithm may seek to optimize for multiple objective functions: for example, minimizing costs and travel times and / or maximizing the diversity of the student body that travels together on any given bus.

The naivest rule-based AI algorithm would use a brute force approach to solve this problem, evaluating every possible combination of bus, student, and route assignments and selecting the one that yields the most optimal response vis-a-vis our multiple objectives. For many large real-world problems, however, this approach is infeasible and could quite literally take hundreds of years (or longer) to compute (Cook, 2012). To this end, rule-based AI algorithms often use sophisticated solution strategies to prune down a large set of possible combinations to a feasible subset that is much easier and more efficient to search through (e.g., Van Hentenryck & Michel, 2009). Unlike machine learning systems, rule-based models will not necessarily make more accurate decisions with a larger scale or diversity of data. In fact, scale and diversity of data can pose challenges to rule-based AI algorithms because they increase the size and complexity of the problem at hand. This said, these challenges will likely be alleviated by the

increased algorithmic and hardware efficiencies afforded by the current wave of AI described above.

While their underlying mechanisms might differ, rule-based AI need not be completely distinct from machine learning. For example, we may have historical data on bus routes and road conditions (e.g., traffic patterns) which we can use to predict travel times. We can then leverage these predicted travel times as inputs into our objective function during the optimization process.

Applications of AI in Education

Despite recent interest in applications of AI and education, the two fields have intersected for some time (e.g., Alevan & Koedinger, 2002)—which has long raised important philosophical and ethical questions. This next section provides an overview of recent applications of AI in education and highlights some of their limitations and broader implications. These examples, far from exhaustive, have been selected in order to highlight the ways in which the scale and diversity of available data—along with improvements in computational efficiency—have created new opportunities for using AI to potentially improve the human condition through educational applications. For a more in-depth review of how AI and other data mining techniques *can* be applied to education-related problems, we refer readers to several existing review papers (e.g., Romero & Ventura, 2010; Koedinger et al., 2015; Fischer et al., 2020).

Intelligent Tutoring Systems

Intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) are a popular application of AI in education. ITS are tools that seek to adapt to students' existing knowledge and skills, or learning states, to help them build skills in more personalized ways. The “I” in ITS often has different definitions for different tools. For example, some ITS are machine learning-based systems that seek to develop (sometimes Bayesian) learner models trained to maximize the likelihood of a student

answering a provided question correctly, conditional on their history of responses (Ritter, 2007). In other cases, developers might simply train a system to predict the likelihood of “correctness” as accurately as possible (e.g., using deep reinforcement learning a la Reddy et al., 2017). These systems then provide students with problems that are most likely to be at their “learning edge”—i.e., the problems they haven’t yet answered that they are most likely to answer correctly, given their prior history of answers. These machine learning systems have the capacity to make more accurate predictions of a student’s learning edge as they draw on larger and more disparate historical sources of student performance and behavior—many of which are becoming more ubiquitous through computer-aided tutoring and assessment platforms. Other ITS, like (Kelly et al., 2013), pre-define simple rules—like correctly answering three similar questions in a row—to determine if and when a student has mastered some concept.

Experimental evidence has largely shown ITS to be effective in increasing students’ grades and test scores (J- PAL Evidence Review, 2019). Of course, grades and test scores offer only one (limited) view into student learning. Crucially, much of the existing efficacy research on ITS has not specifically analyzed which underlying AI methods make them more or less effective. As such, it is unclear to what extent machine learning vs rule- based systems are responsible for helping students improve their outcomes. As machine learning technologies continue to offer new opportunities for personalizing instruction, it will be important to identify the precise elements of these systems that offer the greatest promise for enhancing student learning. There is also a need to better understand the contexts in which these ITS systems can be meaningfully deployed as a resource for teachers and students in ways that do not inadvertently narrow the aims and purposes of Education (Biesta, 2015).

Assessment and Feedback

Proponents of AI, particularly machine-learning based systems that seek to infer students’ knowledge states from the growing scale and diversity of data available on digital learning platforms like Khan Academy, argue these systems have the capacity to obviate the need for explicit formative and summative assessments, by seeking to infer students’ knowledge states from the growing scale and diversity of data available on such digital learning platforms (Piech et al., 2015) and other systems instrumented for “learning analytics” (Gašević et al., 2015). After all, if it is possible to know what a student knows based on how they answer questions in an ITS, why administer an assessment at all? This line of reasoning, of course, does not consider the positive effects exam preparation and studying can have on learning (Karpicke & Roediger III, 2008).

Automated assessment of writing submissions is a popular, albeit complex, example of how machine learning might support assessment. To date, most research has focused on training machine learning models to assess foundational attributes of writing—for example, spelling, vocabulary, and grammar. Other systems have used machine learning to train models that are able to replicate human scores for a given essay (Dong et al., 2017). Growing as a teacher, however, requires much more than feedback on the mechanics of writing or collapsing a rich composition down to a single grade. To this end, (Fiacco et al., 2019) recently designed a neural network-based machine learning system to identify which rhetorical structures were present in sentences contained within a corpus of research study articles: for example, which sentences sought to describe the study, provide context on the study’s methods, or frame new knowledge.

Despite the advancing capabilities of these systems, however, some concerns remain. For instance, it would be important to train these AI on a diverse set of linguistic data to fuel their accuracy and

minimize bias. More work also needs to be done to understand how they might inadvertently negatively impact writing development and written work in the same ways as plagiarism detection software has (Ross & Macleod, 2020), and more generally, how student surveillance via constant data collection may impact students (Eynon, 2013). Thus, although assessment and feedback are the core focus of AIED, the most appropriate ways to deploy AI for particular activities and in specific contexts remains an area of debate.

Coaching and Counselling

The role of coaches and counsellors in schools are multifaceted, time-intensive, and costly. Researchers have therefore started to explore how some of their tasks can be automated. For example, several studies have demonstrated how text-message reminders can help facilitate specific outcomes normally under counsellors' purview (Castleman & Page, 2015) and keeping parents updated about their children's academics (Bergman & Chen, 2019).

Recent efforts have also leveraged AI to enable a richer set of interactions between students and "counselors." A recent study (Page & Gehlbach, 2017) deployed an AI chatbot to answer questions about forms students would need to fill out before starting college at Georgia State University (GSU). The authors indicate that the chatbot was trained using deep reinforcement learning—the same technology that has enabled state-of-the-art advances in automated gameplay (AlphaStar Team, 2019)—though the exact methods for training and evaluating these models in the context of the chatbot are unclear. The researchers found that the AI-powered system was comparable in enhancing college enrolment rates to prior studies that primarily involved human counselors. As more dialogue agent systems are deployed across campuses, the scale and breadth of available linguistic corpora for training models with smarter response strategies are likely to

grow. Nevertheless, a number of open research questions persist—particularly concerning how well these systems can serve a diverse student body in answering complex educational questions.

(Large) School Systems-Level Processes

At the school systems-level, AI is being used to achieve several objectives, including the equitable implementation of school choice. Over the past two decades, a strand of economics research has focused on developing rule-based AI algorithms for districts that offer families choices on where to send their children to school. These algorithms have been designed to be "strategy-proof," matching students to schools in ways that do not enable families to "game the system" by mis-stating preferences in order to exploit loopholes that would increase their likelihood of receiving a spot at one of their top choice schools (Pathak & Sönmez, 2008). This is particularly important for those parents who do not have the resources, social capital, or knowledge necessary to "game the system." Of course, "strategy-proofness" only helps further equity to the extent that other parts of the system are also equitable (Goldstein, 2019).

AI has also been used to help with a range of planning and forecasting tasks, particularly in larger school systems or by those working across large systems of schools. Working with Boston Public Schools, researchers built a machine learning model that forecasts changes in demand for schools in response to certain school choice policy changes (Pathak & Shi, 2015). As more data accrues across the diverse spectrum of families in these systems, such models have the potential to become more accurate—and perhaps also shed more light on the preferences of families who belong to traditionally underrepresented segments of the population. School districts have also turned to rule-based AI systems to help achieve greater logistical efficiency—for example, by producing "optimal" bus routes as discussed earlier in this paper—and to save money

(Bertsimas et al., 2019). Yet such systems have been met with mixed reception from some of the families they ultimately impact (Scharfenberg, 2018). With continued increases in computational efficiency, these rule-based systems promise to be able to operate on larger, more complex problems concerning more students, teachers, and other stakeholders in the years ahead. Yet these need to be developed with an awareness of concerns about the use of such market-driven principles to develop an equitable education system (e.g., Ball, 2017; Biesta, 2015).

Predicting Outcomes

Machine learning systems have garnered significant attention for their ability to “predict the future”—often in the form of “early warning systems.” These systems, often using different forms of regression, mine large troves of historical student data to predict which students are most at risk of failing an exam, dropping out of high school or college, etc. (Faria et al., 2017). Experimental evidence has suggested that deploying these systems can help reduce chronic absenteeism and course failure (Faria et al., 2017). While early warning systems do not always require machine learning—e.g., a simple rule-based system could trigger a warning if a student’s GPA falls below a certain level—machine learning-based systems have the potential to identify and exploit patterns of which school leaders may not be aware. These systems can also pool data across disparate contexts to improve individual predictions. For example, small school districts might face a “cold start” problem: they simply do not have enough historical data to train an accurate machine learning model—requiring them to “borrow” data from other school districts to improve accuracy (e.g., Coleman et al., 2019). Increasing scale and diversity of data may enable such applications of transfer learning, and more generally, extend the possible applications of machine learning to educational settings that have previously been left out.

Unfortunately, these warning systems can have several drawbacks. Being able to predict how well a student is going to do in a particular class might help encourage students to take more advanced classes (Bergman et al., 2021)—but it could also lead to tracking, which might limit a student’s desire and ability to explore new topics, particularly in college and university. School leaders may also struggle to calibrate interventions based on the outputs of a model. If a model indicates the probability that any given student drops out of high school, at what point should an intervention be triggered—when there is a 20% chance of a student dropping out? 51%? 90%? Even if a school leader feels equipped to intervene after analyzing the data, there is a fundamental question about the obligation to act (Eynon, 2013; Prinsloo et al., 2017; Hakimi et al., 2021): which students should receive support? And what if the model has a high false-negative rate—meaning there could be many students who actually need intervention but weren’t flagged by the model as such? These are difficult questions and, at present, there are no standardized responses; school systems approach these questions differently depending on their own knowledge and needs.

Limitations and Risks of Modern Machine Learning Systems

Readers from varied sub-fields of education, learning sciences and data science will bring different critical lenses to the areas and applications previously discussed. Here, we will draw from (Lake et al., 2016) and other researchers to discuss several technical limitations of modern machine learning systems and some risks that arise from them. We will also look at the key gaps that still exist between what many believe AI can do in 2021, what it can actually do (and not do), and how these limitations have important implications for education.

Limitations of Modern Machine Learning Systems Transparency and Interpretability

Neural network approaches to machine learning are powerful, but their inner workings are usually not transparent, making them difficult to interpret. One implication of this is that it may not be clear which inputs were responsible for driving decisions. For example, in the case of early warning systems, a school leader might be informed of the likelihood of any given student failing a course, but not which characteristics of the student are most associated with this prediction. The school leader might obviate this problem by opting for a more interpretable, non-deep learning-based model, but this may require sacrificing some degree of predictive accuracy. These are not always salient tradeoffs, but when they arise, it is often unclear how they should be made. Fortunately, model interpretability is an active area of deep learning research with several recent advances (e.g., Sundarajan et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2018). These advances are critical for equity and inclusion in education, as they open the door to enabling a wider range of stakeholders—including parents and students who may be affected by such algorithms—to understand, interrogate, and ultimately improve their applications (although see Ananny & Crawford, 2018; Tsai et al., 2019 for discussions of questions of the burden such moves could place on individuals).

A more fundamental issue with machine-learning based systems, even those that do not leverage deep neural networks, is causal attribution. Machine learning models are designed to identify and exploit correlations (not necessarily causal relationships) between variables in order to make predictions. For example, a school leader's early warning system might highlight poverty status, prior grade history, and disciplinary actions as student-level factors associated with a higher likelihood of course failure, without explaining the underlying *causes* of failure. Misunderstanding underlying causes may lead to faulty or incomplete interventions, and ultimately, a

perpetuation (or exacerbation) of the underlying educational challenges educationalists are seeking to address. Advances in machine learning methods for causal analysis (e.g., Johansson et al., 2016) are attempting to help separate out correlation from causation. However, grasping a rich understanding of causal processes in settings as complex as education usually requires much more than technical solutions.

Abstract Reasoning and Learning how to Learn

Humans are very good at two things that AI-powered machines are not: abstract reasoning and learning how to learn. For example, while machines can learn to play a variety of games better than champion-calibre players, they require training on simulations of hundreds of thousands or millions of games to learn how to do so. Humans, by contrast, often learn gameplay simply by watching someone else play for a few minutes (Lake et al., 2016). This is partly because we are remarkably adept at abstract reasoning: ascertaining the fundamental rules of a particular task to generalize and apply these rules to other similar but distinct endeavors. Teachers do this all the time: unlike most intelligent tutoring systems, they do not need to observe a large number of question responses from a student in order to identify and begin addressing key conceptual gaps.

An important type of abstract reasoning is learning how to learn. Throughout our lives, we have likely played several games, and these experiences have made it easier for us to learn the rules and dynamics of new games. Such "meta learning" is a popular area of machine learning research. At present, however, the complex reasoning done by humans is broken down into discrete processes for the machines, including teaching a machine "where to focus" in the space of input data (Xu et al., 2015) or how to automatically update different parts of its own architecture (Andrychowicz et al., 2016; Zoph & Le, 2016) in order to make better predictions.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this machine “meta learning” generally lacks the higher-order thinking, reflection, and planning woven throughout human meta-learning. Without this ability to learn how to learn, we must be skeptical of how well AI can support students, understanding the complex in-and out-of-school factors that impact learning. AI, for example, may be able to suggest problems to students to work on, but will be limited in identifying why students continue to get certain types of problems right or wrong—especially if those factors transcend cognitive, skill-based challenges and extend to the home environment or other social forces affecting the child.

Risks that Stem from Machine Learning’s Limitations

Failures in Generalizing

Because machine learning models often fail to develop a deep, intuitive understanding of the task they are built to perform, they can subsequently fail to generalize to new settings than what they were trained for (Murphy, 2012). This sometimes leads them to “catastrophically forget” how to perform tasks (Kirkpatrick et al., 2017), or become brittle in the face of “adversarial” inputs. Adversarial inputs are data examples—often derived by making small perturbations to training set examples—that are designed to fool a machine learning model into making an incorrect decision. As an example, (Brown et al., 2017) showed how an object recognition system that could classify an image as containing a banana with high confidence could easily be fooled into making an incorrect classification simply by adding a small sticker of a toaster to the image. One of the key reasons for this brittleness is probably the fact that the model has not “really learned” what a banana is, beyond a collection of pixels arranged in a certain way. We can play such a scenario out to imagine several concerning possibilities in education, for example: a ranking system that places a student

in a remedial class because of their test score similarity to a historical batch of remedial students, without factoring in other variables that might better indicate their likelihood of succeeding in more advanced courses (Bergman et al., 2021); facial recognition misclassifications in criminal justice applications that lead to the wrongful incarceration of students or their family members (Hill, 2020); and many more. These scenarios have inspired new directions for building more robust deep learning models (e.g., Tjeng et al., 2019), but the need for awareness about what such models are “doing” in technical terms will remain crucial.

Bias and Fairness

Lacking a general understanding of the “how” and “why” behind most decisions, many machine learning models often recapitulate biases in their training data—and hence, risk perpetuating these biases at scale. For example, a recent study illustrated the drastically poor performance of several commercial facial recognition technologies when seeking to identify the faces of black women—due in part to underrepresentation in their training data (Buolamwini & Gebru, 2018). In healthcare, a system for neurological disorder screening based on human speech proved more accurate for individuals who spoke a particular dialect of Canadian English (Gershgorn, 2018). Such shortcomings prevail in education too—with AIED applications favoring certain groups in the content taught, the ways material is covered, and the accuracy of predictions and appropriateness of interventions (Mayfield et al., 2019). The UK’s intention of using predictive models to assign final grades in the wake of 2020 school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates this risk: under the modelling scheme, which was eventually dropped, highly-qualified and capable students from historically lower-performing (and lower- resourced) schools were more likely to receive marks lower than what their teachers would have

assigned, whereas students in traditionally high-performing private received higher predicted scores (BBC, 2020).

Ultimately, fairness is a highly complex concept, particularly when applied to education (Mayfield et al., 2019); and when and how educationalists choose to use AIED is itself a complex ethical question, even if and when those AIs are optimized to root out bias. Addressing the technical limitations of machine learning will help mitigate the risks outlined above, but it will be insufficient to preempt the full range of educational and ethical issues related to AIED, specifically the application of AI in practice. Multiple significant and important critiques of AIED, and of the use of data in education more broadly, center on issues such as privacy, instrumentalism, surveillance, performance, and governance (Jarke & Berier, 2019; Holmes, et al., 2021; Williamson 2017). The technical explanations and considerations outlined in this paper can help inform conversations and decision-making around issues of fair and equitable use—even if they are insufficient to resolve them.

Discussion and Conclusion

As we have explored, AI is not “one thing”; in this paper we have focused on the more technical aspects of AI to highlight the myriad of (sometimes complementary) computational techniques that collectively constitute AI. Understanding the workings, limitations, and risks associated with each—and especially those powered by machine learning—is critical to developing and deploying them wisely, thoughtfully, and with proper human oversight. Educationalists who do not have a background in computer science or engineering have a vital role to play in this endeavor. To aid with this, we offer the following guiding questions that educationalists may ask as they encounter applications of AI in education, to ensure AI is used ethically, responsibly, and ultimately to improve the human condition:

- **What kind of AI is it?** The examples contained in this paper illustrate how different types of AI can (and cannot) help solve different problems in education, and may help educationalists form a judgement about their applicability and risks within their own contexts. Asking this question may encourage a recognition of both human expertise and the realities of the ‘intelligence’ of AI systems.
- **Does the AI enable something that would be difficult or impossible to achieve without it?** Unpacking any benefits of the scale or diversity of data that the AI operates on, or any efficiencies it enables and weighing them against associated risks or limitations may help justify its usefulness. If an AI-powered system does not enable capabilities or benefits that could be achieved without it, it may not be worth deploying. Just because AI *can* be used to power an education technology system, does not mean it *should* be.
- **What are the potential risks or drawbacks of deploying this technology?** Even in cases where AI might enable high-impact new capabilities, there are likely to be critical failure modes that could lead to unintended, perverse outcomes. Understanding the possibility of, and anticipating, these outcomes is of essential importance.
- **How equitably are the anticipated benefits and risks distributed across different groups of students and families?** AI, especially machine learning-based systems, can “learn,” replicate, and scale bias and inequity. It is therefore important to question whether AI systems might underserve or discriminate against students and families from low-income or minority backgrounds; with disabilities; experiencing varying levels of linguistic proficiency; or facing other vulnerabilities. Asking about past performance or evidence of bias, or

about steps taken to ensure equity in application, could be helpful.

- **If you could wave a magic wand and change anything about this technology, what would it be?** All technologies (including those powered by AI) have been designed with a set of values, practices, and use-cases in mind—and therefore, can be changed, even if they appear opaque or difficult to understand. Those who are closest to the application of AI in educational settings should refuse to accept the status quo, using their observations and wisdom to share feedback with system developers in order to spark changes that help improve the human experience with education.

If and how AI should be designed and used in education remains an active question, which can only be answered through conversations between and across different academic communities. As prior work argues, this will require AI researchers and engineers to work with educationalists to better-understand the theory and practice of education. However, we hope we have successfully argued that equally important is the need for educationalists to understand the more technical aspects of theory and practice of AI, especially when critiquing, rejecting or adapting it for their own efforts. Through the provision of an overview of current AI techniques, their use in education, and key limitations and risks, this article contributes to these on-going conversations and help advance the quest for AIED to improve the human condition.

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TECTONICS IN STRAIN INDUCED EMOTION

Prof. Dr. S. SANDHYA

Professor, NITTE School of Management, Bengaluru, India
PDF (Management), Poorna Prajna Institute of Management, Udipi, India

Col. Prof. Dr. J SATPATHY

Professor, The Management University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
PDF (Management), Poorna Prajna Institute of Management, Udipi, India

Abstract

Introduction: The success of an institution is mainly dependent on its effective human capital and in execution of strategic sustainable HR functions. Currently, human resources are under colossal pressure to ascertain its value, facing severe demands to create an innovative, result-oriented workforce. Ecological - connect practices save money through awareness and communication while reducing environmental predicaments. Personal or professional engagement of individuals will have a long-lasting effect on the environment. Innovation coupled with business processes can change the mindsets of people and businesses and reduce incremental costs. The hallmark of ecological - connect is that it brings about enduring strain - induced thinking competence. One of the prime doctrines of ecological - connect is maximization of positive benefits of an institution for all stakeholders and specifically it should commence with its domestic human resources. **Purpose:** Today's institutions are seeking for a committed workforce as institutional commitment and emotional involvement in one's respective job profile is viewed as a business necessity. Strain - arresting Devoutness can be thought as an effective tool in moulding the human resources as it creates a deep sense of interconnectedness, to collectivism, which may be either physical in nature (e.g., group of people) or not physical (e.g., belief). The purpose of the paper is to find the intertwining seismic between engagement as a calling, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, resilience and optimistic explanatory style to find answer to what happens if engagement is considered not just as a means of earning money. **Design/Methodology / Approach:** Recent research on psychological well-being has identified the psychosocial dynamics of human contentment. The advancement in the area of positive psychology has greatly facilitated this research. Drawing on these contemporary developments, it is asserted that engagement-seeking and contentment need not be viewed as separated, often incompatible (Devoutness) processes. **Findings:** The explication of empirical research attests to the assertion that engagement seeking and contentment constitute a unitary (Devoutness) process. **Practical Implications:** The positive psychological concepts such self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, emotional intelligence and growth mind-set are well-incorporated in contentment. These positive attributes are also needed for successful engagement seeking emotional behaviour. The self-efficacy offers the confidence of executing a function competently. Optimism provides the supportive cognitive style to pursue both the engagement and contentment. Resilience builds capacity to deal with adversity. Emotional intelligence furnishes the human factors of empathy and compassion. The growth mind-set leverages the abundance of energy. An integrative approach to blend engagement seeking with contentment fulfills the objective of innovation and flourishing. **Originality/Value:** This paper has brought out the potential benefits of bringing strain - arresting Devoutness into the workplace, providing suggestions for HR and behavioural practitioners to incorporate strain - arresting Devoutness in institutions. Seeing engagement through the lenses of calling, employees attach themselves to the institution to an extent, such that it results in enhanced employee performance, that helps the institution to achieve business objectives

Keywords: work as call, contentment, self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, emotional intelligence

Researchers have shown that with the help of modern brain imaging technology and intelligent IT we are indeed able to detect exactly the corresponding brain activity, when these precognitions occur.

This approach provides us a direct link to the emotions and experiences behind our decisions, before conscious thoughts or self-regulation can take place.

..... Thomas Feiner

Introduction

Identifying and examining factors that contribute to an individual's sense of well-being is one major goal of psychosocial and quality of life research. Keeping in tune with the positive psychology movement, which tries to understand and enhance positive and adaptive aspects of the human experience rather than focusing only on symptoms, deficits, and limitations (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), researchers in healthcare and rehabilitation have begun focusing on subjective well-being, including ideas such as life satisfaction, as the preferred outcome in persons with disabilities (Chou et al., 2013). The identification of factors that could influence well-being and life satisfaction, and consequently may be targeted for intervention, is of primary importance (Chou et al., 2013; Hampton, 2004; Kobau et al., 2010; Vestling et al., 2005).

Life would be simple indeed if our needs were automatically gratified. But, as we know, many obstacles, both personal and environmental, prevent this. Such obstacles place adjustive demands on us and can lead to the experience of strain. The term, strain has typically been used to refer both to the adjustive demands placed on an organism and to the organism's internal biological responses to such demands. Carson, Butcher, and Coleman (1988) referred to adjustive demands as strainors and to the effects they create within an organism as strain.

The hallmark of ecological - connect is that it brings about enduring strain - induced thinking

competence. One of the prime doctrines of ecological - connect is maximization of positive benefits of an institution for all stakeholders and specifically it should commence with its domestic human resources. Human resources occupy the pivotal position in an institution for effectively coordinating with other factors of production. The success of an institution is mainly dependent on its effective human capital and in execution of strategic sustainable HR functions. In this age of fierce competition, human beings and their performances at workplaces can assist in enhancing institutional effectiveness that will help them to sustain in this ambiguous and uncertain work environment. At present, the prime concern of any institution is empowering this resource to reap the benefits in the long-run. The urge for loyal employees for realizing the institutional goals is found as a major researchable domain in the fields of management institutional awareness and behavioural science.

Theories that correlate human personality and emotions posit that individuals have stable emotional styles or personality traits, emphasizing that personality can affect the expression of emotions (Burger, 2008). Also, individuals turn to emotions as sources of information, and dissimilar types of emotions suggest dissimilar types of information. (Schwarz et al., 2010). However, the traditional approach to engagement-seeking and contentment have not considered this assessment done by an individual and has viewed these two phenomena as the pole-points of a continuum of human motivation.

The (Devoutness) process of engagement-seeking is considered as the preliminary step towards attainment of contentment at the apex Dockery (2003). Keeping in line with the abovementioned idea, the recent developments in emotional behavioural science, particularly in the area of positive psychology, reorient our out-look on the matter. This New Look Approach treats engagement-seeking and contentment as a unitary (Devoutness)

process. This assertion is strengthened when engagement-seeking and sustainable contentment are regarded as continuous strivings towards meaning making (citation.). Hence, the paper tries to bring a conceptual model interlinking engagement as a calling, self-efficacy, resilience, emotional intelligence and supportive cognitive style. It has tried to establish how important it is to make engagement not only a way to earn (spiritual) institutional living but also a means for social acceptance, integration and contribution, providing sufficient platform for corroborating model both empirically and conceptually in future research.

Engagement: A Call

The selfish side of human beings, that of Adam Smith's famous "invisible hand," is the basis of traditional economic theory. But this selfish side is just a partial approach to the complex human dimension, being necessary to incorporate the emotional side to the economic models, to include the passions that often cloud reason, empathy and trust generation, the collaborative and cooperative spirit, the psychological biases that make markets fall into bubbles, overreactions and panics and our powerful "unconscious rationality", which dominates much of daily decisions.

..... Sebastian Laza (Argentina)

One point that comes across loud and clear is that a young person need not be gainfully employed in a high-paying, high-status position to gain enormous satisfaction. Positive psychology pioneer Martin Seligman (2002) describes positive persons dissimilarly. According to him, such engagementseekers do not see themselves as just having engagements, instead, they have callings.

The engagement is not the ultimate goal of any person, rather it serves as a way to gain resources which help them enjoy their life as a whole even away from work. They are not only interested in the monetary gain work provides but also satisfied with

the deeper personal investment achieved through occupational structure. This may lead to achievement of higher social standing and coherence with increased 'mitochondrial' impact and higher self-esteem (Bellah et al., 1985). Finally, people viewing work as callings find that their work to be an inseparable part of their existence and always looking forward to the all-round fulfillment that work provides (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997).

Amy Wrzesniewski (1997) explicates the notion of calling. Adults with a calling see their engagements as contributing to greater good, as something larger than they are, hence the meaning making is entirely appropriate. The engagement is fulfilling in its own rights, without regard for money or for advancement. An important discovery in the field denotes: Any engagement can become a calling, and any calling can become an engagement. Viewed from this broad perspective, there are common drivers for the dual success of engagement seeking and contentment. These include self-efficacy, optimism, resilience, emotional intelligence and growth mind-set. A brief discussion on each of these parameters would attest to the unifying (Devoutness) process of engagement seeking and contentment.

Dynamics of Dual (Devoutness)

It happens that the emotional side of Economics has been approached in a very simple way by neoclassical tradition, through the indifference / utility curves (tastes and preferences), weighed against the cold rationality of income restriction (the consumer's pocket). Neoclassical microeconomics has always assumed (wrong) that reason (income restriction) dominates emotion (utility curves), reaching optimal equilibrium for the rational consumer. But this optimization is clearly far from reality. So, something does not fit between theory and practice.

..... Sebastian Laza (Argentina)

As outlined earlier, the vision of positive person is based on the quality of performance. Although a

number of stable predictors such as intelligence and self-esteem have been identified in the past, the growth of positive psychology and its emphasis on psychological capital have demanded our attention to examine some of the factors that remain under-utilized. Those factors are highly pertinent in the context of competence and motivation. One such robust construct is the integrative framework of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy denotes one's competence belief. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Bandura (1977) articulated a robust theory of social learning to explain the (Devoutness) process of observational learning. Later he unconventional the construct of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) within the framework of social learning. It is important to distinguish skill execution from skill acquisition. Skill is acquired when one goes through institutional awareness and training settings. For skill execution to occur, one needs a belief system that he or she can execute the function. Thus, self-efficacy refers to the extent of belief that he or she can execute the function competently.

Self-efficacy can take three dissimilar forms: generalized self-efficacy, domain-specific efficacy and collective efficacy. Generalized self-efficacy is a trait; an individual may believe in his or her overall competence. However, such an individual may not be willing to save a drowning child because he/she does not have swimming competence. Thus, what is important is the domain-specific self-efficacy. This is a state-like concept which is developable in an individual. A driver may be having driving efficacy and a teacher need to have teaching efficacy. Engagement-seekers are expected to have engagement efficacy. The domain-specific efficacy can be measured by presenting a number of odds and asking the target population to indicate the level of confidence with which he/she can overcome. Sahoo and his associates (Sahoo and Batra, 1997) have used domain-specific self-efficacy measures in

a variety of contexts (academic, work, home management). Exhibit 1 shows a representative sample of items.

Exhibit 1

Academic Efficacy Measure (Courtesy Prof F.M. Sahoo)

Encircle the number which is applicable for you.				
"I can complete my engagement assignment even if - - - - -"				
	1	2	3	4
	Do not agree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Fully agree
I am tired	1	2	3	4
I am distracted	1	2	3	4
Relatives come to our house	1	2	3	4
I am worried	1	2	3	4
Manager is angry with me	1	2	3	4
Situations are difficult	1	2	3	4
There are disturbances outside	1	2	3	4
I am not fed enough	1	2	3	4
Friends irritate me	1	2	3	4
There is sickness in my family	1	2	3	4
There is an interesting television show	1	2	3	4
There is continual power failure	1	2	3	4

Drawing on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, a number of researchers have developed measuring instruments. Since Bandura emphasizes context-specific measurements, the investigators have developed area-specific scales. For example, Skill Confidence Inventory Scale (SCIS) measures self-efficacy in vocation and careers. It consists of 10 items relating to self-confidence in career making (Betz, Borgen and Harmon, 1996). Another example of a domain-specific scale is the mathematics self-efficacy (Betz and Hackett, 1983). In addition to domain-specific self-efficacy, there is a third form of self-efficacy termed collective efficacy. It refers to the

extent of group belief that group members collectively can successfully execute a function. Collective efficacy is a stable predictor of many institutional, social and cultural change.

Since self-efficacy is a state-like construct (developable through learning and training), the antecedents to the development of self-efficacy have been delineated (Bandura, 1997). A very powerful antecedent to efficacy formation involves the exposure to mastery experiences. Individuals need to broaden the range of their experiences. Individuals who expose themselves to new kinds of experiential exercises expand their self-efficacy. Those who participate in extra-institutional seminars, workshops and conferences build strong self-efficacy. In general, they tend to go out of their comfort zones. In a recent study, Kumpikaite and Duoba (2013) have shown that students being abroad more than 3 months develop some core competencies.

Second, an intelligent structuring of initial experiences is needed. Many people seek easy tasks and assured success. However, easy successes in the beginning may make it difficult to bear with failures when encountered. If people take very difficult tasks in the beginning, repeated failures may induce a sense of helplessness (Sahoo, 2002). Hence an intelligent strategy is to structure initial experiences with tasks of moderate difficulty level. It is always better to start with tasks of moderate difficulty level and then systematically increase the level of difficulty in subsequent undertakings.

Third, the impact of modelling on personal self-efficacy is well-documented. One precaution is necessary. When people adopt a very distant role model, they may adore the role model, but rarely imitate. The dissimilarity between the role model and the target reduces the possibility of imitation. Hence, it is suggested that role models be adopted from the immediate surroundings. The element of similarity between the role model and the target with respect to some characteristics such as age, gender and

background motivates the target to follow. The role model functions as a source of information and inspiration.

Finally, social persuasion is also impactful. For building self-efficacy, people ought to engage in self-talks: I can do it. For building efficacy for others, they need to offer encouragement: You can do it. Parents and teachers must keep saying: you can do, you can do. In the context of positive training, adults need supportive interventions and/or counselling. A schematic representation of such tips has been depicted in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2

Efficacy - Based Counselling / Intervention Components

Components	Specific Steps
Exposure to mastery experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A great deal of practice • Breaking learning goals into proximal, tangible and attainable sub-goals • Offering feedback on each step
Use of role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing individuals' attention to role models in immediate surrounding • Indicating similarity (age, sex, and other socioeconomic factors) between role models and individuals • Demonstrating as to how the selected role models can function as sources of information and inspiration
Social persuasion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep saying "You can do it" • Offer positive comments

Business institutions fostering Strain - arresting Devoutness in the Workplace such as bringing together employees' emotional need, motivation at work and encouraging them to find meaning in work, often boosts institutional commitment (Jena and

Pradhan,2014). Today's institutions are seeking for a committed workforce as emotional involvement in one's respective job profile is viewed as a business necessity. Thus, workplace strain - arresting Devoutness (WS) can be considered a major construct in creating sustainable business institutions. A potential means to achieve a sustainable HR practice is through creating a positive psychological contract between the employee and the employer resulting in increased trust, commitment, institutional citizenship, engagement and a sense of fairness (Guest and Conway 1997; Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998). HR effectiveness can be best seen as a dependent variable linked to sustainable practice as previous models on ecological - connect literature focusing on development of sound strategies. Keeping the preceding discussion in mind, the present paper undertakes this novel opportunity to complement the existing literature by examining the theoretical and practical functionality of WS and explicitly defining the relationships between strain - arresting Devoutness and ecological - connect leading to "HR effectiveness".

Characterizations of Strain

Adjustment demands or strainors stem from a number of sources. These sources represent three basic categories, such as, frustrations, conflicts, and pressures. These three categories of sources are closely interrelated. The following are some important definitions given by various eminent psychologists and physiologists. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined strain as an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body or by environmental and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable or exceeding our resources for coping. Zimbardo (1979) defined strain as a nonspecific physiological and psychological response of an individual to any environmental demands or challenges to the integrity

of the individual. According to Back (1977), strain refers to any force which physically and/or psychologically strains the coping mechanisms of an organism. In the opinion of Hans Selye (1976), a Canadian Physiologist, strain is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made on it. Maher (1966) said that strain refers to any of a wide range of factors-physical, physiological, or psychological that place demands upon the organism's capacity to react to a degree that is uncontrollable or threatening. All situations positive or negative that require adjustments are strainful. Thus, according to the Canadian Physiologist, Hans Selye (1976), strain is of two types – positive strain or eustrain, and negative strain or distrain. Both types of strain tax the individual's resources and adjustment, though distrain typically has the potential to do more damage.

Strainors Types

In the opinion of Zimbardo (1979), anything potentially injurious to the organism, either physically or psychologically, that taxes the adaptive capacity of the organism, is called a strainor. Holmes (1984) said that changes in one's life are important strainors. Similarly, in the words of Back (1977), a state of strain, composed of the threat, is called a strainor. In other words, any unpleasant, painful, dangerous, embarrassing or otherwise aversive event that causes or induces strain in the organism is called a strainor. In short, strainor is an agent of strain. Strainors are broadly **categorized** into the following four types.

Physical Strainors which include such strainors as injury, infection, electric shock, fasting, body restraint, immobilization, hypertonic saline, water immersion, predator, inadequate living space and the like.

Psychological strainors which include such strainors as threats to self-esteem, failure in an intellectual task, interaction with a hostile person,

frustrations, conflicts, poor health, poor financial conditions, life crisis and so on.

Environmental Strainors which include strainors like crowding, loud noise, extreme heat, high temperature, excessive cold, pollution of air and so on.

Social Strainors which include such strainors as social isolation, cultural deprivation, social disadvantages, poor socioeconomic status, disturbed family, low social status, lower social class and race, malnutrition, undesired social activities, breakdown of social networks, and so on.

Physiology of Strain

Emotional arousal is one of the most frequent causes of strain. The physiological reactions that accompany emotions and strain are regulated by the two parts of the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) – sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. Activation of the sympathetic nervous system readies the body for vigorous activities, producing such reactions as increases in heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration. In contrast, activation of the parasympathetic nervous system influences activity related to restoration of the body's resources.

Research findings indicate that dissimilar emotions, and thus strain, are associated with dissimilar physiological reactions and patterns of brain activity. Positive emotional reactions are associated with greater activation of the left cerebral hemisphere, while negative emotional reactions are associated with greater activation of the right cerebral hemisphere. In addition, the physiological reactions to strainors involve such structures, named as, hypothalamus, pituitary gland, and adrenal glands.

Hypothalamus is the chief brain centre for internal bodily reactions. It is situated just below the thalamus. Hypothalamus is intimately connected with the functioning of the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS). Both the parasympathetic and sympathetic activities of the ANS are controlled by the

hypothalamus. Hypothalamus controls emotions, strain reactions, body metabolism, temperature regulation, blood chemistry, sexual activities, and various other needs.

Pituitary gland is located near the bottom of the brain. It is connected to and largely controlled by the hypothalamus. Pituitary gland is known as the body's master gland, because its hormones help to regulate the activity of other glands in the endocrine system. Its most important function is regulating the body's reactions to strain and resistance to the diseases. Pituitary gland secretes hormones that have other effects on the body, notably in controlling blood pressure, thirst, and body growth. One specific function of the pituitary gland is particular importance to newborn infant. When the newborn infant sucks the mother's breast nipples, a neural message is sent to the mother's hypothalamus, which sends message to the pituitary gland.

Adrenal glands are a pair of glands that sit atop the two kidneys. They play an important role in emotional arousal and strain, and they secrete a variety of hormones important to body metabolism and sexual arousal. When stimulated either by a hormone from the pituitary gland or by the sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system, the adrenal glands secrete three important hormones such as epinephrine, norepinephrine, and cortisol. Both epinephrine and norepinephrine increase blood pressure by increasing heart rate and blood flow. Cortisol increases the body's immunity to diseases. These three hormones are strain hormones.

Because threatening situations generally call for vigorous activity, the autonomic and endocrine responses that accompany them are catabolic in nature; that is, they help mobilize the body's energy resources. The sympathetic branch of the ANS is active, and the adrenal glands secrete epinephrine, norepinephrine, and cortisol, which is a steroid strain hormone. Because the effects of sympathetic activity

are similar to those of the adrenal hormones, here we give much importance to the hormonal responses.

Epinephrine affects glucose metabolism, causing muscle glycogen to become available to provide energy for strenuous exercise. Along with norepinephrine, this hormone also increases blood flow to the muscles by increasing the output of the heart. In doing so, they also increase blood pressure, which, over the long term, contributes to cardiovascular diseases. The other strain-related hormone secreted by the adrenal glands is cortisol, which is called a glucocorticoid because it has profound effects on glucose metabolism. In addition, glucocorticoids or cortisol help break down protein and convert it to glucose; help make fats available for energy, increase blood flow, and stimulate behavioural responsiveness, presumably by affecting the brain. Thus, the secretion of glucocorticoids does more than help an organism react to a strainful situation – it helps it survive.

When an individual is in a strainful situation, the strainors activate the nerve cells of the hypothalamus to secrete a hormone-like chemical substance called corticotrophin-releasing factor (CRF). This CRF flows from the hypothalamus to the pituitary gland through a specialized system of blood vessels. Being stimulated by the CRF, certain cells in the anterior pituitary gland increase secretion of adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) into the bloodstream. The rate of ACTH secretion is in part, controlled by the CRF. Then the ACTH stimulates the cells of the adrenal glands so that epinephrine, norepinephrine, and cortisol are secreted into the bloodstream. It is the inner tissue of the adrenal glands that is activated as part of the emergency response to give us an activating “shot of adrenalin”. Cortisol and other similar hormones, like epinephrine and norepinephrine, have many actions which allow the body to deal adaptively with strainors for long periods of time.

Strain Effects

We generally speak of two types of health – good health and bad health. Good health refers to the total “physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being”. Bad health, on the other hand, usually refers to the health that is suffering from varieties of illness or sickness.

Long-term strain definitely can be hazardous or harmful to one’s health, and can even result in brain damage. A pioneer in the study of strain, Hans Selye (1976) suggested that most of the harmful effects of strain were produced by the prolonged secretion of glucocorticoids. Although the short-term effects of glucocorticoids are essential, the long-term effects are damaging. These damaging effects include increased blood pressure, damage to muscle tissue, steroid diabetes, infertility, inhibition of growth, inhibition of the inflammatory responses, and suppression of the immune system. High blood pressure can lead to heart attacks or stroke. Inhibition of growth in children subjected to prolonged strain prevents them from attaining their full height. Inhibition of the inflammatory responses makes it more difficult for the body to heal itself after an injury, and suppression of the immune system makes an individual vulnerable to infections and, perhaps, cancer. Thus, the most important cause of the harmful effects of strain is elevated levels of glucocorticoids, but the high blood pressure caused by epinephrine and norepinephrine also plays a contributing role.

Immune System

Strain has been labeled as the “silent killer”, because it can quietly chip away at our immune system, thereby weakening our body’s ability to prevent or fight off illness and diseases.

The immune system is one of the most complex systems of the body. Its function is to protect us from infections caused by the attack of foreign viruses, microbes, fungi, bacteria, and other types of

parasites. The immune system derives from white blood cells that develop in the bone marrow and in the thymus gland (i.e., situated on the chest). The thymus gland secretes a hormone called thymosin which supports immune responses of the body. Some of the white blood cells roam through the blood or lymphatic system; others reside permanently in one place.

The immune reaction occurs when the body is invaded by foreign organisms, including bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Two types of reactions, such as, nonspecific and specific, occur. One nonspecific reaction called as inflammatory reaction, occurs early, in response to tissue damage produced by an invading organism. The damaged tissue secretes substances that increase the local blood circulation and make capillaries leak fluids, which cause the region to become inflamed. The secretions also attract phagocytic white blood cells that destroy both the invading cells and the debris produced by the breakdown of the body's own cells.

Another nonspecific reaction occurs when a virus infects a cell. The infection causes the cell to release a peptide called interferon, which suppresses the ability of viruses to reproduce. In addition, natural killer cells continuously prowl through tissue; when they encounter a cell that has been infected by a virus or that has become transformed into a cancer cell, they engulf and destroy it. Thus, natural killer cells constitute our first defense against the development of malignant tumors.

Two types of specific immune reactions occur which are known as chemically mediated and cell-mediated. The chemically mediated immune reaction involves antibodies. All bacteria have unique proteins on their surfaces, which are called as antigens. These proteins serve as the invader's calling cards, identifying them to the immune system. Through exposure to the bacteria, the immune system learns to recognize these proteins. The result of this learning is the development of special lines of cells

that produce specific antibodies. These antibodies are nothing but proteins that recognize antigens and help kill the invading microorganism. One type of antibody is released into the blood circulation by B-lymphocytes, which develop in bone marrow. These antibodies are called immunoglobulins, which are nothing but chains of proteins. The immunoglobulin binds with antigen on bacterium; kills it directly or attracts other white blood cells which then destroy them.

The other type of defense by the immune system is known as the cell-mediated immune reactions, which are produced by T-lymphocytes, which originally develop in the thymus gland. These cells also produce antibodies which remain attached to the outside of their membrane. T-lymphocytes primarily defend the body against fungi, viruses, and multicellular parasites. When antigens bind with their surface antibodies, the cells either directly kill the invaders or signal other white blood cells to come and kill them. Thus, the white blood cells (i.e., the natural killer cells) are the primary defense of the body against infections.

General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)

Strain is a psychobiological state manifested by a syndrome, that is, a set of symptoms. Hans Selye (1976) termed the body's response or reaction to strainors the general adaptation syndrome (GAS), which consists of three major stages: (i) the alarm reaction, (ii) the stage of resistance, and (iii) the stage of exhaustion, which are discussed below:

(i) Alarm Reaction: The alarm reaction is essentially the emergency response of the body, which consists of the physiological changes that are the organism's first response to a strain – provoking agent or strainor. All organisms seem to complain of such symptoms as headache, fever, fatigue, arching muscles and joints, loss of appetite, and a general feeling of being "run down". In this stage, prompt responses of the body, any of them mediated by the

sympathetic nervous system, prepares us to cope with the strainor here and now.

(ii) Stage 'F' Resistance: If the strainor continues to be present, the stage of resistance begins, wherein the body resists the effects of the continuous strainor. The symptoms that occurred during the alarm stage disappear, even though the disturbing stimulation continues.

The resistance to the strainor seems to be accomplished in large part through increased levels of secretions of ACTH by the anterior pituitary gland and of cortisol by the adrenal glands. Cortisol and other similar hormones like epinephrine and norepinephrine, have many actions which allow the body to deal adaptively with strainors for long periods of time during the stage of resistance. But maintained high levels of these hormones can be harmful. For instance, cortisol promotes the formation of glucose (blood sugar) – a fuel needed for nerve and muscle activity – by breaking down fats and proteins. In the short run, this is adaptive; the body has more fuel available. In the long run, though, the increased use of protein to make fuel may be serious because proteins are needed in the manufacture of new cells. For example, white blood cells, which are crucial for fighting infection, have a short lifetime and must be continuously replaced. If the proteins needed to make new white blood cells are in short supply because they are being used to make fuel, fewer white blood cells can be produced and the body will be less able to fight infection. Add to this, the inhibitory action of cortisol on the formation of the infection – fighting proteins called antibodies together with shrinkage of the tissues which manufacture white blood cells, and it is clear that high levels of cortisol can, in the long run, seriously impair the body's defenses to infection. Prolonged elevation of cortisol levels can also have other harmful effects, such as raising blood pressure. In addition to cortisol, other strain hormones like epinephrine and norepinephrine, which, in excess,

may have their own harmful effects on the body during this stage of resistance.

(iii) Stage Of Exhaustion: If exposure to the injurious strainor continues too long a point is reached where the organism can no longer maintain its resistance. It then enters into the final phase called the stage of exhaustion. The anterior pituitary gland and the adrenal glands are unable to continue secreting their hormones at the increased rate. This means the organism can not continue to adapt to the chronic strain. Many of the symptoms of the alarm reaction begin to reappear. If the strainor continues to act upon the organism after this time, death may occur. For instance, due to the actions of cortisol described above, a person may no longer be able to ward off infection and may become sick and perhaps die. Or, because of other strain-induced hormonal effects, such as, stomach ulcers, diabetes, skin disorders, asthma, high blood pressures (which may lead to heart attacks and strokes), cardiovascular diseases, increased susceptibility to cancer, hypertension, headaches, or a host of other psychosomatic diseases/disorders may occur at this stage or late in the stage of resistance (Selye, 1976; Allen, 1983). However, it is rare for strain not to be relieved before the stage of total exhaustion is reached.

Several lines of research suggest that strain is related to aging in at least two ways. First, older organisms, even when they are perfectly healthy, do not tolerate strain as well as younger ones (Shock, 1977). Second, strain may accelerate the aging process (Selye, 1976). Sapolsky and his colleagues (1986), have investigated one rather serious long-term effect of strain, that is, brain damage. They reported that the hippocampal formation (hippocampus is a structure of the limbic system in the brain) plays a crucial role in learning and memory, and evidence suggests that one of the causes of memory loss that occurs with aging is degeneration of this brain structure. Research with

animals has shown that long-term exposure to cortisol or glucocorticoids destroy cognitions located in a particular zone of the hippocampal formation. The hormone appears to destroy the cognitions by making them more susceptible to potentially harmful events, such as decreased blood flow, which often occurs as a result of the aging process. The primary effect of the hormone is to lower the ability of the cognitions in the hippocampus to utilize glucose, so that when the blood flow decreases, their metabolism falls and they begin to die. Perhaps, then, the strain to which people are subjected throughout their lives increases the likelihood of memory problems later in life. Uno and his coworkers (1989) found that if strain is intense enough it can even cause brain damage in young primates as well as in humans.

Coping with Strain

Emotions and strains are the spices of life; they are just like the salt in curry; without these life is not a life. There is no life without strain; and no strain without life. Some amount of strain is essential for life because the achievements of an individual are possible, in part, due to strain. Therefore, an optimal amount of strain in one's life is a blessing in disguise; though a chronic strain is harmful.

Almost any change in the environment or life demands some coping. Though the susceptibility to strain effects varies greatly from person to person, there are some events which seem to be strainors for many of us. Chief among these are injuries or infections of the body, annoying or dangerous events in the environment, major changes or transitions in life, which force us to cope in new ways.

The term, coping process (Lazarus, 1966) has been applied to the various mechanisms a person can use to escape, modify or learn to live with a threat. Many cognitive factors appear to be central to the coping process – particularly, evaluation of the strainful stimuli, expectations of their effects, and the individual's more or less enduring predispositions/personalities.

Coping Strategies: There are several methods of coping with strain. Chief among them are :

- Transcendental meditation (TM)
- Relaxation training
- Hypnosis
- Biofeedback
- Systematic desensitization

Since the severity of strain effects varies from individual to individual, the coping strategies may also vary from person to person. Depending upon the strain effects, individuals may take any one or more coping strategies to adapt to their strainors. The impact of strainor can sometimes be reduced if a person has control over the strainors (Cohen, 1980).

Human beings are organisms of incredible adaptability. They adapt to what is available sometimes by altering the environment to make it more livable. The capacity to imagine an environment better suited to our needs and the ability to create it are hallmarks of the human species. It is the refined development of our cerebral cortex that enables us to think, plan, and solve problems through manipulation of abstract symbols. Through cognition and the use of language we can profit from our past mistakes to transform the present into a more desirable future. Adaptability is given a big boost by our ability to learn much from merely observing the effects of strainors.

It is the brain's Reticular Activating System (RAS) that has the job of "waking up the cortex". It makes the organism vigilant and aware of what is happening in the environment and to it. The RAS is a bundle of nerve fibers running from the Spinal Cord through the medulla into the cortical regions of the brain. These fibers receive inputs from all the senses, thus helping put the total organism in better contact with its environment. They then make the organism alert, aroused, and sensitive to changes in environmental stimuli. This generalized arousal, coupled with appropriate information about bodily needs and environmental demands, plays an

important role in determining the ultimate expression of behaviour.

Contact with a strainor stimulates a complex system of the hypothalamus, the cerebral cortex, the reticular formation, the limbic system, the autonomic nervous system, and the endocrine system. This complex physiological response marshals the body's full energy resources almost instantly. It does so without conscious preparation. Human beings adapt not only biologically, but also psychologically. The key to human adaptation goes beyond survival at any cost. Therefore, I wish you to think positive, to do positive, and hope for positive.

Role of Spiritual Awareness

"Institutional awareness is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know."

- Daniel J. Boorstin

Institutional awareness is an essential tool for creating ecological - connect in institutions. Whoever owns the knowledge controls the power. Institutional awareness should play an important role in ecological - connect programs. In contemporary times of knowledge economy, adequate institutional awareness is required to succeed in any workplace whether it is a business institution, an institutional awarenessal institution or manufacturing plant. Even in developing countries, a large section of the adult population in neglected communities is functionally illiterate and less likely to embrace ecological - connect. Institutional awareness geared toward the new ecological - connect direction will be needed to participate actively in the society.

Currently, human resources are under colossal pressure to ascertain its value, facing severe demands to create an innovative, result-oriented workforce. Ecological - connect practices save money through awareness and communication while reducing environmental predicaments. Personal or professional engagement of individuals will have a long-lasting effect on the environment. To meet the

immense challenges of the present and the future, it is important that all undergraduate and graduate college students learn about our environmental and social ecological - connect challenges and be provided with learning opportunities that engage them in solutions to these challenges. The impact of these decisions will affect the quality of life across the globe. strain - arresting Devoutness is seen not as a process of inner transformation but as an umbrella word which covers a wide range of faith-related traditions, rituals, beliefs, forms of worships, customs, ceremonies, and institutions. – strain - arresting Devoutness refers to other people's strain - arresting Devoutness, e.g. 'local people's strain - arresting Devoutness', 'indigenous people's strain - arresting Devoutness', and 'strain - arresting Devoutness of rural communities' – strain - arresting Devoutness is studied from materialistic perspective to sharing economic growth.

Zajonc (2000) proposes a constructivist view of reality wherein knowledge is conceived of as an event, not an object. He describes knowledge as an epiphanic moment of knowing, and it is through knowing that institutional awareness becomes a process of transformation. Sustainable relationships start with flirting, that artful skill of getting someone to notice you. Once people have each other's attention, they build a connection by focusing on what makes the other person happy. If they both sustain a high level of energy for meeting one another's needs, the attachment between them becomes secure.

But so much can go wrong in relationships. Often people pick poorly at the outset. They flirt with people with whom they have a superficial attraction. It's like buying a car that's beautiful, but has a poor reliability record. It's destined to break down sooner or later. Attraction is important, but it must be backed up by an ability to consistently keep another person's best interest in their heart. There are many questions to be answered to determine whether someone will be able to provide the ingredients essential for

maintaining a loving connection. Can they listen, empathize, negotiate, respect, trust, adapt, have fun, be romantic? Were their parents able to be that way with each other? If so, they grew up with a good model of how to sustain a satisfying marriage. If not, their ability to love will remain stunted until they develop the skills required to engage in a healthy loving relationship. The 3R are the pillars of spiritualism that is **Reflection->Realization->Recognition**

Discipline Towards Ecological - Connect

Mindfulness helps one to connect positively with the world outside. Mindfulness connects the conscious inner self with the universality or the ultimate existence of life on the planet or maybe with the entire spectrum of life in the universe. The mind continues to be connected to the universal truth mired by the pleasures and pains of life. The discussion between whether one should remain within the actual state of physical reality or transcend to the higher unconscious levels will always remain alive.

The indispensable question that comes to our mind is that why institutions are opting for ecological - connect programs and what kind of job description is expected out of HR professionals to be a part of this ecological - connect journey? Primarily, the birth of a formal institution set up is because of market imperfectness and they would not have a place if markets get themselves operated effectively. The perfection is in terms of 'internalizing' recurring economic exchanges, enhancing the efficiency for resource allocation and reducing the cost of individual transactions through standardization and establishing routines (Coarse, 1937). Therefore, the strategic intent of institutions' is 'to harness private interests for serving the public interests' and to engage a range of stakeholders in decision making and sharing of rewards (Zappala, 2010). Adding with the term "ecological - connect" in this context is to

keep a composed view recognizing that institutional values are incorporated in its conceptualization through balancing the competing interests, values and priorities of stake holders (Robbin and Hariadi, 2010). This is through realizing effective internal and external stakeholder management which entails specific capabilities, such as dialogue, long-term strain - induced thinking, critical reflection, systemic strain - induced thinking, conflict management and collaborative skills (Gao and Zhang, 2006). The incessant requirements for collaborative skills and systemic management amongst its stakeholders induce institution to have the discipline of human resource as its biological off spring.

A number of scholars mention a paradigm shift in institutional sciences, management theory and practice in the past two decades. It is given in a diagram the evolution of spiritualism in management science. It seems the paradigm shift is complex and includes multiple dimensions such as moving from a predictable outlook to chaos (Gleick, 1987), from command and control or fear-based approaches to trust and empowerment (Conger and Kanungo, 1988), from simplicity to complexity (Lewin, 1992), from transactional leadership to transformational leadership (House and Shamir, 1993), and from closed systems to complex adaptive systems (Dooley, 1997). These changes in management include a shift from an economic focus to a balance of profits, quality of life, strain - arresting Devoutness, and social responsibility concerns (Walsh, Weber, and Margolis, 2003; DeFoore and Renesch, 1995), a shift from self-centeredness to interconnectedness (Capra, 1993), a shift from self-interest to service and stewardship (Block, 1993; Neck and Milliman, 1994), and a change from materialistic to a spiritual orientation.

This new paradigm that is emerging in institutions has also been called as "the strain - arresting Devoutness movement". Ashmos and Duchon (2000) have described the strain - arresting

Devoutness movement as “a major transformation” where institutions make room for the spiritual dimension, which has to do with meaning, purpose, and a sense of community. This new spiritual dimension embodies employees’ search for simplicity, meaning, self-expression, and interconnectedness to something higher.



Figure-1

Therefore, in a macro perspective human resource practice, such as individual professional’s creativity, risk-taking and innovative capabilities, stands as an outcome of sustainable practice and holds as a key mediator between ecological - connect objectives and institutional performance. These practices contribute to institutional performance through an ability to attract and retain employees, fostering a greater sense of institutional justice and employee commitment, improving employee perception of the institution leading to morale enrichment and job satisfaction (Brammer et al 2007; KuvaasandDysvik, 2009). In this connection, though many scholars and practitioners have hypothesized that there is a relationship between institutional ecological - connect and HR effectiveness, however there is a little research has been carried out to simultaneously investigate the factors of HR outcome and ecological - connect initiatives for bringing out a single entity.

Accordingly, human capital is as crucial to development and ecological - connect as physical capital is. The investment in human resource development through institutional awareness must be given top priority in the overall ecological - connect strategy. More employers today are encouraging strain - arresting Devoutness in the workplace to enhance employee morale, commitment and

productivity. Research suggests fostering strain - arresting Devoutness and allowing free expression of strain - arresting Devoutness at work enables employees to feel complete and authentic at work (Burack, 1999); which leads to a high degree of personal fulfillment and moral. This is a workplace strain - arresting Devoutness model provides the medium to inculcate the spiritualism.



Figure-2

Human Resources Perspective: Strain - arresting Devoutness enhances employee well-being and quality of life;

- **Philosophical perspective:** Strain - arresting Devoutness provides employees a sense of purpose and meaning at work;
- **Interpersonal perspective:** Strain - arresting Devoutness provides employees sense of interconnectedness and community.

First Dimension HR Perspective: This includes individual level positive effects of strain - arresting Devoutness; including subjective well-being, morale, and commitment. This perspective purports that incorporating strain - arresting Devoutness at work a) increases employees’ well-being by increasing their morale, commitment, and productivity; b) decreases employees’ strain, burnout, and workaholism in the workplace. Several researchers found that employees began to feel distanced, vulnerable, and cynical because of downsizing, restructuring, reengineering, delayering, layoffs, and other current changes in institutions. Research suggests that the development and expression of the spirit at work may indeed solve these problems of strain and burnout,

as well as have beneficial consequences for the well-being of employees.

Second approach the issue from philosophical and existentialist perspective; which is disconnected to the concepts such as the search for meaning and purpose in what employees are doing at the workplace. Providing a deeper sense of meaning and purpose for employees is important; as this enables employees to perform better and to be more productive and creative at work. This perspective contends that incorporating strain - arresting Devoutness at work provides employees and managers a deeper sense of meaning and purpose at work.

Third approach the topic from an interpersonal and community perspective, which is disconnected to the concepts of belonging, community, and connectedness. This perspective is centered on the interpersonal relationships, collective dimensions, and social dynamics of strain - arresting Devoutness. This perspective contends that incorporating strain - arresting Devoutness at work provides institutional members a sense of community and connectedness; thus, increases their attachment, loyalty and belonging to the institution

Strain - Arresting Devoutness

Strain - arresting Devoutness plays an important role in transforming our lives and bringing us from darkness to goal-oriented behaviour. It is beyond the physical world but it includes the growth of an individual's self. Our lives have fragmented into pieces because of complexities and the strains of life. Strain - arresting Devoutness helps us integrate as a whole and gives meaning and purpose to our lives. In the present era, companies are facing many hurdles due to the absence of strain - arresting Devoutness in the workplace, for example: strain, absenteeism, and institutional politics (Ashmos and Duchon, (2000), Workplace strain - arresting

Devoutness (WPS) aims at meaningful work, sense of community, and value of institution.

In the paradigm of conventional development, the term 'development' implies an action undertaken by a group of powerful human beings to develop powerless others. If the powerful is not spiritually matured, the question likely to arise in their self-centered mind are: In what way are we to develop others if we are benefit from that development? What development models are we to adopt to develop others if we are benefit from that development? It promotes exploitation and accumulation of wealth. Hence, it leads to inequality. It gives higher priority to material wealth than to relationships; but strain - arresting Devoutness promotes sharing of material wealth, hence leads to equity and gives priority to relationship. Development does not cause too much strain on natural environment. Hence, it is sustainable.

Ecological - connect is the capacity to endure. In ecology, 'ecological - connect' describes how biological systems remain diverse and productive over time. For human beings, ecological - connect is the potential for long-term maintenance of well-being, which has environmental, economic and social dimensions. The SPIRIT Cycle is shown in the following Fig.1.

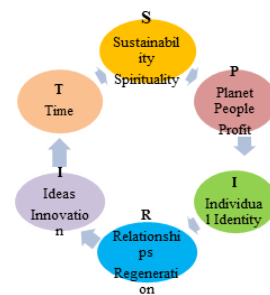


Figure 3 Spirit Cycle

Technology overrides conventional workplaces to increase the revenues of the stakeholders without any major leverage affecting the revenues, thus creating a loss of institutional strain - arresting

Devoutness at many workplaces (Khan, Khan, and Chaudhry, (2015).

Strain - arresting Devoutness and ecological - connect go hand in hand and forces me to believe that the former can help in sustainable development. Similarly living in a sustainable manner helps in spiritual growth. Strain - arresting Devoutness is the state of mind, which understands that the Truth is beyond the barriers of worldliness, caste, creed, race or geographical boundaries. It is universal in nature and a great spiritual thought is a cause of celebration for the whole mankind. It connects us to universal consciousness and gives a certain perspective in life. Strain - arresting Devoutness keeps our lust for material things in life on hold and sustainable development is bound to happen only when we can control our greed for such materialistic things. Strain - arresting Devoutness is realizing that all meaningful people begin with one own self and facilitating the growth, learning and wellbeing of others.

Mahatma Gandhi has rightly said in this context, "Be the change you want to see in the world". Strain - arresting Devoutness inculcates within us a sense of compassion which changes our mindset to view nature and prevent us from exploiting it. Strain - arresting Devoutness transforms our mind and soul, we become accustomed to the nature, we start enjoying and appreciating the beauty of nature, and this helps us in preserving it as much as possible. Hence, this is the first step towards sustainable living. In all religions of the world the respect for nature is preached and the maxim of simple living and high strain - induced thinking is ingrained. As a person strides on the path of strain - arresting Devoutness, he/she shuns all worldly things and their priorities change.

The focus of life deviates from materialistic needs and desires towards getting personal happiness through mental peace. Practicing Meditation and other spiritual practices help us to achieve that inner peace and form the basis for

happiness. This marks the beginning of sustainable development since his or her needs are reduced. There are numerous examples of such great saints like Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi and Einstein who believed in the doctrine of simple living and high strain - induced thinking. With the gradual evolution of technology, we make the optimal use of resources and do things more efficiently and effectively. This assists in conservation of our natural and technical resources which ultimately lead to sustainable development. Therefore, we follow nature where all systems are carried out efficiently with fewer resources and help us to maintain the equilibrium for a longer period of time. Sustainable development therefore can be defined as a process in which we use recyclable materials, resources and energy effectively for our needs in an environmentally sound manner. This process is facilitated by technological advancement and mankind should participate actively to attain ecological - connect. Strain - arresting Devoutness helps us to live in harmony and peace with one another and enable us to achieve that common goal.

By creating some magic, we can foresee the future of a rural based sustainable society driven forward by technological innovation and instilling the benefits of institutional awareness among mankind. Citizens will be able to lead a harmonious, spiritual and happy life. With the availability of Internet, desktop manufacturing, small renewable energy 'mitochondrial' packs and other unconventional technologies being researched in laboratories all over the world, that day is not far away when the world will have the ability to produce multiple products and that vision and dream of a better place can be realized. The most beautiful and precious byproduct of the power of Positive Passion is that it guilds a deep golden path of gratitude in our lives. Journeying on this voyage a person is able to dive into the infinite gentle, nurturing pond of self-love and self-care, empowering the regulating dance of the happy joyous

gene expression, inviting balanced health into one's life on a cellular DNA level.

How can we teach the values of strain - arresting Devoutness and sustainable development to our citizens? More than any other human institution or activity, institutional awareness serves as a key social institution connecting individual and collective actions and their impact on the environment. The knowledge and information about it should be imparted to children at an early age through schools, books and mass media. School curriculum should therefore introduce these subjects in all grades. Only then can the seeds of these ideas in the minds of children can flower and blossom later in their lives. Though we human beings have changed the tapestry of nature through our intervention and have produced the problems facing our planet earth, yet we have that innate ability to take corrective actions once the information and knowledge is available to us. The upsurge of movements around the world in the renewable energy and environmental fields and now the establishment of world forum on ecological - connect attest to this fact. Hence it is the responsibility of all of us especially the mass media to inform the citizens about these issues in a sustained and responsible manner.

There is a tendency to equate institutional awareness with the formal curriculum, but even more significant is its hidden curriculum in which patterns of thought, knowledge, action and association are propagated, normalized, and made uniform across a large population. This hidden curriculum may or may not be intentionally impacted by a society, policy makers, or curriculum specialists depending on their meta-awareness or commitment to social engineering or design. At the same time, there are rich human institutional awareness activities that transpire in the margins or beyond state-structures sanctioning "formal" schooling, and these institutional awareness alternatives are critical to consider in deciphering the

enigma of institutional awareness and ecological - connect. Whether we conceive of it as such or not, institutional awareness is probably the key institution of evolution, whereby we come together to decide the future direction of our communities and species. That we differ on what the future direction should be is what makes institutional awareness diverse and produces the tapestry of visions that constitute the collective vision of humanity.

Optimistic Explanatory Styles

Optimism is one of the most talked about positive psychological resource. In everyday language, an optimist is one who expects positive and desirable events in the future, while a pessimist is one who constantly has negative thoughts (Sahoo, Sarangi and Sahoo, 2017). Optimism is not just a dispositional tendency to expect good things to happen in the future. Optimistic expectations depend on the reasons and attributions one uses to explain why specific events, both positive and negative, occur in the past, present and future (Seligman, 1998). More recently, Davidson and Begley (2012) have identified the cognitological correlates of optimism. It has been shown that the interplay of the left frontal cortex and the nucleus accumbens, our pleasure center, is in focus here. The more signals go from the prefrontal cortex to the nucleus accumbens, gearing it towards increased activity, the more we are on the positive extreme. Elaine Fox (2013) speaks of rainy brain versus sunny brain.

Seligman (1998) interprets optimism as an explanatory style that attributes positive events to personal, permanent and pervasive causes and interprets negative events in terms of external, temporary, and situation-specific factors. On the other hand, a pessimistic explanatory style would interpret positive events with external, temporary and situation-specific attributes and explain negative events in terms of personal, permanent, and pervasive causes.

The optimistic explanatory styles do have great relevance in the context of individuals' success and failure. For better achievements, individuals need to explain their success in terms of personal, permanent and pervasive factors. They need to explain failure in terms of external temporary and situation-specific factors. The socialization plays its role in fostering or hindering the adaptive optimistic style. Research has shown that teachers use double standard while dealing with boys vis-à-vis girls. When boys fail teachers tend to use effort-attribution "You did not work hard, so you failed" – they tell boys. In contrast, teachers offer ability-attribution, when girls fail. They declare: "you have no ability, so you failed". It is not difficult to surmise that the former is an adaptive attribution, because effort is relatively a controllable factor. Similarly, appreciation in terms of intelligence versus hard work makes difference in the context of success and achievement.

The intervention / counselling tips may schematically be presented in Exhibit 3.

**Exhibit 3
Dealing with Positive and Negative Events**

Nature of Events	Components	Specific Socialistic Tips
Positive Events (For example, success)	Who is responsible? How long would the effects stay? How many domains of your life would be influenced?	Think of your positive role in causing the event Try to stretch the effect over time; Talk about it today, tomorrow and afterwards Spill over good home-related messages to engagement and engagement-related messages to home
Negative Events (For example, Failure)	Who is responsible? How long would the effect stay? How pervasive is its impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the role of external conditions; do not blame yourself totally Consider it very temporary Very specific; do not spill it over to other areas of life

Resilience

Perhaps the most parsimonious definition of resilience is "bouncing back". The (Devoutness) process refers to the phenomenon of preventing or minimizing the adverse effects of negative environment.

This broad definition is widely accepted. Dr Emmy Werner sometimes called the "mother of resilience" is a person-focused resilience researcher. She identifies resilient people. However, resilience is manifest in any stage of human development. All resilient people have three attributes: I am, I can and I have. The first attribute refers to the property of self-confidence. Resilient individuals feel that they are capable of completing the engagement competently. The second attribute ("I can") denotes problem-solving competence. The third attribute (I have) is indicative of a special relationship. Resilient individuals do have protective factors. Even if the family life is negative, they have some kind of oasis elsewhere in their social lives. This protective factor insulates them from external adversity.

From a dissimilar stand-point, resilient individuals have three characteristics. First, there is always a blending of optimism and realism. Although they are optimistic, it is not unbounded optimism. It is realistic optimism (functional) optimism. Second, they have the tendency of reinventing the (Devoutness) process. They try to renew the (Devoutness) process. Third, resilient individuals do have a sense of meaning attached to atleast one aspect of their lives.

**Exhibit 4
Strategies for Promoting Resilience
Courtesy: Ann Masten (2001)**

Risk-focused Strategy Prevent faulty prenatal care Screen for and treat depression in mothers Reduce environmental crimes Asset-focused strategy
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Provide basic necessities
 Educate parents
 Provide good institutional awareness
 Restore community service
 Educate teachers
 (Devoutness) process-focused Strategy
 Foster secure attachment
 Parental-sensitivity training
 Nurture healthy brain development
 Provide quality experience
 Provide positive role models

Resilience is a dynamic (Devoutness) process consisting of positive adaptation to significant adversity and it helps in development of patterns of positive adaptation during or following threats to adaptation (Luthar and Chichetti, 2000). It acts as the protective factor that contribute to a good outcome despite experiences with strainors that can cause prominent distrain to health. World Health Institution views resilience as a guard protecting against moderate risk factors, thereby reducing the impact of risk on outcomes (Masten, 2001). Assets which act as protective factors include competence and efficacy; resources, such as family support and community services. As resilience is very important in the course of dealing with the negative, this special adaptational skill is required in the context of successful engagement-seeking behaviour which acts a strainor and contentment pursuits.

Emotional Intelligence

In recent decades psychologists and behavioural scientists have emphasized the role of emotional intelligence. Goleman (1970) strains that emotional intelligence contributes ninety percent of our success while rational intelligence contributes only ten percent of our success in life. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, self-skills (tolerance and motivation), interpersonal sensitivity, and social skills. Optimism and positive moods are also its components. Special

mention includes empathy and compassion. It needs no argument to convince one that emotional intelligence is an essential skill for the attainment of engagement and contentment.

Salovey and Meyer (1990) stated that individuals high in EI have certain capabilities to appraise and regulate emotions according to the context and need. In addition to this, they stated that individuals with high EI could accurately feel certain emotions in themselves and others and also bring in changes in themselves and others in order to achieve a range of adaptive outcomes which is specifically needed when you are in search of engagement.

Supportive Cognitive Styles

In addition to the seminal role of self-efficacy (Zimmerman, 1995), resilience, emotional intelligence, and positive explanatory styles (Seligman, 1998), a couple of cognitive style constructs offer significant contributions.

In this context, Carol Dweck (1999) makes a significant contribution. Her early research focused helpless and mastery-oriented behaviours. She noted that some individuals persist in the face of failure while others quit as soon as they encounter difficulties. She started investigating the cognitive beliefs, particularly beliefs about ability that lie behind behaviours. She discovered that individuals' implicit beliefs about the nature of intelligence have a significant effect on the way they approach challenging intellectual tasks. Individuals who view that their intelligence is an unchangeable and fixed internal characteristic tend to shy away from academic challenges. In contrast, individuals who believe that their intelligence can be increased through effort and persistence seek them out.

According to Dweck (1999), individuals who hold an entity theory give up when encountering challenges while individuals who hold an incremental theory persist. Dweck's theory has implications for how the praise of mentors may lead individual to

accept an entity view of a resource. Praising an individual for his or her intelligence may reinforce the notion that success and failure depend on something beyond the individual's control (Example: I am so happy you got an A+ because you are intelligent). In contrast, individuals who are admired for their effort are much more likely to view resource as changeable. Individuals with an incremental view are more likely to work through frustrations and setbacks and reach their full academic potential. Dweck (1999) experimented the impact of fixed entity versus incremental belief systems and found clear supportive evidence.

Psychologist Tory Higgins (1996) has also developed a motivational theory concerning goal. His theory maintains that people regulate their goal-directed behaviours in two distinct ways. One focus of regulation is promotion focus while the other is prevention focus. Individuals with promotion focus are concerned with advancement, growth and accomplishment. Behaviours with promotion focus are characterized by eagerness, approach, and "going for the best". The prevention focus is concerned with protection, safety and the prevention of negative outcomes and failures. Prevention focus behaviours are characterized by vigilance, caution and attempts to prevent negative outcomes.

Implications

Work controls more than one-third of waking life for most human adults and satisfaction with work varies among individuals (Stawand Ross, 1985) and it results in subjective well-being of the life of an individual (Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991). Felt power to control situation can reduce the adverse effects of strain. But exposure to the same strainors without the power to regulate them impairs physical as well as mental function (Herbert and Cohen, 1993b). The will to act in support of resilience leads to natural tendency of searching ways to fight adversities when the situation is not conducive and the faceoff with

adverse situation at times lead to a new level of growth in the person. Furthermore, if Engagement becomes calling when individual feel engagement to be equivalent to their existence, the factors mentioned can augment this perception.

Emotional Astuteness: Case Study

Introduction

Paternity is currently a challenging responsibility that adults must undertake in their life, and it is generally undertaken with little or no help or preparedness. Being a parent entails a great amount of mental and physical labour, which is accompanied by a variety of sources of anxiety and responsibility. "Parental anxiety," as defined by Abidin (1982), is the anxiety which an individual develops when in the role of parent. According to Abidin, this anxiety can be described by a restriction of the parent's personal activities as a result of her/his continual adaptation to her/his children's expectations and requirements. INSEE (2012) found that mothers, who are typically the primary caregivers, were at increased risk of feeling high levels of anxiety than other caregivers for a variety of reasons. This enormous and on-going duty may explain why working females have poorer mental health when compared to their male counterparts (Veroff et al., 1981). A similar argument has been made by Baruch et al. (1987) who believe that the role of a woman in the family, which combines high levels of psychological demands with low levels of control, might result in high levels of anxiety. Because the mother is in charge of young children, anxiety levels among parents are elevated as well (Matthey, 2011). Having a large number of children at home also increases the amount of anxiety that moms experience (Lundberg et al., 1994). Furthermore, the repetition of her never-ending daily activities contributes to her feelings of anxiety (Fisher, 1991). In addition, when employed moms combine child care with their professional responsibilities, they are more likely to experience not

only high levels of anxiety, but also anxiety or symptoms of depression, as well (Naerde et al., 2000). Finally, Lacharité et al. (1992) assert that the process of raising and caring for a child will necessarily result in a condition of anxiety in the adults involved. This long-term state may be a contributing factor to the development of burnout syndrome (Zapf et al., 2001; Roskam et al., 2017).

Emotional intelligence is very important to the mental and psychological health of employed single mothers. Therefore, emotional intelligence training is important to develop the emotional and psychological intelligence of employed single mothers so that their mental health is more secure. Furthermore, in this era emotional intelligence training is becoming increasingly popular in developing the level of emotional intelligence of employed single mothers so that they are not exposed to anxiety in their challenging daily lives. Poverty, depression, disciplinary problems among children, rising cost of living with an uncertain economic environment, social problems and many more are among the issues that single employed mothers have to deal with (Ishaket al., 2009). This is because employed single mothers have been identified as individuals who are often faced with difficult and challenging lives including financial hardship and worrying mental health problems. Thus, emotional intelligence training is able to strengthen the well-being of single employed mothers to face challenges while living life through a healthier and more productive psychology (Cheeseman et al., 2011).

Anxiety Among Single Employed Mother

Mothers' parenting anxiety in the context of a child disability were found to be favourably connected with emotional-oriented coping and negatively correlated with task-oriented coping in a recent study of mothers who had a disabled kid (Najmi et al., 2017). Parents of children with disabilities who use social support coping techniques report lower levels of parental

anxiety, whereas parents of children without disabilities who do not use social support coping strategies report higher levels of negative conduct in children (Jones and Passey, 2005). Parents of children with autism or Down syndrome, on the other hand, are more likely to employ emotional-oriented coping strategies, whereas parents of typically developing children are more likely to use task-oriented coping strategies (Dabrowska and Pisula, 2010).

Working females who were once known for their feminine qualities such as gentleness, affection, patience and so on can experience a drastic change in lifestyle especially in terms of attitudes and perceptions, the way they think and the control of their emotional behaviour. Negative traits and attitudes that are learned or inherent from childhood to adulthood are carried over to this time in turn having a major impact on the anxiety and psychological or financial problems of this adult. Therefore, when a woman holds the status of a employed single mother, then the woman will face cultural shocks such as supporting, managing and leading a family life in a household with various social, mental, economic and child problems. Psychological Conversion Disorders that is, they believe they are sick even though in fact they are not sick (Abdul Hamid, 2008). However, she explained that the effects experienced depend on emotional intelligence, personality, self-concept as well as the way the single employed mother deals with the problem. In addition to moral, financial and material support obtained from families, government institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Therefore, these employed single mothers need to be equipped with emotional intelligence, assertive or anxiety-free communication skills that fear if not managed properly there will be emotional behavioural disorders and depression (Abu Bakar, 2011). They can continue to live independently and self-identity

so that they dare to make decisions with more confidence for the sake of emotional behavioural stability, spiritual and physical self -development, social relationships at home and at work, performance achievement and job satisfaction (Abdul Rani, 2008). Furthermore, anxiety can contribute to emotional instability for employed single mothers and their children. Balance and emotional stability are very important for employed single mothers especially in a employed context, they need to manage the upbringing of children and be prepared to deal with changes that occur over time (Husain, 2000). For employed single mothers who lose their husbands due to death, they have to adjust to new situations or in other words lose their place of dependence, loved ones, loved ones and grief. Meanwhile, for those who are divorced, they have to fill the 'void' left by their ex -husbands. This means, they have to play the role of mother as well as father. Adding more anxiety to this group if the ex-husband does not pay alimony to help support the children. This situation will be worse if a single mother faces problems with the court when making a claim for alimony or matrimonial property (Asaari Abdullah, 2003).et al., 2009).

Therefore, employed single mothers need to be prepared and strong to face such situations. The big challenge for employed single mothers is forming a good emotional system and management so that such problems do not weaken them and the children. In the context of children, separation or even the death of a father will cause conflict in their souls. If not refined and shaped well, it may cause children to frequently rebel where it is one of the mediums for them to express their feelings. Therefore, emotions will cause a state of physical imbalance and will affect the child's emotional behaviour (Yahaya, 2008). A child's response to a stimulus will evoke an emotion and depend on his past experiences.

These emotions will affect his adjustment. Some children have learned to express their emotions

immediately and others have learned to prevent and suppress their emotional disturbances but will release those feelings of resentment at a more appropriate time. When a child expresses his feelings, it is often said to be immature by others. On the other hand, if his angry emotions are suppressed he will feel depressed and this will cause him to become more rude, irritable, cruel, unwilling to cooperate and stare about himself. High emotional anxiety will cause the child to feel restless, nervous and unhappy. The dominant emotions experienced by children usually have more influence on a child's personality when compared to emotions thorough tension. The work environment often encourages negative emotional patterns.

Emotional Intelligence Training Approach

In the United States today, single mothers who are initially anxietyed and who are not properly handled are living in a state of "depressed" Alone, with the burden of financial problems as well as the responsibility of caring for and raising children, face risks with children in making psychosocial adjustments (Okun, 2000). The psychological anxiety and emotional burden borne by single mothers is an impact on their psyche involving children, neighbors, relatives and employers. Furthermore, single mothers have psychological implications for the impact of loss of life guidance or loss of self-direction which occurs immediately gives rise to a variety of long -lasting problems from psychological, economic and social aspects (Doshi &Panalal, 2005).

Today, the symptoms or signs of emotional behavioural disorders from the aspect of anxiety may be different from the signs of psychosis (Trinidad & Johnson, 2002). In addition, they may be the result directly of anxiety or may be the result of emotional behavioural disorder issues that occurred at least 6 months ago. Symptoms or symptoms of anxiety in adults include chronic forgetfulness and forgetfulness, anxiety, low self-esteem, job boredom

problems, difficulty controlling anger, impulsivity or acting without thinking, drug abuse or addiction, weakness in organizing skills, procrastination or procrastination-procrastination, low frustration tolerance, chronic boredom, difficulty concentrating when reading, emotional changes, depression (Ciarrochiet al., 2002).

What a pity for single employed mothers if this group is also left marginalized by society. It is feared that they will become accustomed to being overly dependent, impulsive or unaware of who they really are. They are less optimistic and the implications of their pessimism make it difficult for them to accept the realities that befall them. However, their self-strength increases and changes in a more positive direction gradually and can help them communicate more effectively and productively in societal life.

Thus, the result of ignorance and slowness of the use of intellect and emotion to be viable in self-development causes others to take over their duties. They can change in a positive or negative direction because they have the right to freedom of choice (D'Mello & Graesser, 2012). If they take chaotic action not to change then the implications indirectly indicate that the lives of some single mothers will have arbitrarily been controlled, manipulated, exploited or influenced by others. With the inability to survive without the support of a communicative, caring and compassionate society, the single mothers are worried that they will be neglected and fall into the valley of uncertainty about a meaningful life that causes them to be careless, careless, forgetful and depressed about responsibilities to family, children and themselves. As a result of such confusion, depression and forgetfulness they unknowingly become part of the main causes or contributors in generating social symptoms, domestic violence if remarried, societal lameness and moral collapse (Hodgson et al., 2001).

Thus, the fate of a single mother employed as a devoted member of society is in her own hands to

choose the direction or direction in this life. If they want and strive towards goodness i.e. free from ignorance then they will achieve it and if they, willingly, choose the wrong way of life, then they will be responsible for their emotional disturbances and emotional behavioural disorders leading to an uncertain life and further bringing destruction to themselves (Widjajanti, 2003). Furthermore, the concept of emotional intelligence describes the emotional qualities that contribute to a person's production of the ability to understand others and act intelligently in human relationships (Trinidad & Johnson, 2002). Recent studies have found that emotional intelligence can be taught i.e. it can increase automatically through emotional intelligence training where it can change emotional intelligence training from avoiding anxiety and improving emotional behaviour in a more positive direction.

Emotional intelligence is also the ability to recognize the meaning of emotions and their relationships as well as solve emotional problems that exist in each other (Mayer et al., 2001). Thus, emotional intelligence encompasses all skills whether interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Interpersonal skills consist of the ability to understand other people's feelings, emotions, maintain and develop interpersonal relationships and on our social responsibilities. Instead, skills intrapersonal consists of the ability to understand one's own motivations. Emotional intelligence plays an important role in determining life success.

In addition, the effects of divorce as well as factors that can contribute to psychological problems are anxiety, he looked at the positive and negative effects of parental divorce (Hilton & Kopera-Frye, 2003). There are several factors that contribute to the causes of divorce, among them include area function, depression, hostility, drunkenness (alcohol use) and well-being. Maternal and paternal care differences were assessed based on a series of hierarchies used to assess the factors that had helped both groups

(mothers and fathers). When comparing maternal and paternal care, most mothers are younger, have less income and have more economic problems. In terms of area function, income and hostility, mothers are more vulnerable to such situations, but on the other hand for alcohol use, mothers are less prone to this problem. Therefore, the issue of divorce should not be underestimated as it involves emotional problems between the children and the mother herself. Good emotional management can provide space and opportunity for single mothers to take wise action in making a decision.

The intelligence training followed by an individual is capable of developing and developing the level of emotional intelligence of that individual (Bar-On, 2000). In other words, several studies have shown that emotional intelligence is a learnable ability (Clyne & Blampied, 2004; Dasborough&Ashkanasy, 2003; Hein, 2005; Kotsou et al., 2011; and Ab. Rahman et al., 2003). In addition, it was found that the level of mastery of emotional intelligence was found to differ based on factors of gender, age, level of education and other factors related to a person's background.

Observations

Finally, it can be concluded that efforts to conduct emotional intelligence training to increase the level of emotional intelligence and reduce anxiety among single employed mothers should be given attention by all parties whether government, private, NGOs, statutory bodies or individuals. Furthermore, the concept of emotional intelligence provides an opportunity for single mothers employed in such an organization to adapt themselves to their own emotions and shape emotions that are appropriate for their self-interest and the needs of the public. Explorations made by researchers show that emotional intelligence is an internal component of human beings that has the potential to be developed to influence an individual to achieve success in life

and career. Emotional intelligence can be used as a form of measurement of an individual's excellence and effectiveness in navigating this challenging life which is associated with some common mental attitudes such as awareness to understand one's own and others' feelings, empathy, love, motivation, and ability to respond appropriately to certain situations. The phenomenon of single mothers is not something new in our society. But, in recent years, it has become an issue that invites discussion when we talk about working females and families who have the responsibility to support families. Recently we were exposed to the number of single mothers employed so many and increasing day by day. As a sole breadwinner, whether in the public sector or the private sector the majority of single mothers are low-income. Limited financial resources limit their income. This is reflected in the cramped and uncomfortable condition of the house. That has not taken into account other needs such as inadequate food and clothing. Poverty occurs due to factors of large number of dependents, doing jobs that do not generate high income especially in the informal sector, not employed, not doing side jobs, low level of skills and education and old age factors.

Conclusion

The subject of strain - arresting Devoutness is "conspicuously under-represented in development literature and in the policies and programmes in development institution" Ver Beek (2002). Once ecological - connect has been defined, the next steps are the action plans. Communication is a must on what ecological - connect means to the remaining core groups, which is then cascaded down to everyone in the institution. Strain - arresting Devoutness plays an important role in shaping a people's personality and way of handling strain or negativity. Strain - arresting Devoutness can be thought as an effective tool in molding the human resources as it creates a deep sense of

interconnectedness, to collectivism, which may be either physical in nature (e.g. group of people) or not physical (e.g. belief). Today's spiritual institution is deliberate in implementing a vision that is built around contributions to the betterment of mankind. It promotes work outside of the institution that contributes to and "gives back" to society through community and volunteer service. Spiritually aware managers and businesses consider themselves servants of employees, customers, and the community. Today's institutions are also seeking for a committed workforce as institutional commitment and emotional involvement in one's respective job profile is viewed as a business necessity. Investment in human resource development through institutional awareness must be given high priority in the overall ecological - connect strategy. Nevertheless, bringing ethics and spiritual values into the workplace can lead to increased productivity and profitability thereby generating better emotional bonding among employees. More than providing excellent service for customers, global service indicates a larger sense of responsibility to contribute to the betterment of the world. We believe that our arguments offer initial support for the value of viewing work according to the Engagement-Calling distinction and discusses the roles played by various factor in regulating the association of calling with human desire. The foregoing discussions posit and defend the assertion that the (Devoutness) processes of engagement-seeking and sustainable contentment are not only complementary phenomena, these constitute a unifying (Devoutness) process of making meaning in lives. The parameters that facilitate the (Devoutness) process of engagement-seeking also leverage the pursuit of contentment. This unification (Devoutness) process is clearly visible when engagement is viewed not as a means of survival, but as an effective instrument of fulfilling larger objective of our lives and society. Furthermore, as the environment is constantly changing, developing a flexible attitude

among the employees based on cognitive ability will help to reinforce the love for calling.

This paper explores the relationship of various constructs, and based on the literature review a conceptual analysis has been presented. The summary suggests that engagement as a calling is act as a key element for engaging an employee and in turn also boosts employee attachment with engagement. To have a better clarity of the relationship among the various factors, a conceptual framework has been suggested that can be investigated and validated in future research studies.

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FIDELTY RECONSTRUED: LOCATING GENDER ISSUES IN TRANSLATION OF *MIYEN DI BAARI* IN ENGLISH

Prof. SUCHETA PATHANIA

*Professor, Department of English
University of Jammu, Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir*

Abstract

Ever since the evolution of mankind and its initiation of communication, translation has been an integral part of man's life. Though its shape underwent many phases of transition, yet the purpose remained the same; communicating the message across to the receiver in a code that he/she is well versed in. Twentieth century research has found a renewed interest in the significance of translation as an academic discourse. Further advances in research have located many areas and issues that translation deals with gender being one of them. According to Chamberlain, "the issues relating to gender in the practice of translation are myriad, varying widely according to the type of text being translated, the language involved, cultural practices and countless other factors". (96) Translation theorists have talked mainly about three gender issues in translation: grammatical gender (gender assigned to nouns), semantic gender (male and female nouns) and social gender (gender assumed based on its noun use and milieu of its usage). In a study of translation vis-à-vis gender it becomes important to investigate the following: who, what, when and how of the translated text, interventions of various gender affiliations and constructions in translation, issues, and impact of gendered identity etc. (Von Flotow) The present paper investigates manifestation of gender in translation, grammatical and social systems of language, and what challenges the translators while translating gender-related texts. The text taken for analysis is a famous piece of Dogri literature translated into English language. Dogri is a recognized language in the eighth schedule of the Constitution of India. Dogri and English, both have grammatical gender, semantic genders, and social genders, though differences exist. In Dogri discourse gender is revealed not from the pronouns but syntactically.

Keywords: *translation, dogri, rajput, communication, gender, semantic.*

Introduction

Ever since the evolution of mankind and its initiation of communication, translation has been an integral part of man's life. Though its shape underwent many phases of transition yet the purpose remained the same; communicating the message across to the receiver in a code that he/she is well versed in. Twentieth century research has found a renewed interest in the significance of translation as an academic discourse. Further advances in research have located many areas and issue that translation deals with, gender being prominent of them. Though gender studies and translation studies are independent areas yet, as Louise Von Flotow opines that translating in the era of feminism has had a great impact on translation practice in form of technical

challenges, issues of intervention and censorship like politicized correction of the text, recuperation of the 'lost' texts and questioning the link between social stereotypes and linguistic forms (14-34). "The issues relating to gender in the practice of translation are myriad, varying widely according to the type of text being translated, the language involved, cultural practices and countless other factors" (Chamberlain, 96). The intersection of gender studies and translation studies has led to explore many issues related to transfer of meaning into a different cultural space, revelation of constructed gender differences through patriarchal language etc. Translation theorists have talked mainly about three gender issues in translation: grammatical gender (gender assigned to nouns), semantic gender (male and

female nouns) and social gender (gender assumed based on its noun use and milieu of its usage).

In a study of translation vis-à-vis gender it becomes important to investigate the following: who, what, when and how of the translated text, interventions of various gender affiliations and constructions in translation, issues and impact of gendered identity etc. Sherry Simon in *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* also argues that the process of translation must consider the gender of the translator and the author of the original text. The practice of translation has drawn various similes between a woman and translation in terms of issues of hierarchy, fidelity, creativity, under-estimation, compromise and negligence. Sherry Simon opines that "Both feminism and translation are concerned by the way <<secondariness>> comes to defined and canonized; both are tools for a critical understanding of difference as it is represented in language" (8). Chamberlain in *Gender and the Metaphors of Translation* also endorses that the western culture has ascribed creativity and originality to paternity and women have been relegated to the secondary roles (66). Various metaphors and sexist tropes have been used to describe translation: The author is the landlord and the translated text is only a tenant, translator as a seducer of the original text to beautify it and make it infidel in consonance with the French adage 'les belles infidels', 'rape of the text', etc. Flotow in her essay "Gender and Translation" while giving reference to Chamberlain writes that "the ancient and the ongoing derogatory link between women and translation, which has been expressed in countless metaphors used to describe translation over the centuries, has to do with a struggle for power or authority between the sexes that result directly from men's fears about women's sexual fidelity." (95) Susanne de Lotbiniere Harwood's *Rebelle et Infidèle* counters the misogyny of the conventional view to relate translation to patriarchal

view about women to show how "translation practices have occulted women's interests, ideas and presence in the texts..." (Flotow, 94). Quoting Sherry Simons that translation poses the question of "equivalence in difference", Asist. Cezara argues that translation is not only an operation of linguistic transfer, but also one that creates new textual forms, new forms of knowledge and introduces new cultural paradigms. So what interests in this process is the issue of difference.

The present paper investigates manifestation of gender in translation, grammatical and social systems of language, and what challenges the translators while translating gender-related texts, and how a translation becomes gendered. The text taken for analysis is a famous piece of Dogri literature translated into English language. Dogri is a recognized language in the VIIIth schedule of the Constitution of India. Dogri and English, both have grammatical gender, semantic genders and social genders, though differences exist. In Dogri discourse gender is revealed not from the pronouns but syntactically. This study analyses *Miyen Di Baari*, a short story written in Dogri by Krishna Prem and translated as *Miyan's Farm* in English, from a feminist perspective. The language and the style of the author and that of the translator shall also be investigated as Clifford E. Landers observes that in literary translation style can "make the difference between a lively, highly readable translation and a stilted, rigid, and artificial rendering that strips the original of its artistic and aesthetic essence, even its very soul." (7)

The selection of this story for translation by Dogri Sanstha is an appreciable step in the sense that the feminist narratives highlighting the historical issues of women subjugation, injustice and oppression need to be brought out to a wider reading public to generate a collective action to counter the patriarchal mindset. This story by a woman short story writer of Dogri literature is based on an excruciating social evil prevalent mostly among the families of Dogra Rajput

community. The Dogra Rajputs, a warrior class like any of its counterparts in any other part of India, have been instrumental in stretching borders of Jammu and Kashmir touching Tibet and including the entire area of Ladakh in its territory. As Rajputs would live and die for the pride of their nation and community, almost every Rajput family took pride in sending its sons to the Army. Mostly the habitation of this community was in far-flung villages, away from the reach of towns. Splendour, prestige, grandeur, grace, dignity, respect and above all, patriotism defined this community in olden times. They were locally known as *Miyans*, the landlords. Even those who did not own farms lived with the same reverence. Miyans were known as uncompromising community as far as their esteem, honor and veneration was concerned. They could never ever think of bowing to anyone, leave aside their enemies. In pursuit of quenching this thirst for maintaining the sense of pride, their communities developed few practices which effected women the most. *Purdah system, Sati Pratha, Child marriage, and killing of the girl infants* were the most common practices that not only made this community prone to heinous crimes against women but also made the society daughterless. Many Rajput villages had no daughters of their own. Their sons were married to the girls from other states, mostly Himachal Pradesh or Punjab.

Miyans' Farm has been woven against this backdrop of crime against women. The daughters born to Dogra Rajput women were buried alive to save the prestige of the family. Many such narratives are prevalent in the Duggar land where mostly the child was packed off to the burial place in their farms by the women of the family as agents of Patriarchy, though in *Miyans' Farm* it is the father who disposes off the child. Whatever, this pseudo-honor thirst killed girls brutally and later revered them as *Bua Rani*, local deities. The story under study revolves around such a character Rano Boo who was buried live by her father but, as luck would have it, she survived

because of Padamnabh, Badde Miyan's confidant and Rano Boo's foster father who raised the girl, ironically, in the Haveli of Badde Miyan only. Though they had dispatched their own daughter but the Zamindar couple loved Rano Boo as Padamnabh's daughter. The writer's expression and syntactical brevity in a proper Dogra idiom speaks of Boo's journey with such a force that the reader cannot help feeling a part of the story. Her effort of striking a contemporary relevance of the old practice by linking it with the current practice of female feticide has been widely appreciated. Another shift that attracts attention from Raano's burial to the abortion by Krishan's wife is that Miyan ji, a patriarch buries the child alive but in today's world it is done by women themselves, well aware of all the pros and cons of this crime.

Women narratives have been dealt with more dexterously by women ever since they have got a room of their own. Though Dogri women writing is not much old yet the representation of women in the Dogri folklore makes an interesting study for research. The journey of Dogri women writing started in the post independence era pioneered by Lalita Mehta and followed by Padma Sachdev, Ved Kumari Ghai, Champa Sharma, Veena Gupta, Shashi Pathania, Nirmal Vikram and many more but only after the women started being educated. Though in the Indian context it has been men who initiated discourse of women empowerment and eradication of crimes against women yet it is a living reality that women writers have dealt with the issues of women more honestly.

Translation of a literary piece entails many challenges to the translator. The most important aspect in this field has been the eligibility of the translator; his/her education, equal knowledge of source language and target language, linguistic prejudice, socio-historical preferences, cultural orientation, and above all his/her gender. There might be diversity of translation theories but all opinions

unanimously agree that the end of all efforts should be an honest translation. *Miyan's Farm* has been translated as a part of the translation project of Shri Mata Vaishno Shrine Board to promote the selected Dogri literary works through their publication into English. It has been translated by Suman Kumar Sharma, a seasoned and reputed translator, hailing from Poonch area of the state with a slightly different cultural set up. Though apparently the story in translation appears most appealing to its readers of English, yet some inbuilt gaps attenuate the pleasure of reading of a scholar-translator when this translation is tested through the method of back translation and is looked through a feminist's lens.

The biggest risk that an English translation poses to the original text is that English reading community, which comprises a big chunk of reading public in India, will consider English version true, and if there are gaps in translation all those hidden defects become permanent features of the critical discourse. In this sense the translation is seen as a process that occurs through mediation of ideology and identity.

After a thorough study of *Miyan's Farm*, its back translation and its comparison with the original text, it was revealed that it could not escape the subjective, cultural and gendered intervention.

The story in translation opens as:

She was a woman of ripe years. Everyone in the village called her Raano Boo and she indeed was **aunt** to the whole village. (40)

This opening tells us about the physical appearance of Raano Boo who was in her ripe years. Looking at the context and back translation, the SL writer has supplemented this physical aspect with an adjectival phrase 'aged kind of a woman' that tells more about this ripe age as an offshoot of the tribulations of her life. It is not necessary that one should look old in ripe years; good health, peace of mind and comforts of life may make a person deceive

one's age. But it is not in case of Raano Boo. Her birth itself has been a death for her, and a life granted by luck turns out to be nothing but another death in life; losing her mother and then her husband and spending entire life looking at that occasionally lit clay lamp which is, ironically offered to her own grave. In a way, the writer suggests that the death of women is more celebrated than a life which finds no happiness despite sacrifice. The emphasis and extension of physical description by the SL writer carries significance and direct relevance to the narrative that unfolds later. The translation of Raano Boo as "aunt" in these lines also demands attention. Raano Boo is a culturally rooted honorific and regardful address to the daughters of the village. It has been a Dogra tradition, especially of Rajput community, to address all daughters of the village as Raano or Boo or sometimes Raano Boo. Raano is an inflected form of Rani which connotes *Princess* in English, though literally it means a queen. No woman could be addressed by name: Daughters were *Raano, Bubu, Bubri, Rani or Boo*, Wives deserved honorific pronoun *Tus*, Daughter-in-law was *Laadi* – addressing a girl with her proper name was perhaps insulting. On the other hand this generalization could also be taken as negation of a woman's individuality and perpetuation of gendered ideology of defining women in relation to men. That is why the protagonist of this story was "Rano Boo" for the whole village-always a daughter because this is what she had to finally opt for in absence of any other options. SL text engages the reader, with its punctuation and repeated stress on Raano Boo because she could never be more than that. Being in ivory towers cannot promise happiness to anyone. The TT translates Raano as 'aunt', a more distant term. A re-translation of these lines may be as:

In her ripe years she was an old looking woman. Everyone called her Raano Boo. She was the Raano Boo of this village.

Next the TT Records

Having lost her mother in infancy, she was married off as a child. But on demise of her husband, no one among her in-laws had given her quarter. Forlorn, Raano had returned to her village, there to live permanently with her father. (40)

Two points arise here: one that she was a victim of early marriage which the ST does not endorse upon back translation. Second, the implication is that Raano had to be married off as a child because of her mother's death in her (Boo's) infancy. Moreover, an important temporal fact also has been dropped. Her husband had died after three months of her marriage following which she had to come back to her father's house. She could not leave her father as her mother had died in her early years. Also, the fact, that she did not go anywhere else leaving her lonely father, has been dropped off. It has been a fact transcending time and space that daughters, especially in Indian context have proved to be more loyal, loving and caring for the parents than sons. Raano Boo, too, did not leave him. A re-translation will be:

Married too, but three months later after the demise of her husband, she had returned to her parental abode, and then remained here only. No one at her in-laws owned her. Back home, she did not go anywhere leaving her lonely father. Her mother had died while she was in her early years.

Later in the story when Raano Boo feels as if Miyan Ji were pushing her out of the haveli the TT reports: "She averted her eyes in disgust" (43). Here again the meaning is distorted. The ST records the agony experienced by Raano. It is not actually the conscious action of averting her eyes in disgust, rather the eyes are full of hatred generated out of her stormy experience; an involuntary, unconscious action. The re-translation may be: "She withdrew her hatred-laden eyes"

The translated version is replete with many important omissions. The location of the Miyan's haveli, which has been emphasized in the SL text, stands omitted in translation. Later in the text, the writer talks of the secrecy of the Haveli. In anyway, no secret would leak out to the village. This fact becomes important in two ways: First, the fact of the murder of the girl child could be successfully kept hidden because of the location of the Haveli and second, the habit of the inmates to do things discreetly is revealed. The TL text writes:

It was seldom that anything concerning the haveli reached the village. (40)

After the back translation it meant that it is 'the things' of the Haveli which were kept safe, rather than its 'secrets'. Moreover, the translated version is unduly longer than the ST. This line can be re-translated as:

The matters of the haveli could seldom reach the village.

While tracing the basis of awe-inspiring aura of the Miyan's family SL text mentions the phrase "Rajputi splendor" which has been dropped in the TT. When Padamnabh is narrating the child-burial incident in SL text we come to know that Padamnabh was asked to accompany him whereas TT tells that the father went all alone: "He wrapped you in a blanket and holding a lantern in his hand went towards the Farm" (42). The word 'khandani' has been translated as 'aristocratic' which has altogether different connotations. Even a poor man, from the lowest strata of the society can be a 'khandani' which is more of family ethics than a political position.

The sentence "The haveli was run on old customs and rituals" (40) could be replaced by "The upright old customs and rituals would circumscribe the haveli".

Look at this line

Raano exerted herself fully to make their stay comfortable, but age-worn as she was she could nothing much. (41)

ST writer means that she is not able to do much, not due to her old age but because she has been subjected to the tribulations of life, attenuated by circumstances, whereas the TT shows that her being age-worn is the reason. In the sentence "In the empty Haveli, there was no one with him but Raano" (41), the haveli is accommodating both, the father and the daughter, whereas in SL text Padamnabh has been accompanied by two lonely, helpless, deserted companions, Raano and the Haveli. A re-translation goes as:

"There was no one with him but Raano and the empty haveli."

Broadly speaking style is nothing but a writer's mode of expression intertwined with what David Crystal calls 'Ideolect', the linguistic system of the single speaker. A translated text should try to be as near to the style of the SL as possible.. Clifford E. Landers also endorses this idea: "The translators should adapt to the style of each author translated- now terse, now rambling, sometimes abstruse, but always faithful to the original as circumstances permit" (Landers, 90). A beautiful description of Raano's inadequate emotional pace, rendered by age and circumstances, to feel and respond on being revealed her story of birth, death and rebirth has just been just paraphrased in the TT affecting the message of the ST.

TT says: "She did not know whether she was crying for Padamnabh or the haveli" (43) whereas the ST traces the journey of tears that roll down her eyes, caught in the wrinkles, like a perplexed traveler at the crossroads, searching for their existence. Who should they turn to, Padamnabh or haveli? The beauty of this literary and syntactical expression of ST that uses personification and imagery interspersed with a mental fix of identity has been lost in a dreary expression of TT. A re-translation would reveal the following:

At last the eyes overflowed. Two tears trickling down the eyes of Rani Boo were caught in the

wrinkles of her face, as if they were looking for their existence on this turn, pondering which side to flow, towards Padamnabh or towards haveli?

Here the ST has used a gender neutral pronoun 'noha'de' which is used for everyone in Dogri; male or female, animal, bird or human in the same manner. In this case of grammatical gender, the source language does not encode gender distinctions in pronouns; it is embedded in the syntactical expression. But the target language does have this gender system though it is reflected only in case of third-person possessive and reflexive cases. When the gender is not specified in the source language the translation becomes problematic there is a possibility that it could change the context in the target language. So the translator has to be cautious enough while translating it. The context makes it clear that this possessive pronoun has been used for Raano, and not for tears which are assigned masculine social gender, so it could be translated as 'her'. But the omission of this beautiful expression hampers the true understanding of the text to a non-native reader.

SL text employs repetition as a figure of speech to express the consistent flight of time in this sentence "Time kept flying, flying away" but the TT omits the use of this sentence using stylistic device.

Inadequate tenses can also hamper the true understanding of the translated text and the original message of the text may be lost. The omniscient narrator of the story uses present tense occasionally shifting to past tense in flashbacks. Change of tense dilutes the narrative technique of the ST.

Once in a while, Miyan ji's youngest son Kuldeep Singh came on a visit with his wife. Raano exerted herself fully to make their stay comfortable, but age-worn as she was she could do nothing much. (41)

The TT has used past indefinite tense in the translated text whereas in SL text the writer has used present indefinite tense. The line "Everything comes to an end with time" (43) is a universal expression in

the present indefinite tense whereas in ST the writer meant the past indefinit. It could be translated as "Everything came to an end". While describing Raano's condition after father's death, the TT says: "Burdened with age, Raano passed her days in solitude" (45). This statement is a part of the omniscient narration which tells of her current position. Moreover, it is she who is clinging to the old age, not the old age has been imposed on her. A re-translation would be like: "Clinging to her old age, she passes her days all alone". Even when Kuldip Singh arrives at Haveli with his wife, the TT reports in the past indefinite instead of present perfect.

So a close reading of *Miyen Di Baari* written in Dogri and its translated version *Miyan's Farm* produced by Dogri Sanstha reveals that since English and Dogri differ in encoding gender in their lexical and grammatical systems, a thorough knowledge of both the cultures is a mandatory condition for honest translation. The cultural context of the usage of these languages also differs, especially in context of gender depiction, language employed etc. Translation often turns out to be a deceptive process. Though no translation can ever be declared as a final draft and a single text can have multiple versions of translation, yet a true translation will have to be near the SL text and aptly communicative. No single model of translation has been found final and complete. Here also the mixed model of translation could be seen. The translator is seen engrossed in metaphrase and paraphrase, formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence etc. yet the unconscious perplexity between transparency and fidelity, as Friedrich Schleiermacher has also talked about in his book *On the Different Methods of Translation* (1813), has betrayed the endeavor and created ambiguities. This study concludes that some social, cultural and lexical gaps have intervened silently creating discrepancies between the two texts involved. Language is influenced and shaped by culture. A gap in language creates cultural gaps in the translation process. The

TT has been found either to condense, simplify or omit some content in its endeavor to make things easier for the readers, but this counts for a damage done to this women text. While translating a text the translator makes thousands of decisions regarding punctuation, nouns, title, mood, grimace and gestures embedded in the language of the text. For this again the eligibility of the translator and his idiolect need attention. However good they are, no two translators will make the same choice as their own style and idiolect differ, though ideally translators strive to have no style (Landers, 90). David Crystal's observation from *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* shall be quite relieving for conclusion: "Probably no two people are identical in the way they use language or react to the usage of others. Minor differences in phonology, grammar, and vocabulary are normal, so that everyone has, to a limited extent, a 'personal dialect'." (cited in Landers, 90) Whatever the theories say, the accuracy of meaning and expressivity shall not be affected in translation. Gender in translation and gendered translation in Dogri literature is an unexplored area but a significant one so that the near-true versions of the narratives representing and represented by women are brought to the non-Dogri speaking world.

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AN ANALYSIS OF NOVEMBER IS THE MONTH OF MIGRATIONS THROUGH THE LENS OF MARGINALIZATION

SONU KUMAR MEHTA

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
A. S. College, Deoghar, Jharkhand*

Abstract

The present study focuses on the issue of marginalization in Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar's short story November is the Month of Migrations. The theme of marginalization as manifested itself in its various aspects has been dealt with in this paper. Talamai Kisku, a twenty years old Santhal girl, belongs to an extremely poor family and her needs compels her to move outside to earn bread for herself and her family. While moving to Bardhaman from Santhal Pargana for some employment she heads for a railway station along with the other villagers where her hunger for food took her to the RPF soldier who exploited her physically. Both the characters are not just individuals but the types. The RPF soldier represents the exploiter in general, who belongs to a higher social strata, economically well-to-do and intellectually superior. On the other hand Talamai Kisku represents the exploited class in general, whose characteristics are contradictory and inferior to that of the so-called exploiter. This superiority and inferiority complex generated within the characters is the outcome of the orthodox custom and the culture which are still influencing the minds of the individuals. The issue of marginalization explored in this paper encompasses different sets of marginalization such as Social Marginalization, Cultural Marginalization, Gender Marginalization and Economic Marginalization. The theories of subalternity, racism, stereotyping and hegemony have been employed to deal with this paper.

Keywords: *marginalization, identity crisis, racism, subalternity, feminism, stereotyping.*

Introduction

The term Marginalization refers to the process of barring individuals, groups, or communities to the periphery of society, often resulting in their exclusion, oppression, or deprivation of resources, rights, and opportunities. There can be varied forms of marginalization depending on various factors like social, economic, political, cultural, geographic, psychological, or intersectional. Due to marginalization, some major consequences could arise such as social exclusion and isolation, economic inequality and poverty, limited access to education, healthcare and resources, psychological distress and trauma, loss of cultural identity and heritage, reduced social mobility and opportunities, and others. Fiona Robards and others write-

“Marginalisation is both a process and an experience, consequent upon unequal power relationships where dominant groups within society

are privileged over other groups. Those who become “othered” are pushed to the peripheries or the “margins” of mainstream society. This process can involve multiple forms of exclusion, lowering participation in education, work and in healthcare access leading to lower health and social outcomes. Marginalisation is a socio-cultural lens for understanding why some groups experience disadvantage and some groups within society are privileged over other groups.”

For India it was not an ordinary task to set itself free from the clutches of the colonial power, it took countless efforts to set itself free from the white supremacy. India has been a diverse country where people from different religions, castes and socio-economic classes reside. People belonging to different sociocultural backgrounds foster a particular ideology. The difference of geopolitical setting also creates a psychological and cultural gap. The

difference of culture splits people apart. There had been a number of ideologies that obtained the psyche of multitudes regarding the free nation. But the things did not occur as it had been expected, the end of the Colonial reign did not fulfill the expected result. The end of English reign was not the end of class distinction. Since the centuries one section of Indian society, was not treated as human beings at all. A number of postcolonial critics came up with several ideas upon different aspects of postcolonialism. Jharkhand, a tribal region, had to face the atrocities, the Adivasis suffered a lot in the hands of the upper caste people and the suffering was highest and the cruelest in the case of the Adivasi women. The women of the clans had such a misery and hardships that one finds it quite difficult to encompass those miseries and hardships through any particular piece of literature. Their pain and suffering is so immense that it inspired me to conduct a brief study of this story against the backdrop of the burning social issues like marginalization, racism, and feminism.

When one thinks about marginalization in the case of Adivasis then all the major forms of marginalization reflect out. If one talks of social marginalization then it is evident from the past practices that Adivasis have always been restricted to the periphery of society. Adivasis have often been restricted from participating in any sort of social gatherings. In the case of cultural marginalization, Adivasi culture has often been considered to be the meanest one, their culture and practices have often been scorned by the higher class people. Their culture of eating, dressing, and others have often been scorned. In the same way, if one observes concerning the past then one can understand that Adivasis have been marginalized in all the possible ways.

Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar, winner of Sahitya Academy Yuva Puruskar, a doctor by profession and a renowned Santhal writer is well known for his

portrayal of the predicaments of the socially, culturally, and economically downtrodden people and the Santhals and Adivasis. He is the author of the amazing novel *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey*. His second book that made him popular among the readers was *The Adivasi Will Not Dance: Stories* published in the year 2015. With the publication of this book he got into a controversial situation as it portrayed the Adivasis in a bad light. With the rising controversy this book was banned by the government of Jharkhand, though the ban was later uplifted when people were convinced that the sufferings and atrocities portrayed in his stories were true to some extent. He has written several mind-blowing fictional books. Some of his major books are- *My Father's Garden*, *Jwala Kumar and the Gift of Fire: Adventures in Champakbagh*, and *Who's There? (Hook Books): It's Not a Book, It's a Hook!*.

The Adivasi Will Not Dance: Stories is a collection of ten poignant short stories. It was published in January 2015 by Speaking Tiger publication. In the literary review of this book, it has been written in the daily newspaper The Hindu- "Shekhar, one of the five writers shortlisted for *The Hindu Prize 2017*, produces a no-holds-barred work on the life of the marginalized that seems less fiction and more the stuff of life. He doesn't veil these voices in literary flourishes or what he calls "classic literary tropes". His characters are flesh and blood, the stories difficult to stomach, the language brutal." Each of the stories in this collection manifest the sufferings and the traumas of the Adivasis. *November is the Month of Migrations* is the third short story from this critically acclaimed book. This research article is going to deal with the sufferings and oddities that arises with the protagonist of this particular story.

Main Argument

Talamai Kisku, a twenty years old Santhal girl, whose family converted to Christianity yet she did not get a proper education under missionaries, as was usually

promised by them. Her family would have converted to Christianity with the hope of a better lifestyle and better future. Being a girl from an extremely poor Santhal family was not less than a curse for her, yet she managed her lifestyle well enough to convert her condition into a norm and she never felt irritated or anxious about her condition. She is the epitome of Spivak's *Subaltern* and being a subaltern she has no voice of her own and she cannot speak for herself. Here we confront the loss of identity, the circumstances had dwindled her to such an extent that on being physically assaulted for the sake of a morsel of food was not at all surprising to her. Being a girl from Santhal clan she is treated worse than the ugly creatures. When we go through the story the effects of marginality ooze up to the surface. Most of the people, often belonging to the upper castes and religions, see them as such ladies who "do this work for food and money" (Shekhar 40)

The R.P.F. soldier, a Hindu, belongs to a higher social rank and here his appearance is enough to express that he is superior to the Santhal people and he is an epitome of the patriarchal head, rather a cruel exploiter, who is a symbol of Colonial power, who takes the liberty of the situation and satisfies his libido. He did not force her but he took advantage of the situation. As per his duty he was supposed to safeguard the belonging of rail and the people present in the railway premises, but he did contrary to it. He is quite aware of the custom and social setup and he also knows the exact moment when he should hunt for a girl, a poor Santhal girl, who will give in to the situation and satisfy his libido and will not speak even a word. The same thing happened with Talamai Kisku, she did as he wanted just for the sake of her hunger and at the end of it she got two pakoras to eat and fifty rupees to keep her mouth shut. His comment upon the Santhal women, "... you Santhal women are made for this only" (Shekhar 41), shows his mindset. He is a man with stereotypical mindset who has a preconceived notion about the

Santhal women, and this enables him to treat Talamai Kisku as a debauched girl who is solely made for the purpose of entertainment and satisfaction of the people like him.

"One is not born, but rather becomes, woman" (Beauvoir 14), a renowned statement by Simone De Beauvoir is very much appealing in the case of Talamai Kisku. The social upbringing in this story has been prejudiced and the patriarchal setup has monitored the women in such a way that Talamai found herself helpless to break away from this setup and decided to give it up and to live as the socio-cultural setup wanted her to. The liberal politician Carl Welcker, an elected member of Frankfurt parliament once said, "Women, the weaker, dependent and timid, requires the protection of man. Her sphere is the home, the care of the children, the nurturing of the family..." (India 17) The statement of Carl Welcker exhibits the social set-up and the mindset of people in his contemporary society and this statement is very much valid in the case of Talamai kisku too. When Carl Welcker made this comment then he was talking about the women of the First World Nations, it means if the women of the First World nations were expected to practice such demeaning domestic activities then the condition and expectations from an Adivasi girl belonging to an Adivasi land of a Third World nation is quite dreadful to imagine. The case of Talamai became worst because she belonged to a socially marginalized class, besides this, she belonged to such a family where maintaining one's existence was itself a big challenge. Managing two times of meal was even a challenge for such backward family. She is the epitome of the other, the inferior, the subaltern, the periphery.

The characteristics of the RPF soldier makes him to stand for an Occident and Talamai on the other hand stands for an Orient. He finds himself in such a state that he can judge the character of Talamai as a barbaric, a debauched and a stolid girl who has no

dream, no desire, no right, no emotion and not even her self-respect. The thought process within that RPF soldier must be the outcome of the socio-cultural setup in which he had grown up. A child learns things not by learning but by experiencing and he learnt the difference between him and Talamai by the practices that he had observed in his older generation. The poor economic and socio-cultural identity of Talamai gave him the confidence enough to exploit her and to judge her as a commodity. His comment upon Talamai and other Santhal women shows his preconceived stereotypical notion towards her and the women belonging to her clan.

From the postcolonial perspective marginalization means exclusion. There are two related terms in it, first is margin or periphery and the second is the center. In this story we find the RPF soldier as an epitome of the center, he belongs to a Hindu race and on the same time he holds a government job that entices him to feel superior to a girl who is an Adivasi and belongs to an extremely poor working class family. Her socio-cultural conditioning has developed a sense of being marginalized within her and she simply accepts it without any resistance. Another reason of her bowing down to the system was the fact, she was well aware of, that she is not that much powerful who can break this age old custom. She knew that she belonged to a weaker section of the society. She consoles herself by thinking that others are also going through the same and so she agrees to surrender to the consequences without any questions.

The preconceived notion within the RPF soldier for Talamai Kisku is not his self-generated notion but the notion drawn out of the age old custom. As Manusmriti, an ancient legal text, divides people into four Varnas. They are Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vyshyas and Shudras. It was believed that these four Varnas represent four different parts of the body of the God. The Brahmans being the highest of all Varnas while the Shudras were amongst the lowest

of them. The Adivasis belong to the fourth Varna and they were supposed to be the dirt cleaners and the untouchables. There is another opinion for women in the Manusmriti, according to Manu, women are similar to any property who is owned by her master and they were treated as slaves or Shudras. It forces the women to be dependent upon their fathers, husbands and sons forever. The time has changed, the present scenario is different from what it was earlier in the times of Manu but the sufferings of the Adivasis and the women belonging to the lower section has not come to an end. Indian society is still divided into graded inequality widely based on religion and other aspects like caste, race, class, gender or faith. The Shudras are the inferiors and the Shudra women are the worst of all.

Conclusion

The Dalits have been suffering the pain of being marginalized on the basis of either religion, cast, culture, custom or of economic background. The Santhal women on the other hand suffer from the same sting but their pain becomes deeper because they suffer for being the inferior to their male counterparts too. They have to undergo such a practice that does not allow them to outwit their male representers who exist as their fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons. There is a long catalogue of the reasons of their suffering. Talamai Kisku is the victim of this system and she gives in to the situation without making any effort to set herself free of it, since she knows that to oppose is to suffer more. Her predicament is the outcome of the double marginalization that she faces in the cultural setup of the society. The language that Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar has used in this short story is quite harsh. The usage of harsh language does not signify that the author is violent in nature. The language signifies the intense torture inflicted upon an Adivasi girl like Talamai Kisku and the sense of donning in an upper class character like the R.P.F. soldier portrayed in this story.

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HYDROBIOLOGICAL AND MICROSCOPIC STUDIES OF THE WHITE SPONGE *EPHYDATIA MUELLERI* (DEMONSPONGIAE) LIEBERKÜHN, 1856 GROWING IN A FRESH WATER COMMUNITY FISH TANK

MOMIN SHAKIR

*Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology
Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai, Maharashtra*

MOMIN HEENA

*Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology
G. M. Momin Women's College, Bhiwandi, Maharashtra*

Abstract

Ephydatia muelleri has emerged as a significant model organism in the field of animal science research. This freshwater sponge is commonly located in the lakes, ponds, and streams across India. The unexpected and spontaneous emergence of *Ephydatia muelleri* in a freshwater community tank prompted the current study, which aimed to investigate its appearance, growth (both vegetative and reproductive), and development in relation to water quality. Light microscopy was employed to examine the gemmules and various types of spicules present in the sponge, while growth measurements (Vertical Length = VL and Horizontal Length = HL) were recorded using a ruler over a three-month period from January to March 2024. Hydro-biological assessments were conducted following standard methodologies. The findings revealed that the hydrological parameters observed were optimal, thereby facilitating the growth and development of the sponge within the freshwater fish tank. Notably, during the vegetative phase, the predominant cells identified were scleroblasts, which secrete mono-actinal spicules, while gemmules were found to be abundant during the reproductive phase.

Keywords: hydrobiology, ephydatia, fish tank, microscopy, growth.

Acknowledgement

The authors express their gratitude to the principal of Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai, for the support and resources provided during the course of this research. Additionally, the authors affirm that no funding was received from any sources for this work.

Introduction

Sponges are classified within the Phylum Porifera, which translates to 'pore-bearer,' and encompasses a distinctive group of aquatic organisms that were not definitively categorized within the animal kingdom until the early 19th century. This group, commonly referred to as sponges, represents one of the most ancient lineages of aquatic animals, whose life

processes are entirely reliant on the water that circulates through their bodies. Sponges are categorized under the division Parazoa, which includes the simplest multicellular organisms characterized primarily by epithelial cells and mesenchyme. Notably, these organisms lack the organization and coordination of specialized cells into distinct tissues or organs. Currently, approximately 5,000 living species are recognized within the phylum Porifera. All sponge species are sessile, exhibit limited movement, lack a digestive tract, and possess a complex canal system supported by ostia and osculum. Additionally, they feature unique choanocytes (collar cells) and possess a skeletal structure composed of spicules or spongin fibers.

Their remarkable regenerative capabilities further distinguish them within the animal kingdom.

Sponges exhibit a global distribution, predominantly inhabiting marine environments where they are found in abundance across all oceans, extending from the equatorial regions to polar areas, and from coastal tide-lines to significant depths. An exception to this widespread marine presence is a minor family known as *Spongillidae*, which includes approximately 150 species that thrive in freshwater habitats such as ponds, lakes, and streams worldwide. Each sponge species is characterized by a specific bathymetric range (Kotpal, 1919-1912).

Sponges offer numerous benefits to humans and animals, having been used since prehistoric times. The ancient Greeks employed dried sponges for hygiene, cleaning, and padding for armor. Ecologically, sponges are vital habitats for various organisms, including crustaceans and Nudibranch molluscs, which feed on them. However, some sponges can be harmful, suffocating other organisms by overgrowing them. For instance, boring sponges like *Cliona* damage the shells of oysters, clams, and barnacles, posing a threat to oyster beds. *Demospongiae* represents the most extensive class of sponges, encompassing a wide array of species with intricate and diverse structures. This class is characterized by its highly organized nature and current dominance within the sponge phylum. The majority of species within this class possess either monaxon or tetraxon siliceous spicules, spongin fibers, or a combination of both, which contribute to their skeletal framework. Additionally, they exhibit a Rhagon-type canal system and are classified into three subclasses: *Tetractinellida*, *Monaxonida*, and *Keratoso*. Furthermore, this class is divided into seven orders: *Myxospongida*, *Carnosa*, *Choristida*, *Hadromerina*, *Halichondrina*, *Poecilosclerina*, and *Haplosclerina*.

Freshwater *Demosponge*, *Ephydatia muelleri*, exhibits a cosmopolitan distribution and is commonly

found in the rivers and lakes of India. This species displays a variety of colors, including green, yellow, and brown; however, it predominantly appears green when illuminated, a phenomenon attributed to its symbiotic relationship with green algae. The sponge's surface is characterized by a rough texture due to its undulating form, and it possesses numerous ostia and oscula. The oscula are covered by a delicate, translucent membrane. *Ephydatia muelleri* thrives in freshwater environments that maintain a clean water flow, along with appropriate pH levels and temperatures (Kenny, Francis, Rivera, Vicéns et al., 2020). Given its remarkable adaptability to various freshwater habitats, along with its sexual dimorphism and the production of genetically identical gemmules, this species presents a valuable opportunity for scientific research.

Diwanshah Lake ranks as the second largest freshwater body in Bhiwandi, following Varhala Lake. Bhiwandi is situated in the Thane District within the Konkan Division of Maharashtra, India, approximately 20 kilometers (12 miles) to the northeast of Mumbai and 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) northeast of Thane city. This urban area is included in the Mumbai metropolitan region. The geographical coordinates of Bhiwandi are 19.2873° N latitude and 73.2518° E longitude, which can also be expressed as 19° 18' 0" N and 73° 4' 0" E (Heena & Shakir, 2023). The city is located at an average elevation of 24 meters above mean sea level (MSL) and experiences an annual rainfall of 3224 mm. Numerous researchers have documented the presence of sponges in the freshwater ecosystems of Maharashtra. For instance, Kakavipure & Yeragi (2007) identified the freshwater sponge *Eunepius carteri* in the Khativali-Vehloli Lake near Shahpur in Thane District, Maharashtra. Carter, 1849 provided a detailed description of freshwater species found on the island of Bombay. Tanopi 1964 conducted studies on freshwater sponges in Pune, while Soota, Baskaran and Saxena 1983, Soota, Pattanayak and Saxena 1983 and Soota, 1991

explored freshwater sponges in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and India more broadly. Additionally, Penny and Racek (1968) contributed to the global understanding of freshwater sponges.

Materials and Method

A 20-liter glass aquarium, measuring 15.27 x 8.48 x 8.85 inches, was established in the laboratory near a window to house various fish species, including kissing gourami, Surf tetra, Red eye tetra, Tiger barb, and Hockey stick tetra. The aquarium's substrate consisted of 2 inches of desalinated sea sand, complemented by stones and aquatic plants sourced from Diwanshah Lake in Bhiwandi. Water aeration was maintained using an XY-380 large sponge filter for 18 hours each day. Following the introduction of the aquatic plants, specifically *Hydrilla*, and stones from the lake, the sponge species *Ephydatia muelleri* began to proliferate in the lower left corner of the tank and was identified according to the classification outlined in Systema Porifera (Jhon, Hooper, Soest and Philippe, 2002), as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. The growth of *Ephydatia muelleri* was monitored monthly over a three-month period from January to March 2024, utilizing a ruler to mark growth lines on the exterior of the glass tank with a glass marker. Additionally, hydrobiological parameters, including dissolved oxygen (DO), temperature, pH, salinity, phosphate, and nitrate levels, were systematically recorded each month following standard procedures. Light microscopic examinations of the sponge's spicules and gemmules were conducted by sectioning small samples of the sponge and observing them under a 10X magnification microscope.

Result and Discussion

The hydrobiological parameters were assessed in triplicate, and the mean values were taken into account. The hydrobiological parameters observed are detailed in Table 1.

Table No. 1 Hydrobiological Studies of Fish Tank Water

Parameters	Methods	January	February	March
DO (mg/l)	Winklers iodometric method	8.5	8.8	9
Temperature (Centigrade)	Thermometric method	22.5	25	26
pH	Digital P ^H meter	6.5	6.8	6.9
Salinity (mg/l)	Argentometric method	4.4	4.7	4.7
Phosphate (mg/l)	Colorimetry by using ascorbic acid	4.3	4.3	4.5
Nitrate (mg/l)	NEDD method	5.5	5	5.18

One of the critical physical properties of an ecosystem is temperature, as it significantly influences various water quality parameters, as well as the Gemmulation and germination processes of freshwater sponges (Annandale, 1911). Nonetheless, certain endogenous factors also contribute to these processes. While we did not conduct a detailed examination of the phenology of Gemmule formation in this study, our observations indicated that the Gemmulation period typically commences around the onset of summer, specifically from mid-February to March, when water temperatures range from 25 to 26 degrees Celsius, without any vegetative growth occurring. By the end of March, due to the summer conditions, the sponge was found to contain numerous Gemmules embedded within its skeletal structure (spicules), as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6. During January and February, characterized by winter temperatures of 22.5 to 25 degrees Celsius, the sponge exhibited vegetative growth (HL = 5 cm and VL = 4.5 cm) with no noticeable Gemmulation activity. Microscopic examination of a small sponge sample under a light microscope (40X) revealed the production of numerous monoactinal spicules and scleroblast cell, which support growth on the flat inner surface of the tank, fully submerged in water, thereby serving as a skeletal framework for the sponge (Figures 3 and 4). The sponge appears as a delicate

white flat crust layer aligned with the inner glass surface, displaying numerous small canaliculi that likely form part of its canal system (Figure 3). By the end of March, the sponge's entire body was inundated with numerous Gemmules, giving it a white appearance initially. Additionally, the sponge exhibited a greenish hue due to the proliferation of symbiotic green algae within its structure (Figure 7). Kakavipure and Yeragi, 2007 briefly noted the presence of symbiotic algae contributing to a brown, green, or yellow coloration in the sponge *Eunapies carteri* found in a lake in Maharashtra.

During the three-month study period from January to March, sponges exhibited growth reaching approximately 5 cm in height and 4.5 cm in width. Notably, the most significant growth occurred in January and February, coinciding with water temperatures ranging from 22.5 to 25 degrees Celsius. However, in March, when the water temperature increased to 26 degrees Celsius, the sponges' vegetative growth ceased. This rise in temperature may have created an unfavorable environment for the sponges, prompting them to produce Gemmules, as illustrated in Figure 7. Additionally, the relationship between the fish and the sponges is characterized by mutualism, with both organisms coexisting without causing harm to one another.

Conclusion

The introduction of the aquatic plant *Hydrilla* and stones from Diwanshah Lake in Bhiwandi city, Maharashtra, likely facilitated the introduction of Gemmules of *Ephydatia muelleri* into the fish tank. The environmental conditions within the tank, particularly temperature and other water parameters, were conducive to the growth of these Gemmules. Initial growth was observed during the first two months (January and February), followed by the sponge's production of Gemmules in March as temperatures increased. Annandale, 1911 noted that

sponges thrive in aquatic environments characterized by a balanced interplay of light and shade, adequate support structures, and minimal disturbances, such as those caused by the draining of ponds. The phenomenon of Gemmule formation is intricate and noteworthy, prevalent across all sponge species. Our research indicates that Gemmule formation is primarily influenced by temperature, as demonstrated in Table 1 and Figures 5, 6, and 7. Other water quality parameters, including dissolved oxygen, pH, nitrate, phosphate, and salinity, remained relatively stable with only minor fluctuations throughout the study period. The sponge exhibited significant growth during January and February, marked by an increase in the production of supporting cells, Scleroblast and spicules, while March was distinguished by the process of Gemmulation. This remarkable adaptability may enhance the sponges' resilience to the rapidly changing conditions of their aquatic environments. Harrison, 1975 documented the germination of Gemmules from Australian *spongillid* species following a prolonged dry period of 25 years. Freshwater sponges are distributed across all biogeographic regions, with the exception of Antarctica, and they occupy a range of lentic and lotic freshwater environments (Maconi, Murgia and Pronzato, 2008). A particularly noteworthy evolutionary adaptation observed in freshwater (as well as certain marine) sponges is the development of dormant structures known as 'Gemmules.' These gemmules are generated by sponges in reaction to adverse environmental conditions. The ability of sponges to reproduce asexually through Gemmule formation provides them with a significant advantage in enduring the challenging environments of freshwater lakes and streams. Gemmules are formed from a cluster of archaeocytes that are encased in protective spongin layers (Bergquist, 1978). This protective layer typically comprises three distinct layers of collagen (Frost, 1991). In the species *Ephydatia muelleri*, specialized structures known as

Gemmoscleres are generated within the gemmules (Frost, 1991). The protective coat is largely continuous, featuring a small aperture termed a micropyle, which allows for the exit of cells during the germination process in the spring (Frost, 1991). *Ephydatia muelleri* presents itself as a promising model organism due to its straightforward collection, storage, and application in laboratory settings. This is particularly notable when contrasted with the current demosponge model, *Amphimedon queenslandica*, which is restricted to a single collection site globally and poses significant challenges for laboratory cultivation, thereby enhancing the practicality of *Ephydatia muelleri* as a model system (Kenny, Francis, Rivera-Vicéns, Juravel et al., 2020). The research history surrounding this species is

extensive, encompassing various topics such as its distribution, resilience to cold temperatures, pH levels, thermal conditions, and exposure to environmental pollutants, as well as aspects of silica production, development, physiology, and behavior. The availability of genomic, transcriptomic, and other genetic resources is expected to broaden the scope for primary research and facilitate educational and citizen-science projects. We have endeavored to compile fundamental taxonomic information, histological data, and hydrobiological studies related to the growth performance of *Ephydatia muelleri*, a freshwater sponge species, to enhance diagnostic capabilities for this species. Furthermore, we aspire to extend this research to encompass other freshwater sponge species identified in India.



Figure: 1



Figure: 2 (Magnified)

Figure: 1 and 2 Fresh Water Community Fish Tank. Arrow Indicating Growth of *Ephydatia Muelleri* Left Bottom Corner.



Figure: 3 *Ephydatia Muelleri* showing Vegetative Growth and Canaliculi (Canal system).

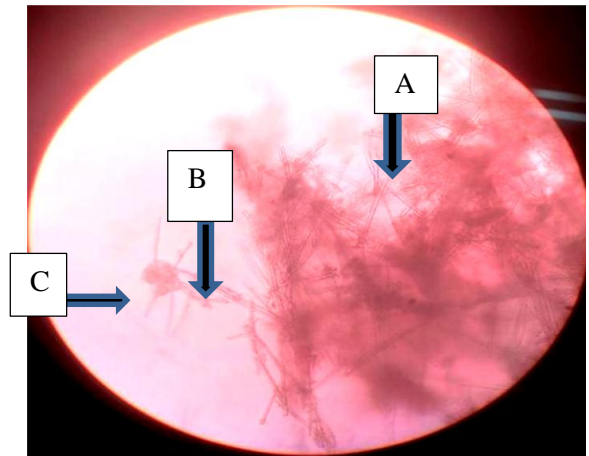


Figure: 4 Microscopic Studies of *Ephydatia Muelleri* showing Many Monoactinal Spicules A and B and Scleroblast Cell C Secreting Spicules. (10X).



Figure: 5 *Ephydatia Muelleri* showing Gemmule (Appears as white bodies).

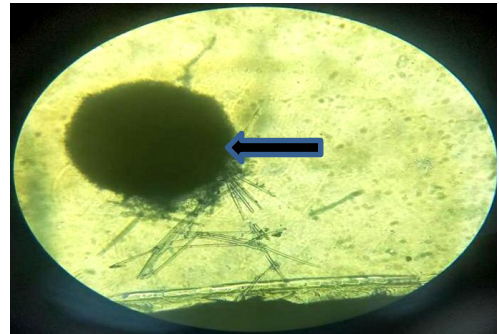


Figure: 6 Gemmule of *Ephydatia Muelleri* under 10X Compound Microscope

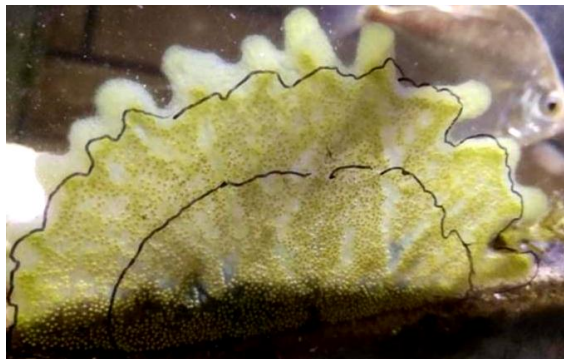


Figure:7 *Ephydatia Muelleri* showing Gemmule and Symbiotic Algae

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Abbreviations

1. HL: Horizontal length
2. VL: Vertical length

Declarations

1. Ethical approval and consent to participate: NA
2. Consent for publication: We affirm that this research is intended for publication in your journal. Additionally, I confirm that this paper has neither been published nor submitted for publication elsewhere. Both the author's have approved the manuscript and agreed with submission to the journal of Species.
3. Availability of data and material: All the obtained data in the present work are reported in this published article.
4. Competing interests: The author's stated that the authors possess no competing interests.
5. Funding: The authors have stated that they did not receive any financial support from any source for this work.
6. Authors' contributions: Heena Momin and Shakir Momin have both made equal contributions to this work.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONFLICT AND SOCIAL CRITIQUE IN ADIGA'S PORTRAYAL OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA

PREETI ASATI

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Mansarovar Global University, Bilkisganj, Madhya Pradesh*

Dr. SOUMYA TIWARI

*Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities
Mansarovar Global University, Bilkisganj, Madhya Pradesh*

Abstract

Aravind Adiga's novel, "The White Tiger", presents a critical analysis of contemporary Indian society, examining the themes of psychological conflict, social inequality, and the pursuit of success. The protagonist, Balram Halwai, undergoes a transformative journey from a subservient individual to a shrewd entrepreneur analogous to the rare white tiger that emerges once in a generation. Balram's internal conflict arises from the injustice and inequality he observes, compelling him to challenge the status quo and liberate himself from the servitude cycle. Drawing on Freudian psychology, the novel depicts Balram's actions as being driven by his instinctual desire for wealth and social mobility. Through a first person narration, Adiga illuminates the various challenges faced by modern India, including caste discrimination, economic hardship, and limited personal autonomy. The novel's central theme of survival and the protagonist's unwavering determination to succeed reflects the complexities of human psychology in the face of adversity. Ultimately, "The White Tiger" functions as a potent social critique, exposing the dark underbelly of India's rapid technological and economic advancement, while exploring the psychological toll of navigating a profoundly unequal society.

Keywords: *psychological conflict, social inequality, entrepreneurship*

Aravind Adiga, an Indian English author and journalist, is renowned for his Man Booker Prize-winning work and his approach to contentious subjects. His writings depict authentic Indian society, addressing the negative aspects of Indian culture. Through his literary creations, Adiga portrays technological and economic advancements as well as their shortcomings, explicitly aiming to criticize the nation. The protagonist, Balram Halwai, commences his career as a driver, and subsequently becomes the chauffeur for Ashok Sharma. Initially, Balram's loyalty to his employer mirrors Hanuman's loyalty to Lord Rama. However, urban life and his obsessions transformed Balram into a deceitful murderer. In India, servants often exhibit devotion to their masters, analogous to Hanuman's dedication to Rama. Hanuman, a deity that combines human and simian

characteristics, is perceived as a god of darkness in India. He also exemplifies unwavering love and loyalty. Despite this cultural ideal, many employers treat their workers as slaves. This exploitation frequently leads to resentment and a breakdown in trust between masters and servants. Consequently, some servants, such as Balram, may resort to extreme measures to escape perceived oppression and achieve social mobility.

The transformation of loyal servants into cunning criminals highlights the complex power dynamics and social inequalities prevalent in contemporary Indian society. Balram's father endures the physically demanding occupation of a rickshaw puller, dedicating his entire existence to supporting his family. He expresses his desire for at least one of his sons to experience a dignified life, stating, "My whole

life, I have been treated like a donkey. All I want is that one son of mine at least one should live like a man". This sentiment partially elucidates Balram's pursuit of masculine lifestyles. His unwavering determination led to his success as an entrepreneur. Additionally, Balram's complex emotions drive him to both betray and remain loyal to Ashok's mentors. He holds Rama and Sita, his employer, and his wife in high regard.

The title "The White Tiger" represents the protagonist, Balram Halwai. Similar to the rare white tiger that emerges once in a generation in the jungle, Balram is equally uncommon. During his school years, an inspector dubbed Balram "the white tiger," saying, "You, young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thug and idiots. In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals the creature that comes along only once in a generation. Balram diverges from the typical man who values emotions and submission, stating, "I'm not a sentimental man, Jiabao. Entrepreneur can't afford to be." His exceptional qualities and intellect earned him the "white tiger" moniker. In his quest for identity, Balram defies his humble origins and societal expectations. The primary sources of Balram's internal conflict are the injustice and inequality. In his series of letters, Balram emphasizes the increasing disparity between those in positions of authority and subordinates. He opts not to escape the rooster coop but instead decides to improve his precarious position by escaping the metaphorical cage. As a significant development, Balram terminates his employer Ashok's life by severing his throat. Notably, the patient experienced no remorse regarding this action. Rather than perceiving himself as a murderer, Balram focused on his newfound sense of empowerment. His primary preoccupation is the accumulation of wealth, compelling him to act with ruthless determination. Balram's egocentric perspective precludes any consideration of his family or society. This perspective can be attributed to contemporary

individuals. Unlike his father, Vikram Halwai, who spent his entire life in servitude, Balram refused to follow this trajectory.

Vikram integrity and dedication yield no tangible benefits. Balram's fixation and his father's unfortunate existence gradually eroded his psychological stability. Balram frequently references the rooster coop when describing the conditions and characteristics of Indian servants. While these servants demonstrate loyalty to their employers, the latter exploits them without compunction. Balram's father, a genuine Halwai, had his establishment forcibly appropriated by members of his caste with the assistance of law enforcement. Affluent prey on the disadvantaged akin to parasites. Balram's psychological distress stems from the sentiments of discontent and despair. Destitution was posited as the source of all malfeasances. Balram accepts the system's cruelty, aggression, and inequities. The impoverished, analogous to the chickens in the coop, did not attempt to liberate themselves from confinement. Balram drew a parallel between these unfortunate avians and India's lower social strata. This analogy elucidates his conflicting emotions towards his mentor, Ashok. Balram Halwai is a typical rural youth. However, urban life has corrupted him thoroughly. In his pursuit of wealth, Balram disrupts the "Rooster Coop" paradigm by committing homicide against his employer, Ashok, and absconding with a cash-filled red bag.

This fixation, known in psychology as an *idée fixe* or fixed notion, is characteristic of monomania, a condition in which an individual's context remains static. Balram's conflicting emotions led him to dismantle the "Rooster Coop," a metaphor for servitude. *White Tiger* chronicles the transformation of a loyal servant into a murderer, illustrating the evolution of human psychology. The novel's central theme is survival, which drives the protagonist's success. Balram's desire for affluence propels him to elevate his socioeconomic status. According to Freud, all human actions stem from drivers or

instincts, which are mental representations of physiological needs. Balram's impulses compel him to become absorbed in fulfilling his desires. These natural tendencies guide individuals to consider their wants and serve as a motivational force to satisfy their cravings.

The renowned psychologist Freud stated, "Life is not easy!" Balram has endured numerous hardships to escape poverty and break free from rooster coops. He asserts, "I think the rooster coop needs people like me to break out of it." Like the white tiger, the balram is unique and possesses a distinct perspective. He consistently envisions 'tomorrow,' while others focus today. Balram expresses no remorse for his actions, stating, "I never say I made mistake that night in Delhi when I slit my master's throat." This statement reveals conflicting emotions. Moreover, he critically evaluates Indian society. Balram's traumatic experience profoundly affected him, both mentally and emotionally, for several years. Consequently, Adiga employs first-person narration to illustrate the various challenges faced by the modern world, including caste discrimination, economic hardship, social disparity, and restricted personal liberty. Adiga draws a parallel between the balram and white tiger. The golden tiger lacks the strength of its white counterparts. These rare and intelligent white tigers require careful management and management. The novel's protagonist is an exceptional white tiger of his generation who strives to overcome his social and economic circumstances. "There— I'm revealing the secret of a successful escape. The police searched for me in the dark, but I hid myself in light." He successfully transitioned from obscurity to prominence.

Conclusion

Aravind Adiga's "The White Tiger", critiques modern Indian society, exploring psychological tension, social stratification, and the relentless pursuit of success

through Balram Halwai's transformation from a submissive figure to a shrewd entrepreneur. The "Rooster Coop" metaphor illustrates oppressive social structures confining underprivileged individuals. Balram's internal conflict, driven by perceived injustice and inequality, propels him to defy societal norms and escape servitude. The novel serves as a potent social commentary, exposing the dark aspects of India's rapid growth while examining the psychological effects of navigating deep societal inequalities. Adiga reveals the moral ambiguity in seeking success within a corrupt system, encouraging readers to contemplate the ethical implications of personal actions against systemic oppression. By juxtaposing Balram's rise with societal decay, the novel questions the true nature of progress and the human cost of economic development. The stark depiction of corruption, exploitation, and moral compromise compels readers to confront unsettling truths about human resilience and ruthlessness in the face of systemic injustice.

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MAKING THE INVISIBLE CAR VISIBLE IN MURIEL SPARK'S *THE DRIVER'S SEAT*

ANSHUMAN MITTRA

PhD Scholar, PG Department of English
Sambalpur University, Sambalpur, Odisha

Abstract

*This paper explores the significance of the title *The Driver's Seat* by Muriel Spark, with a critical focus on the symbolic role of the automobile trope in the narrative. The title itself serves as a metaphor for agency, control, and the illusion of autonomy—central themes that define the protagonist Lise's psychological and existential journey. By situating *The Driver's Seat* within a broader literary context, the paper draws intertextual parallels with F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, both of which employ the automobile trope. The automobile in this text is a purely metaphorical one. In Spark's novel this trope is used as a reflection of the protagonist's fractured sense of control and self-determination. Through a close reading, this paper argues that the title *The Driver's Seat* encapsulates Spark's thematic preoccupation with fatalism, identity, and performative agency in a postmodern world while at the same time showing the deep rooted position of the automobile within culture.*

Keywords: *automobile trope, literary symbolism, metaphor, control, agency.*

In many a American literary and artistic productions the automobile plays a significant role. While it would be incorrect to opine that this trope is not widely used in literary and artistic productions of the other countries, it could safely be said that it is in American art and literature that this automobile trope is most obviously present. Literary examples from the beginning of the 20th century exist where this particular trope has been employed.

The reasons for this machine becoming such an intricate and inseparable part of the lives of people all over the world from its early days are many. Modern day America, as we know it, was built around roads and cars to a very large extent. Quintessentially American features like fast food, drive-in cinemas, drive-through fast food joints, motels, etc. were all conceived around the automobile. Furthermore, it changed the lives of the people living in rural areas, women, doctors etc. by introducing the kind of mobility into their lives which right until before its arrival was unimaginable. From decentralizing cities to changing ways of life, the automobile quickly

became an inseparable part of different cultures. For obvious reasons, this culture is more deep-rooted in those countries which witnessed its arrival early and, in those countries, where mobility is essential for survival. Artists of all kinds were quick to recognize the semantic potential of this machine, and this is the reason why even early twentieth century literary and artistic productions gave it such important places in them. Whether it is *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame or *A Motor Flight Through France* by Edith Wharton or Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the reader finds that automobiles have been used for a lot more than simply moving people from one place to another. Even in today's age of environmental activism, this trope continues to hold its ground. It must, however, be noted that while the employment of this trope is extremely obvious in some texts, it is almost easy to overlook in others. Additionally, while the automobile is physically present in some texts, in others it may be metaphorical. The text that inspires this article is based on the latter kind-Muriel Spark's *The Driver's Seat*.

This British writer's novel's title may make one assume the work to be some sort of a travel narrative but when the reader starts reading the novel, it does not take them long to realize that their assumption could not have been farther from the truth. Furthermore, regardless of what the title suggests, there is no automobile in the text which could have suggested the title. Therefore, the driver's seat as well as the automobile to which it belongs are purely metaphorical.

This psychological thriller revolves around the central character Lise who is out to get herself murdered. Lise's behavior is strange, inconsistent and her clothes seem to be selected for one purpose only – to draw attention. Where she is from, or exactly how old she is etc. are not known. The plot begins when she decides to go on a vacation and most of the story is set during this vacation which ends with her getting herself murdered. She had planned this murder to its last detail and not once does she ever reconsider this gruesome decision. Since there is not a lot of action in this short novel, a detailed summary of it will not be very useful for this article but the one thing that stands out in the plot is the determination with which Lise constantly moves towards her goal of getting murdered in a very specific way. In fact, in the last chapter the murder actually happens, she forces a man named Richard to kill her. She, almost excitedly, instructs him exactly how to tie her and with what, where to stab her with a paper knife, and how to twist the curved knife after penetrating her body to ensure fatal injuries.

The title of a novel with such a plot, therefore, seems curious. Attempting to justify the title by saying that it is so because Lise was on the driver's seat of her life would be correct, no doubt, but not supporting it with a detailed analysis risks undermining, even overlooking, the cultural significance of the automobile trope.

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* the cars owned/driven by the characters and the manner

in which they are operated speak volumes about those characters. In her essay titled "The Great Gatsby: Driving to Destruction with the Richard Careless at the Wheel", Jacqueline Lance talks about how bad drivers are, good at taking bad life decisions. She writes,

Not only are the characters defined by the kind and colours of automobile they drive, but the way they behave behind the wheel strongly indicates their attitude towards life and relationships; those who are "careless" drivers approach life in the same manner with which they approach the open road. Just as they carelessly cause injury to the people and property while behind the wheel, they inflict similar emotional wounds on those with whom they come in contact. The characters in the novel who are the most careless drivers emerge as those who are the most careless in their personal relationships. (Lance 28)

Lance goes on to prove her point by drawing several instances from the novel.

In Sparks' novel, Lise is neither a careless driver nor is she careless in her decisions. If anything, she is meticulous about her plans. At one instance, however, she practically makes off with another person's car. This action does not show carelessness, but it shows her approach to life. She is a determined woman who will go out and do whatever it takes for her to keep on the path that she has chosen for herself. Since the path that she has chosen cannot, under any circumstance, be called the right one, her driving on it, however careful it may be, cannot be called good.

Again, in John Steinbeck's classic novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, when the Joad family is escaping to California in hopes of survival in a Hudson that is in terrible shape, whoever is behind the wheel becomes the head of the family. Whatever decisions they take, the family follows and whatever orders they give, the family obeys. In the novel, Steinbeck writes about Al Joad who is driving the car and whose responsibility it is to keep the beat-up old vehicle running. Al says,

He might be masking a goat sometimes, but this was his responsibility, this truck, its running and its maintenance. If something went wrong, it would be his fault. And so, he felt it, watched it and listened to it. As his face was serious and responsible. And everyone respected him and his responsibility. Even Pa, who was the leader, would hold a wrench and take orders from Al. (Steinbeck 101)

Even Al Joad himself is acutely aware of his responsibility. He says "I won't be doin' no weeping an' a moanin' to get through. I got this goddam car on my soul" (273). What can be deduced from this example, then, in that when one is in command of a powerful machine, they themselves become powerful, their authority is not questioned, and it is they who will decide how to use this power. In Lise's case, she has decided that she wants to get herself murdered and worked out every detail of her plan as meticulously as she could. With this determination she has metaphorically occupied the driver's seat of her life. She is not a passenger because she will neither be swayed from her decision nor will she be controlled by somebody else.

The choice of the title is, therefore, a powerful and suggestive one. It is powerful because the reader does not take much time to realize that Lise is in absolute command of her life and life decisions. It is suggestive because simply by using a very familiar

trope the author suggests multiple things at once. This also goes with the character of the novel which is precise, pointed and never digresses. It tells a story without ever attempting to give reasons for anything or explain anything. Additionally, the very fact that by the simple usage of the phrase "the driver's seat", the title manages to achieve so much goes on to show how very familiar readers are with terms associated with the automobile. This familiarity is a result of the deep-rooted cultural association of the automobile which artists of all kinds have employed as a semantic device. In spite of this, the significance of this trope is often overlooked and the reason for this cannot be anything other than excessive familiarity with the automobile.

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PHONETIC VARIATIONS OF ENGLISH AMONG BAYALUSEEME KANNADIGAS

Dr. AKSHAY YARDI

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women University, Vijayapura, Karnataka*

Abstract

The English language was introduced in India by way of the British colonisation. Indians learnt the art of 'Indianising' English in numerous ways during and after colonial occupation. Regional languages and cultures within India have also accelerated the process of nativising the once-foreign language. The spoken dialects of English in Karnataka, have been 'Kannadified' to a great extent; and the reverse is equally true. Speech, accent, intonation and dialects of the colloquial Kannada have heavily influenced on their spoken English. The present research paper highlights various phonetic variations of English among the people of Bayaluseeme (North Karnataka). The overall attitude towards English in North Karnataka is not very encouraging. Nevertheless, due to globalisation and extensive use of technology, English has become a part of their communicative language. This has led to the development of unique pronunciations, speech patterns in colloquial English. The researcher has made actual observations upon how English is spoken with variations that are much different from the Received Pronunciations of the British English. The present paper tries to acknowledge a special variant of English spoken in the region, which can be labelled as 'Bayaluseeme English' that has evolved over a period of nearly half a century.

Keywords: *english, kannadigas, bayaluseeme, nativisation, accents, tonal varieties, pronunciation, rough sounds, elongated syllables, stress patterns*

Introduction

The English language belongs to the West Germanic group of the Indo-European family of languages. It evolved in England and was eventually introduced in several colonies of the British Empire during the colonial occupation that majorly started influencing geopolitics of the modern world the seventeenth century. The establishment of the British East India Company was an event that was responsible for the introduction of English on the Indian soil. However, until 1830s, it remained only as the language of British administration in India. There were only a few scholars and elites from Bengal, Bombay and Madras Presidencies who learnt and used English. Rest of the population was unaware of the language until 1830s, when was made a medium of instruction in 1835 after the implementation of the famous minutes on Indian education proposed by T. B. Macaulay. Gradually, Indians started adopting English either willingly or unwillingly.

The English language, previously a foreign one, played on the Indian soil and became a language of modern India. Nearly after three hundred years of its presence on the Indian soil, English has become a majorly used Indian language. In fact, it is one of the two official associate languages of the country. The increased and continually increasing usage of English across the length and breadth of the country has ensured an evolution of its several written and spoken varieties.

India is a land of multiple languages and dialects. Basically, the heterogeneous nature of linguistic situation in India helped English become a link language between various states. Indians naturally tend to become at-least bilinguals and in some cases tri-lingual speakers. In an article, Annie Montaut writes, "There is no speaking community which does not handle at least three distinct language codes, and there is no language whose speakers don't have at least two other contact

languages.” (Hasnain and Chaudhary pp. 83-116). Due to this bi and tri-lingualism in India, there are multiple ways in which Indian regional languages affect the way English is used, resulting in emergence of distinctive varieties of English. Although people follow the rules of the British English grammar while writing, spoken English has seen several phonetic and tonal variations that deviate from the Received Pronunciation. In their research article, Dr. Anjali and Shalini Mishra have identified several sub-varieties of Indian English such as ‘Butler English’, ‘Babu English/Tamil English’, ‘Punjabi English’, ‘Gujarati/Parsi English’, ‘Hindi English’ and ‘Boxwala English’ (ICRRDESH pp.84-86). Similarly, one can find variations of the English language within Karnataka too. Kannada intonation, vocabulary and grammatical structures have influenced English used by Kannadigas. Although these variations could be wrong according to the standard English grammar, they succeed in communicating expressions. Within Karnataka, there is a significant difference between the English used by the people in the southern parts and the northern parts. Bayaluseeme is a geographical division of Karnataka where people have developed unique patterns of the spoken variant of English. There are variations in tone, accent and pronunciation. While the residents of the Old Mysore region (most part of the Southern Karnataka) are more proficient in English, those of North Karnataka are comparatively less proficient in it. There are several factors responsible for this difference which the researcher explains further.

Bayaluseeme, its Unique Geography and Culture

Geographically, the stretch between Bidar in the north to Davanagere in the South and from Belgaum in the west to Raichur in the east is a vast plateau, popularly known as ‘Bayaluseeme’ (*Bayalu* literally means – a flat ground with lack of thick vegetation). It is a vast agricultural plain terrain with characterized by less rainfall and hot and dry weather and most of

the residents reside in villages practicing agriculture. For a long time, several districts of this region such as Vijayapura, Kalaburgi, Raichur, Koppal, Ballari, Bagalkot and Yadgir have been considered as backward areas due to lesser literacy rates, drought conditions, shortage of water and poverty. The eastern part of *Bayaluseeme* (officially known as Hyderabad-Karnataka) attracted considerable attention from the government after it was allotted special status under the article 371-J in 2012. Since then, the region has seen some improvement in infrastructure and education. Hyderabad-Karnataka was officially renamed ‘Kalyana Karnataka’ in 2019. However, not all districts of North Karnataka enjoy this privilege. The other districts of *Bayaluseeme* such as Dharwad, Belagavi, Bagalkot, Gadag, Haveri and Vijayapura, which were under the Bombay Presidency before independence, constitute the region traditionally known as Bombay-Karnataka.

Bayaluseeme owns a unique cultural heritage that celebrates agriculture through festivities, food and lifestyle. Occasions like *Kaara Hunnime*, *Seege Hunnimme* and *Mannettina Amavasye* are some of the regional agriculture-based celebrations along with other prominent festivals such as *Yugadi*, *Nagara Panchami*, *Raksha Bandhan*, *Ganesh Chaturthi*, *Dasara*, *Deepavali*, *Sankranti* and *Holi* and *Moharam*. Culture, lifestyle and social milieu of *Bayaluseeme* is majorly influenced by the ‘Sharana’ movement of the twelfth century that was led by saints like Basavanna, Allama Prabhu and Akkamahadevi.

Although the official language in *Bayaluseeme* is Kannada, there are several other languages known and spoken by the residents. Due to people’s affinity and relations with the neighbouring states, Marathi, Urdu, Dakkhani Hindi and Telugu are also spoken in some parts of the region. Since most of them live in rural areas, *Bayaluseeme* residents have lesser contact with English, compared to those in South Karnataka (especially the Old Mysore region).

English has been majorly an urban and cosmopolitan language in India. However, due to the extensive use of communication technology, rural masses are now acquainted with the English language to a considerable extent. An average villager of North Karnataka uses at least 50 English words in his/her colloquial Kannada every day, either consciously or unconsciously. Nevertheless, if we consider the status of the formal education, even after India's independence, several generations were deprived of English education. However, residents of *Bayaluseeme* now aspire to send their children to English medium schools. The language, which was once unknown and strange, has now become a part of their life, although in direct and indirect ways. People have adopted English in their colloquial and have modified it to their own tonal variations and pronunciations peculiar to this region. In the further section, the researcher proposes to introduce phonetic variations of English in *Bayaluseeme*.

English in the Context of *Bayaluseeme*

English is a difficult language for many people living in the *Bayaluseeme*. Compared to South Karnataka (which enjoys its affinity to Bengaluru, the technological Capital of the country), people in the rural *Bayaluseeme* are not exposed to the corporate and convent culture, which basically uses the English language for daily communication. Also, educational backwardness of the region due to a lack of resources, illiteracy and poverty adds to the problem of the English language. As per the final report summary of the High Power Committee for Redressal of Regional Imbalances, "Out of 78 taluks suffering from abject poverty (defined as a situation when not less than 40% of the families in a given taluk are below the poverty line), 48 taluks (62%) belonged to North Karnataka and the remaining 30 taluks (38%) to South Karnataka." (Dr. D. M. Nanjudappa, et al. 7) The statement explains the situation in North Karnataka in terms of poverty and lack of

development in the year 2002. Although the region has seen development since then, getting school-level education has been a challenge for several generations. English is taught as the Second Language right from the 5th grade in schools across Karnataka. Although, several youngsters have availed higher education, English is still a difficult and alien language for several people of *Bayaluseeme*. People of this region have a dull attitude towards English. Following could be some prominent reasons for a general feeling of discomfort and unease towards English:

1. Absence of English Communicative Environment
2. Excessive Love and Preference of the Mother-tongue
3. Lack of Awareness about the Utility of English
4. Demand for Translation in their Vernacular in Educational Institutions

Due to these and several other reasons, English has taken a backseat among the college and university students, as well as the common citizens of *Bayaluseeme*. The number of English language users is significantly less, and the quality of English spoken or used by students is generally sub-standard.

English among *Bayaluseeme* Kannadigas

One could clearly feel the impact of the colloquial Kannada on the English spoken in the region. Their English is highly regionalised in terms of pronunciation, stress and intonation patterns. Also, they extensively use different grammatical structures that are akin to those of Kannada.

Similarly, English has also influenced their Kannada language. There is a significant infusion of English vocabulary into Kannada. Several English words, such as 'college', 'bus', 'car', 'building', 'accident' and many more have been 'Kannadified' very naturally. Plenty of English words such as 'road', 'mobile', 'call', 'phone', 'gate', 'cross', etc. are frequently used even in their vernacular Kannada.

The researcher has tried to throw light upon how spoken English has been transformed into a new variety by the *Bayaluseeme* Kannadigas. The paper focuses majorly on the spoken variety of English used among the people with no English medium schooling background and who use English vocabulary casually and in informal situations.

Phonetic Variations of English in *Bayaluseeme*

English and Kannada do not belong to the same family of languages and therefore they have much different phonetic structures. Kannada is a phonetic language whereas modern English is non-phonetic. While Kannada has a total of 46 phonetic sounds, English has 44. The following Kannada sounds are absent in English phonetics:

/ʎa/ as in the word 'haʎeya' (meaning 'old one'), 'geʎeya' (meaning 'a male friend');

/ŋa/ as in 'guŋa' (meaning 'quality'), 'maŋi' (meaning 'a bead')

/ʃha/ as in 'ʃhatkona' (meaning 'hexagon'), 'ʃhadga' (meaning 'co-brother') and

/tha/ as in 'thande' (meaning 'father'), 'thaayi' (meaning 'mother')

Absence of Certain English Sounds and Compensatory Sounds

A few English sounds do not exist in Kannada. There is no /ɔ/ sound in spoken as well as written Kannada. Because there is no letter assigned to /ɔ/ in Kannada, it is not even pronounced. We thus say that Kannada is a phonetic language because if there is no morpheme, there is no phoneme as well. It is spoken as it is written. In Kannada, /ɔ/ is compensated by the /a:/ sound. For example:

English word	Actual pronunciation	Variation in <i>Bayaluseeme</i>
College	/kɔ-lɪdʒ/	/ka:-leɪdʒ/
Lodge	/lɔ-dʒ/	/la:dʒ/

Knowledge	/nɔ-lɪdʒ/	/na:-leɪdʒ/
Important	/ɪm-pɔ:-tənt/	/ɪm-pa:r-tənt/
information	/ɪn-fə-meɪ-ʃən/	/ɪn-fa:r-meɪ-ʃən/
bottle	/bɔ:tl/	/ba:t-lɪ:/

The last example in the chart is a very unique one because of the addition of /ɪ:/ at the end. No other word that end with '—ttle' (such as little, throttle, turtle) is pronounced in that way. Pronunciation of 'bottle' as /ba:t-lɪ:/ in the *Bayaluseeme* could be attributed to the influence of Marathi upon Kannadigas. In Marathi, 'bottle' has been naturalized as 'baatali'.

Similarly, there is no /æ/ sound Kannada. It is compensated by a sound that combines /j/ and /a:/. Therefore, English words like 'match', 'latch', 'batch' and 'catch,' which have /æ/ as the main vowel are pronounced by replacing it with /ja:/ sound. For example:

English word	Actual pronunciation	Variation in <i>Bayaluseeme</i>
Catch	/kætʃ/	/kja:tʃ/
Match	/mætʃ/	/mjɑ:tʃ/
Batch	/bætʃ/	/bjɑ:tʃ/
Bat	/bæt/	/bjɑ:t/
Mat	/mæt/	/mjɑ:t/

Addition and Modification of Sounds

In Kannada, words in the nominative case (*Prathama Vibhakti*) end with /u/ sound. Kannadigas replicate this rule upon several English words (those ending with voiced, unvoiced as well as nasal consonants) in the nominative case by adding an extra phoneme or syllable at the end. This is how several English words have been naturalized in Kannada speech. For Example:

English word	Actual pronunciation	Variation in Kannada-English
car	/kɑ:r/	/kɑ:r-u/
gate	/geɪt/	/geɪt-u/
bus	/bʌs/	/bʌs ^s -u/
train	/treɪn/	/treɪn-u/
damage	/dæm-eɪdʒ/	/dʒɑ:-meɪ-dʒu/

However, this peculiar way of adding an extra /u/ as a suffix to English words is rare in *Bayaluseeme* but more pronounced in South Karnataka.

There is a more prominent variation of English pronunciation among the people of *Bayaluseeme* i.e., an intense use of /r/ sound. While in typical English phonetics, the pronunciation of /r/ in the middle or the last syllable is almost silent, *Bayaluseeme* Kannadigas pronounce it with stress. This is again a strong influence of the colloquial Kannada spoken in the region. Following are some examples:

English word	Actual pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
car	/kɑ:r/	/kɑ:r ^r /
chart	/tʃɑ:t/	/tʃɑ:r ^r t/
carpenter	/kɑ:-pen-tə ^r /	/kɑ:r ^r -pen-tə ^r /
mister	/mɪs-tə ^r /	/mɪs- tər/
rubber	/rʌb-ə ^r /	/rʌbb-ə ^r /

Kannadigas habitually elongate the last syllable while uttering certain English words. The last syllable in words like 'college' (/kɔ:-lɪdʒ/) and 'knowledge' (/nɔ:-lɪdʒ/) contains the short vowel sound /ɪ/. However, these are replaced with what are known as *Deergha Swaras* (long vowels and some diphthongs) in Kannada. As a result, 'college' becomes /kɑ:-leɪdʒ/. Similarly, 'knowledge' becomes /nɑ:-leɪdʒ/ and so on.

English words ending with the letters or sounds like '—rm' and '—lm' are also mispronounced. According to English phonetics, there should be no extra vowel sound between the last two letters, as in

'form', 'term', and 'film'. In these words, /r/ is almost silent. However, *Bayaluseeme* Kannadigas add /r/ and an extra vowel sound at the end. As a result, an extra syllable is created. For example:

English word	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
Form	/fɔ:m/	/phɑ:-rəm/
Fern	/fɜ:n/	/phə-rən/
Film	/fɪlm/	/phɪ-ləm/
Term	/tɜ:m/	/tə-rəm/
Germ	/dʒɜ:m/	/dʒə-rəm/

Quite often, *Bayaluseeme* Kannadigas replace /f/ with /ph/ sound as just mentioned in the examples such as film, fern and form.

There is another evident and odd-sounding practice commonly observed among the *Bayaluseeme* Kannadigas. While addressing someone with their designation, people add an extra /ɑ:/ to the words ending with /r/ sound. For example:

English expression	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
Sir!	/sɜ:!/	/sə-rɑ:/
Teacher!	/tɪ:-tʃə ^r /	/tɪ:-tʃə-rɑ:/
Doctor!	/dɔ-ktə ^r /	/dɑ:-ktə-rɑ:/
Master!	/mɑ:-stə ^r /	/mɑ:-səθ-rɑ:/

The last word in the chart is again unique one where the /t/ sound is replaced by /θ/. As there is no exact phonetic representation or English sound for /th-/ as in words like 'tande' (written in South Karnataka as 'thande') and 'taay' (written in South Karnataka as 'thaay') which is less-breathed than /θ/, a / θ/ is used here.

Kannada and English languages have different singular and plural patterns. In Kannada, plural expressions are used to address a respectable individual as well. As a result, *Bayaluseeme*

Kannadigas use the plural expression for respectable individuals with an added expression '-r' (used for respectable/elderly person) even for English words especially while addressing them.

English expression	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
Sir!	/sɜ:ɹ/	/sə-rɹɹ/
Teacher!	/tɹ:tfə/	/tɹ:tfə-rɹɹ/
Doctor!	/dɔ-kətə/	/dɑ:-ktə-rɹɹ/
Master!	/mɑ:-stə/	/mɑ:-sθə-rɹɹ/

The suffix '-r' is grammatically incorrect. However, a local Kannadiga can understand that such an expression intends respect.

Spoken Kannada features a significant elongation of the last syllable. For example, the Indian word 'Naatak' (meaning 'drama') is pronounced as /nɑ:tɜ:k/ in Marathi and other North Indian languages. However in Kannada, the same word is pronounced as /nɑ:tə-kə/ or as /nɑ:t-kɑ:/. This pattern is evident for all other words ending with consonant sounds, and Kannadigas apply the same to English words. There is an addition of the /ə/ sound after several words that end with a consonant. E.g. Kannadigas (mostly from rural parts of North Karnataka) utter the sentences in the following manner:

"It is a long journey" - as "It-a is-aa long-a journey".

"Now, I will write a story" as "Now-a, I will-a write a story."

This kind of pronunciation is more evident in the case of some of the conjunctions such as 'and' (pronounced as /ænd-ə/) 'for' (as /fɑ:r-ə/) and 'therefore' (uttered as /ðer-phor-ə) and so on.

Replacement of Sounds

Some of the individual English sounds are conveniently replaced. Bayaluseeme Kannadigas commonly mispronounce English sounds in the following manner:

English letter	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
C	/sɹ:/	/ʃɹ:/
F	/ef/	/jef/
L	/el/	/jel/
M	/em/	/jem/
N	/en/	/jen/
S	/es/	/jes/
V	/vɹ:/	/wɹ:/
W	/dʌbl-ju:/	/dəb-lu:/
X	/eks/	/jekks/
Z	/zed/	/dʒhed/

These variations may be observed while using them in abbreviations such as V.C., T.C., M.A., B.C., P.C., R.C., D.C. and so on.

There is another variation in case of some English words beginning with a /s/ sound. /s/ is replaced by /ʃ/. For example:

English letter	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
Cell	/sel/	/ʃel/
Sale	/seɪl/	/ʃeɪl/
Same	/seɪm/	/ʃeɪm/
Send	/send/	/ʃend/
Saturday	/sæt-ə-deɪ/	/ʃæt-ər-deɪ/
Should	/ʃud/	/sud/

The last case is interesting where several people of the region pronounce the word 'should' by replacing /ʃ/ with /s/ sound. Although the meanings could drastically change in case of such modifications, the locals understand them perfectly without getting confused.

Bayaluseeme Kannadigas cannot accurately pronounce the /ʒ/ and /z/ sounds as they are absent in their native language. However, they are both replaced with /dʒ/ and sometimes with /dʒh/. For instance:

English word	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
Pleasure	/ple-ʒə/	/ple-dʒə/
present	/pre-zent/	/pre-dʒent/
please	/plɪ:z/	/plɪ:dʒ/
zoo	/zu:/	/dʒhu:/
zebra	/zeb-rə/	/dʒheɪ-brə:/

Skipping Certain Sounds

Several people of Bayaluseeme have the habit of skipping the first /s/ sound in words beginning with a combination of 'st-' and 'sch-'. They feel the words could be pronounced easily that way. However, the locals do not fail to understand the words perfectly even after mispronunciations. For example:

English letter	Actual Pronunciation	Variation in Bayaluseeme
Station	/steɪ-ʃən/	/teɪ-ʃən/
Scholarship	/skɔ-lə-ʃɪp/	/kɔ-lə-ʃɪp/
School	/sku:l/	/ku:l/
Student	/stju:-dənt/	/tu-dent/

With these phonetic variations, people have naturalized plenty of English words in their colloquial speech. Although, most of the people in the rural areas of Bayaluseeme cannot construct full sentences in English, they do use a vast English vocabulary in their own fashion. They use combinations of English verbs with Kannada verbs and construct their sentences in the vernacular. Apart from the vocabulary, English used by the minority of the English-educated population has been modified and transformed due to the impact of their mother-tongue Kannada. Considering the variations in vocabulary, grammar and other linguistic elements used in the region, one can name it 'Bayaluseeme-English', one of the many Englishes spoken across the world.

Conclusion

With the plethora of phonetic variations of English in the region explained in the paper so far, a few questions arise: whether to change these variations and teach people the standard Received Pronunciations? or to accept them as a new variety of English specific to the region, as has been the case with other sub-varieties of English within India? It is rather difficult to answer the question in the most straight-forward manner. As long as people understand and can communicate effectively with these variations, the language can be accepted as a new variant. However, in written and formal communication, these variations could not be acceptable due to the confusions they would create. Kannada and English languages will keep evolving in unique ways in Karnataka. People will create new varieties of spoken dialects and accents. It should be remembered that language is like a river that imbibes the nutrients and minerals of the soil it carries along its path. These transformations within spoken dialects may eventually lead to pidgins and creoles specific to the North Karnataka region. No language can remain pure or uninfluenced. Acceptance, assimilation, evolution and transformation are the essential qualities of a language that grows and survives long and so is the case with Bayaluseeme English as well.

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ILLUSTRATION OF INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN A DOMESTIC SPACE AS DEPICTED IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF ANNE TYLER

Dr. M. K. PRIYANKA

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Emerald Heights College for Women, Ooty, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*Down the ages, internal conflicts have envisaged the physical surrounding of a house or a hut but Mary Douglas, interpreted the meaning of the conflicts as an association with emotions and human bondage. Remarkably, Mary Douglas, a British social anthropologist conceived the meaning in a different perspective and explained that it is a space bound for women and the domestic space is a container of social process to fill it with human emotions. The present article brings out the representation of the internal conflicts in men, women and children in Anne Tyler's *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* and *The Clock Winder*. To substantiate further, the victims come across the culture of silence within the familial confinement with different modes of domestic behaviour. In the context of *Culture of Silence*, the domestic Space in these novels, persuade the characters to combat the internal conflicts revolving around the families in these novels. Moreover, the paper also lists the recommendations of the domestic theorists like Nicole Westmoreland and Kelly Lowe towards a favorable environment in the family by obliterating the internal conflicts.*

Keywords: *internal conflict, emotions, human bondage, culture of silence, domestic space*

Introduction

In general, the term 'domestic space' gained impetus only in 1970 by the British social anthropologist, Mary Douglas and this term was associated only with the women of the household. Before the 1970s, the domestic space was interpreted by associating it with the structure of the outer building of the house. Later Mary Douglas found that there were also internal family conflicts pointing to inexpressible emotions that surround an intimate partner in a domestic relationship. In addition, these internal conflicts within the family address more psychic conflicts among the family members. In particular, any partner who can be a male, female, or a child gets affected by a peculiar or mysterious behaviour of one's family members. For example, even within their own realm of domesticity, individuals fight for rights to establish their equality. Significantly, both in Literature and in the cultural or traditional paradigm of domestic confinement, inmates of the house are subjected to verbal, physical and emotional abuse. In harmony

with the women's space in the domestic sphere, they take care of the household duties without protest. On a close examination, it was found that women occupied only the private boundary of the domestic space whereas men indulged in public space for outdoor activities. The present paper details the different roles possessed by men, women and children in the domestic space to bring out the conceptual framework that both the partners should contribute to the healthy and happy environment of domestic space. According to Gaston Bachelard, he says in his *The Poetics of Space*: "there is a ground for taking the house as a tool for analysis of the human soul". (Bachelard 1964, p. 36). In his opinion, the space of the domestic sphere encompasses the social containers for emotions more than the enclosed structure of the building which has been discussed as a huge space of an individual with a hope of a family comfort.

Domestic Space in Anne Tyler's *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*

Down the ages, men have appeared to be detached completely from the home and they considered the space outside the home to be more exhilarating, sensational and illuminating. For them, the space inside the home appeared to be doomed, gloomy and uncomfortable. As a matter of fact, men's outlook towards the home was based on the process of childhood socialization and parenting. Most of the men internalized the home as a model for females containing both positive and negative qualities while for men, the outside of the home is a public space represented mainly as a positive confinement for adventure and enthusiasm. Interestingly, Roger Hart in *Children's experience of Place*, says that boys maintain a greater distance from the home than girls as highlighted by Jerome Tognoli (Tognoli 1979, pp. 599-607) Similarly, Beck Tull in *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, longs to be away from his family even after begetting three children, Cody, Ezra and Jenny. Specifically, Beck being the breadwinner of the family creates a protocol of staying outside the family by leaving Pearl in desertion. In addition, Beck expresses his inability to be with the family due to a petty incident when Cody, the eldest one recalls the arrow incident in which he had been projected as an antagonist. Moreover, the culture of silence is prevalent in the Tulls family due to the quiet departure of Beck, the irresponsible father. Within the limits of the culture of silence, Pearl Tull, being the single mother, attaches herself more deeply to the home and children than Beck. On a close analysis, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* presents an inter and intra psychic human family structure with an analogical interpretation. In general, Pearl Tull has given the impasse in parenting involving a violent mother and the absent presence of the father. Though Beck leaves the family in the lurch, it is observed by Leo Schneiderman that Tyler's families have only a half-life, perhaps because their members

do not love or hate each other with enough intensity" (Schneiderman 1996, pp. 65-81). In truth, Tyler invades into the private sphere and cares more for the proximity of the characters rather than their intimacy. One cannot comprehend the individual's character without introspecting the family system of her portrayal of the American homes. Interestingly, Tyler's characters especially, the children in the Tull family, remember their domestic space as a haunting place without a loving mother and an absent father. Decidedly, the mother is apotheosized in the child's world and whatever is communicated to the child is informed through the mother. Unfortunately, Pearl becomes an insane mother to her children through the corporeal punishment. Arguably, the children become sick of 'home' and for 'home' without receiving love and compassion within the domestic space.

Representation of Domestic Space in *The Clock Winder*

As regards to the plot, Tyler brings out the conflict or the loss of lives to precipitate the rest of the action and reduce the burden of the consequences in the domestic space of *The Clock Winder*. In the light of the family and the community, Dorris Betts explains: "She does not recount the gradual passage of time but instead enters it at a still spot near some point of change, insight or decision for the protagonists". (Betts 1983, pp. 22-37). In other words, Elizabeth Abbott in *The Clock Winder* represents a change when she is disrespected by her family consisting of her minstrel father, sister and mother. According to Dorris Betts, Tyler always finds a ray of hope for the protagonists not to escape but to find a permanent solution for the unpremeditated intricacies. To substantiate further, Tyler also throws more light on the distance and sympathy among the relationships in order to understand the essence of life within the culture of silence. Due to the prevalence of domestic space in Elizabeth Abbotts' family, Elizabeth

confronts the culture of silence to encounter the repercussions of domestic life. Considering the fact of the relationship, Tyler boldly alternates her novels for the characters to face miscommunication with the relatives and acts of closeness with complete strangers. Predictably, Elizabeth Abbott meets the challenges in her domestic world of the minstrel father and the ignorant mother who frequently compare her attributes with her younger sister regarding her talents. At the other end, Elizabeth Abbott transgresses her domestic space with the thought of clinging on to a culture of silence without protest.

Internal Conflicts in *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*

Interestingly, Nicole Westmorland, a domestic theorist says that social work also has to ensure the safety and protection to the affected victims of the household. She projects that if the domestic environment is transformed into a notable and valuable source of inspiration, then the family attains comfortability and at the onset, both the partners become more thoughtful, dedicated and remain normal in abnormal circumstances. Theorists, Westmarland and Kelly suggest that if the domestic environment is worth living then "We can all walk back into the house without feeling a bit scared to be honest... I mean now I trust him because he gets in before me. I text him at the lights and he has a cup of tea ready for me and he'd never have done that before. I would spend ages out of the house just walking around the shops so that I didn't have to go home. (Westmarland & Kelly 2013, p. 8) From these lines, the theorists unraveled the reality behind leading a happy life between partners without internal conflicts. In most of the city homes, women were more attached and they also extended a security to the home and men. Owing to this fact of femaleness at home, men inclined to get frightened out of tension. To add to the complexity, men were kept on

tenderness and they attained a kind of tension when they were dependent on women who act as the nourishing mother who feeds and clothes them. It stands to reason that most men, due to the frightening environment at home, escape to the public spaces like the bars or restaurants or parks to socialize with other men by inviting them to play card games or watch sport on television. In the case of *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, Beck Tull decides to run away from the responsibilities after observing Pearl's role in motherhood. Interestingly, Pearl being a single mother, lives for the sake of her children.

Significantly if men are assigned the roles of a provider and protector, he has to make a safe living for his partner and children rather than solely being the breadwinner of minting money for his family. Relatedly, in the midst of an emotional crisis, he develops intimacy with his partner to combat the difficulties instead of accusing his partner for the reason behind the insurmountable problems. As we can see, Pearl appears to be a less mother and more shrewd in nurturing her children. However, Cody, the eldest, recalls the internal conflicts with his mother and brother who have outside connections beyond the troublesome home. In a personalizing family system, the power is controlled and dominance over the children is followed by way of reduction rather than using commands and therein a smooth and conducive environment is created between the children and parents. Concomitantly, the parent-child relationship serves to approach the line of demarcation and the children identify themselves with more of a better communication and inexpressible feelings. To illustrate, the parents reduce their level of authority by their negotiable instructions: "Don't you think it is time to go to bed now because you'll be tired in the morning" (Sibley & Lowe 1992, p. 191). This particular instruction makes the children obey or oblige without a second thought instead of 'Go to bed'. While this differentiation in modes of articulation

and accent in the parents' attitude speak at length about how the children would end up with the modes of behaviour in future. Evidently, in the absence of a father in the Tull family, Ezra places his trust on his mother where Jenny looks at Pearl as a shrieking Witch. More than once, Pearl calls Jenny in impolite words such as "Serpent", "Cockroach" "hideous little sniveling guttersnipe" (*Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* 1982, 66). At this point, to sum up the comments of Sibley and Lowe, if either the mother or the father acts aggressively, the children become violent. Consequently, even on her deathbed, she calls them "Duckers and Dodgers" (*Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* 1982, p. 34). Besides, Pearl is addressed as a witch in her Baltimore neighbourhood. At the outset, Pearl agrees to accept the feeling of desolate, despair and disillusionment. On the other hand, Jenny, the youngest, inherits the internal conflict of verbal abuse from her mother and executes the same to her daughter. Suddenly, Jenny realizes and puts an end to her disgruntled self of disappointments.

Ultimately, men distance themselves from the domestic environment or from domestic work that produces negative emotion and it also shows their inability to define human bondage within the family. Hence, the domestic space signifies cultivating self-realization, humaneness, protection, proximity in showing love, affection, sympathy and empathy towards other members in the domestic relationship. In general, family is the honeycomb from which any individual resides and inhibits the traits to execute them in the society. On the contrary, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* puts the reader in shock waves wherein the plot revolves around the mysterious internal conflicts between Pearl Tull and her husband, Beck Tull and how Pearl being the maternal figure strives hard to bring forth the children under a single mother family. Anne Tyler recognizes that if the spousal relationship persists with internal conflicts between the two partners, then undoubtedly, there

exists a contradictory or unpleasant relationship between the mother and the children which would pave a way for adverse internal conflicts. Ironically, Cody becomes the most affected soul in his family and his mental anguish deepens while his mother favours Ezra with utmost kindness and care. Rather than searching for salvation, Cody derives a pleasure out of giving trouble to Ezra. Literally, in order to avoid the tirades of his mother, Cody puts on the disguise of a virtuous man to become the favourite of Pearl instead of Ezra. Persistently, Pearl reflects on her internal conflict towards Cody by making a comment that: "You have been mean since the day you were born". (*Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* 1982, p. 61)

Decidedly Anne Tyler conglomerates both goodness and badness in Jenny Tull to bring a conflated species of human mother. Unlike Pearl, Jenny builds a personal space and avowedly takes responsibility in caring for her children. In comparison with Ezra, Cody puts Ezra in a discomfited state and blames him for the intensified internal conflicts. More bitterly, Cody expresses his rage towards his biased mother and deserted father, Beck. At the end, Cody attains salvation by redeeming his actions and he goes out to form an ideal home with his wife. On the contrary, men don't proceed with the roles to be carried out in the domestic space and if they take up the roles of a proper leader, proper role of a father and husband, then interestingly he can build a comfortable home to cherish the happenings around his family consisting of wife and children.

Internal Conflicts in *The Clock Winder*

Basically, patriarchy posts a serious threat to the domestic environment to the opposite partner and children and without further delay, it contributes more to the suppression of behaviour in women and children. Firstly, the child experiences the bitterness of his or her own confinement when parents demand an extreme form of restricted environment to the

children by curtailing their rights. In short, the child becomes stressful and begins to alienate itself from the parents. According to Bernstein's theory of domestic mode and problem behaviour, he talks about the power relations in the family. To demonstrate, Bernstein observes that a family with a power functioning system characterizes the very fact of thrusting dominance and authoritarian relationship with their children. These parents are always highly demanding and never maintain intimacy with their children and are found only to be picking the negative aspects of them.

Following this criticism, Elizabeth Abbott, while spending her time with her family, observes her mother keeping herself engaged in the kitchen and always making food for the family. During one of her conversations, her mother asks her why she is idle and lazy and why she can't perform some dynamic activity to make herself active and vibrant. Instantly, Elizabeth responds by saying that she takes walks with the dog. For the most part, in *The Clock Winder*, the minstrel father of Elizabeth Abbott places Elizabeth Abbott in a restricted area by demanding his complete attention. Unfortunately, he exercises patriarchy in controlling Elizabeth's endeavours. During her bitter conversation with her minister father, Elizabeth gets disappointed and feels unhappy when her father finds fault with her idleness including her slovenly habits, disorderly appearance, a helpless girl and a late riser who rises late to watch the television. As the minister frequently develops internal conflicts with his daughter by indicating that "You're disrupting an entire household" (*The Clock Winder* 1972, pp. 135-136) Whatever the accusations might be, Elizabeth relaxingly takes a pack of cigarettes to smoke by adding fuel to the burning fire. Besides her father asks her to do some activity to place her on record but Elizabeth remains stubborn and says, "I can't think of any other job I'd be good at" (*The Clock Winder* 1972, p. 136) Apart from the daring resistance of the plot, Mrs. Emerson

in *The Clock Winder* places her sympathy and love on Elizabeth Abbott to perform a closer relationship than with her own offspring. Significantly, the crux of the matter is framed by Tyler in such a way that Elizabeth Abbott earns more fondness of Mrs. Emerson than her own children who are looked upon as outsiders. In the final analysis of the parent-child relationship, it should be noted that more of a curtailed environment prevails in *The Clock Winder* to target internal conflicts between Elizabeth Abbott and her minstrel father. Precisely, the patriarchal restrictions of Elizabeth's father induces increased pressure between the father and daughter as Elizabeth's father orders her to pay a visit to Mr. Cunningham's house to look after him on his sick bed. Though Elizabeth initially refuses to take care of the old man, out of her dominative father's repeated compulsion, she visits to pay attention to Mr. Cunningham. However, Elizabeth's ordeal of internal conflicts with her father forcibly pushes her forward to leave her home which is filled with domestic complexities to another world of Mrs. Emerson. Consequently, the paper contributes to the prosperity of family life which strengthens the relationship without internal conflicts.

Conclusion

Categorically, while a mother distances the adults from the children's space and the father works for the integration of these two entities then the children struggle with mental anguish and needless tension. At the other end, parents have to be democratic in nurturing their children as long as two or more children are to be reared. They also have to execute their diplomacy in treating their children equally in all aspects. Emphatically, Tyler provides a space for both Pearl Tull and her children in *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* to lead a quiet and serene life but Pearl expresses her inability to attend to her children by treating them equally. It is noteworthy that Pearl is effective in relationships which are

interconnected with parenting but she uses abusive language to cultivate internal conflicts. Hence, parents must need to relieve tension and ambiguity from the home environment of children as they consider equality by consolidating the freedom to adapt in a newly required formulation of togetherness in the family during the adolescent period of their children. From the point of view of Elizabeth Abbott in *The Clock Winder*, Anne Tyler produces sympathy and empathy for Elizabeth while she is entangled with internal conflicts in her own family. Subsequently, due to Elizabeth's father's egoistic behaviour, she suffers with troubles and turmoil as her father neglects to offer her fatherly love in the domestic relationship between the father and the daughter. At the outset, Elizabeth escapes from the internal conflicts of her father to dwell in a more personal space for her to think, evaluate, and improvise to reach her goals. Thus, this paper has laid emphasis on the contribution of both men and women in the domestic space by obliterating the prevalence of alienation among the intimate partners to bestow a complacent zone for the children in Anne Tyler's *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* and *The Clock Winder*.

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A DISCUSSION OF THE 1935 GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT AND ITS PRINCIPAL ATTRIBUTES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO FEDERAL LEGISLATURE OF THE GOVERNMENT

K. SEMMANNAN

*Ph.D. Research Scholar (F/T), P.G & Research Department of History
Government Arts College (Autonomous), Salem, Tamil Nadu*

A. RENUKA

*Principal
Government Arts & Science College, Komarapalayam, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

After the Act of 1919, The Government of India Act of 1935 was the country's second major turning point towards an entirely accountable administration. In the year 1935, the British Government passed this Act. With 321 sections and 10 schedules, it was one of the longest Acts at the time. Additionally, it served as British India's final constitution before the nation was partitioned into Pakistan and India in 1947. After the act was passed, the government realised it was too long to be effectively regulated. As a result, in order for the act to work as intended, the government decided to split it into two parts. The Government of India Act, 1935 2. The Government of Burma Act, 1935

Keywords: significant turning point, british government, governmental functions, governor general, federation, province, autonomy, princely states, discretionary powers, aforementioned.

Introduction

The Government of India Act of 1935 was the nation's second significant turning point towards a fully accountable administration, following the Act of 1919. This Act was passed by the British government in 1935. It was one of the lengthiest Acts at the time, containing 10 schedules and 321 sections. It also functioned as the final constitution for British India prior to the country's 1947 division into Pakistan and India. The government discovered that the act was too long to effectively control after it was passed. The administration chose to divide the Act into two parts in order to guarantee that it would be implemented as intended. The 1935 Government of India Act No. and also the The Government Act of Burma 1935.

Aims of the Study

The objectives of this research have been established as follows:

1. To investigate the rationale behind the 1935 Government of India Act.

2. Examine critically the Act that the British government passed in order to appease national movements
3. To comprehend the 1935 Acts that established the British parliament.

Period of Study

This research paper covers the period of 1935.

Methodology

The current research has an analytical and historical focus. In this investigation, primary and secondary data were employed. The primary data used here is statements made by national leaders, whereas the secondary data are published works such as books and dissertations.

Review of Literature

The Indian Constitution's Evolutionary Philosophy by Madabhushi Sridhar was published in 2003 in New Delhi, London, and New York Free Press. The

philosophy and development of the Indian constitution are discussed in this article.

The book , Evolution of the Indian Constitution by B.L. and S.L. Grover was released in New Delhi by S. Chand & Company Pvt. Ltd. (1987) Understanding the Indian Constitution's evolution and foundational ideas requires reading this book.

Indian Constitution and National Development by Mahajan V.D., S. Chanda & Company LTD, New Delhi, 1956. The Indian National Movement was addressed in this book. Particularly. India Act 1935.

Statement of the Problem

The Government of India Act, 1935, which reflected the current stage of the Indian constitution's formation, was passed as a result of the dynamics of the country's constitutional development. The 1935 Act's two primary components were its provisions for an all-India Federation and its responsible, safeguarded governance. The Act envisioned the creation of an all-India Federation that would incorporate the Chief Commissioners Provinces as well as the Governors Provinces and any Indian States that could have joined. When a number of States had joined the Federation and their rulers had the right to select no fewer than fifty-two members of the Council of State, and their combined population equaled or more than half of all the Indian States' combined population, a Royal Proclamation was to be issued in that regard by both Houses of Parliament and presented to His Majesty. In order to facilitate Federation, the Governors Provinces were granted independence. Each Governor's Province was given "an Executive and a Legislature having precisely defined spheres and in that exclusively provincial sphere broadly free from the control of the Central Government and Legislature" under the terms of the system. ⁱ

Salient Features

The Provincial Governments had devolved authority, not original authority, under the Government of India

Act, 1919. The Devolution Rules, established by the Act of, designated specific subjects as Provincial subjects, thereby establishing a domain in which the Provincial authorities bore primary responsibility for governmental functions. However, this domain was not exclusive, as the Governor-General in Council and the Central Legislature retained significant authority over the entirety of the Provinces. ⁱⁱ

According to the planned plan outlined in the Act of 1935, "the Legislature and Central Government would, in general, cease to possess any legal power or authority with respect to any matter within the exclusive Province in the Governors' Provinces."

In terms of the scope of federal and provincial legislation, a provincial legislature was empowered to enact laws, whilst the federal legislature was responsible for enacting laws for any federated state or for all of British India. the province or any area inside it. There were three lists pertaining to the subject matter of federal and provincial laws: the Federal Legislative List, the Provincial Legislative List, and the List of concurrent legislation. Any topic not on one of the three lists would be given, at the Governor-General's discretion, to either the Federation or a Province. ⁱⁱⁱ Any subject that is not on one of the three lists would be given, at the Governor-General's discretion, to either the Federation or a Province. This is how power was divided, with the first division established by the constitution itself: the Federal Legislature could only pass laws pertaining to the Indian States on subjects that were included in the Instrument of Accession. ^{iv}

A Federal Court was given the authority to ensure that the units' and the center's boundaries were properly observed. The Act's provision for responsible government with safeguards was another noteworthy aspect. The Governor-General was to exercise the Federation's executive authority on behalf of the King. A maximum of ten ministers will serve as the council of ministers advising and assisting the governor general. However, he was to

exercise his "individual judgement" in some specifically designated instances and act at his discretion in others. The Governor-General was to handle defence, foreign affairs, church affairs, and tribal affairs at his discretion. However, ministers had the right to counsel him in these matters. ^v

Context of the Act

The Simon Commission Report and the Round Table Conferences' recommendations served as the foundation for the Act. The Joint Select Committee Report; the British government's 1933 White Paper, which was based on the Third Round Table Conference.

Salient Features of the Act

This Act contains a number of noteworthy aspects, some of which are regarded as major and some as minor. These key characteristics are listed below.

All India Federation

The Act established the Indian States and the British Indian Provinces as part of an All-India Federation. The Instrument of Accession specified the conditions under which a state might become a member of the federation. The Government of India Act, 1935 gave each state the option of joining or not joining the federal government. The constituent units of that federation were certain states that consented to merge with the stated federation, six Chief Commissioner's provinces, and eleven Governor's provinces. Each unit had complete control over its internal operations.

This act stated that if half of the four Indian states choose to join, India would then become a federation. However, because not enough princely states joined, the provisions pertaining to the union were not put into effect. ^{vi}

Provincial Autonomy

The fact that the new Act initiated provincial autonomy was one of its redeeming qualities. Without a doubt, it was a step forward from the 1919 Act. Within their designated domains, the provinces were permitted to function as independent administrative entities. Additionally, the Act established responsible governance in the provinces, requiring the governor to make decisions based on the counsel of ministers answerable to the provincial legislature. This was put into action in 1937 and removed in 1939. This does not imply, however, that the Act of 1935 created a fully functional, accountable government in the Provinces. The Ministers' discretion over how to manage their departments was limited. Even though they weren't used frequently, the Governors' overriding powers were still available. ^{vii}

Division of Subjects

The separation of subjects between the Centre and the Provinces was made possible by the strategy used to establish the federation and grant provincial autonomy. This Act of 1935 updated and added a few more subjects to the subjects already divided by the Government of India Act, 1919, along with three lists. Dyarchy at the Centre: The Act of 1935 instituted dyarchy at the Centre after outlawing it at the Provincial level. Two types of federal subjects existed.

Subjects that have been transferred and reserved

Bicameral Legislature

Constituted by the Federal Assembly and the Council of States, the Central Legislature was bicameral under the Government of India Act, 1935. A third of the Council of States' members were to retire every three years as the upper house of the permanent assembly. It was to consist of 260 members, of which 104 were to be representatives of the Indian states and 156 of British India. The lower chamber, the Federal Assembly, had a five-year term. There were

to be 375 members total, with no more than 125 coming from the princely kingdoms and 250 serving as representatives of British India.^{vii}

The provinces received varying numbers of seats, while the seats set up for princely states were to be filled by individuals nominated for those positions. There was to be indirect elections for the Federal legislature. The assembly may be dissolved earlier, but its tenure was set for five years. In six of the eleven provinces, bicameralism was also instituted. As a result, the legislatures of the United Seven Provinces, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, Bihar, and Assam were established as bicameral legislatures, with an upper body known as the legislative assembly and a lower house known as the legislative council. But there were a lot of limitations imposed on them.^{viii}

Retention of Communal Electorate

By creating distinct electorates for women, labour (workers), and the downtrodden classes (scheduled castes), it further expanded the idea of communal representation. Even though Muslims made up considerably less than one-third of British India's overall population, they yet held 33 1/3 percent of the seats in the Federal Legislature. Women and workers had separate representation even if they had not requested it.

Dissolution of the India Council

The new Act eliminated the India Council and allowed the Secretary of State and his group of advisors, whose total count could neither be less than three nor greater than sixty-five, to be appointed. Provincial autonomy significantly reduced the Secretary of State's authority over the Transferred subjects. Nonetheless, he continued to have authority over the Governors' and the Governor General's discretionary powers.

Expansion of the Franchise and Enlargement of Legislatures

The Act's expansion of franchise was another noteworthy feature. The voting rights of around ten percent of the population were granted. In India, direct elections were first introduced under this Act.

A Federal Court

This was to be established in accordance with the Government of India Act, 1935, to interpret the Act and resolve conflicts pertaining to federal subjects. The Act established a Federal Court with a maximum of six judges and one Chief Justice.^{xi} The sole original jurisdiction to resolve conflicts between the Centre and its component Units has been delegated to the Federal Court. The ability to file appeals from High Courts to the Federal Court and the Federal Court to the Privy Council was established. Additionally, the Federal Court had the authority to give Special Leave to Appeal, and in order to file an appeal in these cases, a High Court certificate was required.

Reorganization of Provinces

The provinces were likewise reorganised or restructured in some way by this Act. After being divided from Bombay, a province was given the name Sindh. The division of Bihar and Orissa into their respective provinces is another action that has been taken. Orissa and Sindh are the two new provinces created by this Act.

Separation of Burma

This Act reflects the Government of India's acceptance of the Simon Commission's suggestion to split Burma from India. The Burma Act was passed in 1935, and two years later, in 1937, the country was officially separated from India. The Burma Act called for the creation of a new Burma office with the authority to declare Burma a sovereign nation.^{xii}

Supremacy of the Parliament

The 1935 Act was a strict law. No Indian legislative, be it temporary or federal, was allowed to change or amend it. The only body with the power to alter it was the British Government. At most, the Indian legislature might propose a resolution to amend the constitution in hopes of bringing about a change. India was forced to accept it by the British parliament.

Federal Railway Authority

The Federal Railway Authority, a new body established by this Act, now has control over the railway. There were seven members of this authority, and they were not subject to ministerial or councillor oversight. The Governor-General received direct reports from the authority. Convincing the British investor that their investment in the railway was safe was the primary motivation behind the creation of this authority.

Other Provisions

It called for the creation of the Reserve Bank of India to oversee the nation's credit and currency. It also stipulated the creation of a Provincial Public Service Commission and a Joint Public Service Commission for two or more provinces, in addition to the Federal Public Service Commission.

Federal Legislature

The Governor General will represent His Majesty in the Federal Legislature, which will have two chambers called the House of Assembly and the Council of State, respectively. Two hundred and fifty representatives of British India and no more than one hundred and twenty-five representatives of the Indian States will make up the Federal Assembly, while one hundred and fifty-six representatives of British India and no more than one hundred and four representatives of the Indian States will make up the Council of State. ⁱ

The First Schedule to this Act's provisions pertaining to representation shall be followed in the selection of these representatives.

The Council of State will remain a permanent body that cannot be dissolved, but in compliance with the rules in the aforementioned First Schedule, about one-third of its members will retire every three years.

Every Federal Assembly shall exist for five years following the date of its first sitting, unless earlier dissolved; the Assembly shall be disbanded upon the end of the aforementioned five-year period.

The Federal Legislature 1935 shall call a meeting of the Chambers at least once per year, with a maximum of twelve months not elapsing between PART II. The date of the last sitting of one session and the date designated for the first sitting of the subsequent session.

The Legislative, pro-Governor-General, may, in his discretion, from time to time, rogation and dissolution, subject to the terms of this section.

- a. call a meeting of the Chambers or of either Chamber at a time and location of his choosing;
- b. dissolve the Federal Assembly; (b) prorogue the Chambers.
- c. No later than the day that may be designated in that regard in His Majesty's Proclamation establishing the Federation, the Chambers shall be called to order for their first session.

The Governor-General has the power to address any chamber of the Federal Legislature or both chambers simultaneously, and he may demand that members attend in order to accomplish this. (1) Address, and (2) The Governor-General may, at his discretion, convey messages to either Federal Chamber chamber. Legislature, about a Bill that is currently pending in the Legislature or not, and a Chamber to which such a message is addressed, shall as soon as possible took into account any issue that the message requires them to evaluate.

The right to speak in, and the right to participate in, any joint sitting of the Chambers, any advocate

committee of the Legislature of which he may be named General a member, shall belong to each minister, counsellor, and advocate general. However, this section does not grant any of these groups the right to vote.¹

Officers of the Council of State shall designate two members of the Council to serve as Chambers, respectively, as quickly as possible. President and Deputy President thereof; alternatively, the Council may designate another member to fill the position if the current President or Deputy President becomes vacant.

In addition to being removed from office by a resolution of the Council passed by a majority of all then-members of the Council, a member holding the office of President or Deputy President of the Council of State shall vacate his or her office if he or she ceases to be a member of the Council. No resolution for the purposes of this subsection may be moved unless at least fourteen days' notice has been given of the intention to move the resolution.

When the President's office is vacant, the Deputy President, or, if the Deputy President's office is also vacant, any member of the Council that the Governor-General may, at his discretion, appoint for the purpose, will perform the President's duties. In the event that the President is not present at a Council meeting, the Deputy President, or, if he is also not present, any member of the Council determined by the Council's rules of procedure, or, in the absence of both, any other person designa.

The wages of the President and Deputy President of the Council of State shall be paid in accordance with any Acts of the Federal Legislature, and in the absence of any such provisions, the Governor-General may fix the remuneration.

The previous clauses of this section will apply to the Federal Assembly in the same way that they apply to the Council of State, with the titles "Speaker" and "Deputy Speaker" replacing "President" and "Deputy President," respectively, and references to the Assembly being used instead of the Council.

With the caveat that, whenever the Assembly is dissolved, the Speaker shall remain in office until right before the Assembly's first meeting following the

dissolution, subject to the rules of paragraph (2) of this section as applied by this subsection.

Conclusion

A significant step towards India's independence and aiding in state reorganisation was the Government of India Act, 1935. The Act was adopted by the British with the intention of gaining the support of contemporary nationalists and gaining control over India. The act had numerous problems that inadvertently hampered the people's rights and morals, and it was bad for the Indians because there was no central administration. The Act was mainly disappointing because it offered no guarantees about the granting of Dominion Status and failed to take into account the needs and feelings of politically conscious Indians in a compassionate manner. Furthermore, the New Constitution made no mention of the people's fundamental rights. It merely demonstrated how powerful the British government was over the Indians. They had introduced this Act solely to enrich themselves. Notwithstanding the aforementioned shortcomings, the new Act had unique significance. Despite the fact that many Indians disliked this Act, it was significant since it cleared the path for India's independence. The 1935 legislation improved the situation as it related to the provinces. The foundation for negotiations between British and Indian parties to gain independence was established by this Act. On the other hand, a number of elements introduced by the Government of India Act 1935 eventually served as the foundation of our Constitution. Therefore, the Government of India Act of 1935 marked a turning point in the evolution of India's constitution, as the experiment of provincial autonomy fulfilled certain beneficial reasons. After India gained independence, the Government of India Act 1935 was superseded by the Indian Constitution.

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HAUNTED BY LOSS: MAGICAL REALISM AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN A STRANGE THING HAPPENED IN CHERRY HALL BY JASMINE WARGA

RATHNAMALA. K

*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English
Sri G.V.G Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalpet, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. K. DEEPA

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Sri G.V.G Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalpet, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

This paper explores Jasmine Warga's A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall through the lens of magical realism, positioning the novel within a wider cultural framework that includes contemporary Indian women's art, literature, and cinema. It investigates how feminist aesthetics reinterpret the female body, desire, and emotional memory by breaking away from traditional narrative structures. The study focuses on themes of grief, trauma, and identity, analyzing how Warga crafts a surreal yet emotionally grounded space in which the protagonist navigates loss and reconstructs selfhood. The museum in the novel becomes a liminal site, simultaneously real and imagined, where suppressed emotions, fragmented memories, and bodily transformations surface as part of the grieving process. Magical realism, as employed in the narrative, serves as a method of reclaiming emotional authenticity and disrupting patriarchal constraints that often silence women's pain. In dialogue with Indian feminist creators who similarly utilize metaphor, surreal imagery, and layered storytelling, this paper highlights how Warga's work resonates across borders, reflecting a shared aesthetics of resistance and reclamation. The novel's portrayal of identity as fluid and grief as transformative challenges conventional ideas of closure and healing. This study situates A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall within a broader feminist project that seeks to rewrite desire, recast bodies, and affirm the emotional realities of women through bold narrative experimentation. It contributes to a growing body of scholarship that recognizes magical realism not merely as a literary device but as a political and aesthetic strategy for reimagining women's inner worlds.

Keywords: *magical realism, feminist aesthetics, grief, identity, jasmine warga, cherry hall, indian women artists, trauma, surreal space, embodiment, emotional truth*

Introduction

Jasmine Warga's *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall* presents a deeply affecting narrative that blends the ordinary with the surreal, exploring how adolescents process loss and navigate fragmented identities in the wake of trauma. Through the subtle use of magical realism, Warga crafts a space where emotional truths take shape in fantastical forms, allowing the unspeakable weight of grief to manifest

in ways that feel both strange and intimate. The novel traces the protagonist's inner world as it unravels and reforms under the strain of absence, guilt, and longing, inviting readers to engage with the blurred boundaries between memory and imagination, sorrow and transformation. Set against the backdrop of a school touched by tragedy, the story follows a journey not only through mourning but also toward self-understanding and emotional reconnection. This

paper examines how Warga employs magical realism as a literary device to illuminate the complexities of grief and the search for identity, revealing how the surreal elements mirror the emotional dissonance inherent in adolescence and trauma.

Magical Realism as Emotional Cartography

Jasmine Warga's *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall* crafts a deeply symbolic world in which magical realism becomes the emotional blueprint of the narrative. Instead of relying solely on internal thoughts to express grief, the story externalizes emotion into the very structure of Cherry Hall. This hall is no ordinary building. It is a living, breathing extension of the protagonist's psychological state, reacting to sorrow, memory, and disconnection in ways that cannot be fully explained by logic.

The surreal behavior of Cherry Hall illustrates how grief warps perception. When the protagonist describes the building as "breathing, as if the building had lungs of its own," it signals a shift where architecture becomes responsive to emotion. This description is not just metaphorical; it suggests that emotional pain has seeped into the fabric of the environment, making the building itself a participant in the grieving process.

This blending of the psychological and the physical is emphasized in one of the most poignant moments of the narrative:

It felt like the hall was holding its breath with me, waiting to see if I'd fall apart. Its silence wasn't empty—
it felt expectant, like grief lingering in the walls.
(Warga 61)

Here, the silence within the hall becomes saturated with unspoken emotion. The space does not merely reflect sorrow; it seems to anticipate it. The protagonist projects her inner struggle onto her surroundings, and those surroundings respond in kind. The hall's stillness becomes a mirror of emotional suffocation, where even the air seems tense with grief.

Through these subtle distortions of reality, Warga captures the fragile mental state of a grieving adolescent. The protagonist's sense of space and time is fractured, and magical realism becomes the perfect medium to express this instability. Rather than escape from reality, the story intensifies it, showing how trauma can reshape even the most familiar environments.

The magical elements do not distract from the emotional core of the novel. Instead, they highlight how identity and memory become fragmented in times of pain. Warga's use of magical realism is quiet but profound, allowing readers to feel the heaviness of grief not just through words but through atmosphere, structure, and silence. Cherry Hall does not just house the protagonist's story; it breathes with it, mourns with it, and holds space for healing.

Fragmented Identity and the Self after Loss

Warga's exploration of identity in *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall* delves into how grief can displace not only one's emotional stability but also one's sense of self. The narrative does not limit grief to the pain of losing another; instead, it focuses on what is lost within, the parts of identity that fracture, scatter, or vanish in the face of trauma. As Judith Butler notes in *Precarious Life*, grief "exposes the constitutive sociality of the self," revealing how identity is shaped through relationships and how its loss unsettles the foundations of one's being (Butler 23).

Within the novel, the protagonist's selfhood becomes increasingly unstable after the death that haunts the story. She drifts between who she used to be and who she is becoming, someone unrecognizable even to herself. This fragmented identity is represented not only through narrative voice and memory lapses but also through recurring mirror imagery and ghost-like metaphors that resist straightforward interpretation. The magical realism in the text makes these fractures literal, not symbolic.

The character does not just feel ghostly; she inhabits that state.

One of the most haunting lines in the novel captures this disconnection vividly:

Every time I look in the mirror,
I feel like a ghost pretending to be me.
Like someone who borrowed my face but forgot
how to wear it. (Warga 98)

This moment is not a fleeting metaphor. In the magical realist framework of the novel, it holds weight as an ontological truth. The protagonist's reflection no longer confirms her identity; instead, it deepens her estrangement. The mirror, often used in magical realism to symbolize alternate realities or fractured perceptions, becomes a portal through which the character confronts her internal disintegration. She recognizes her face but not the person behind it, reinforcing the idea that her grief has not only reshaped her emotions but her very essence.

Warga uses magical realism to avoid explaining these ruptures through psychological realism alone. Instead of offering therapy sessions or inner dialogue filled with rational introspection, the novel allows surreal events, ghostly encounters, sentient spaces, and shape-shifting reflections to carry the weight of transformation. In doing so, the narrative affirms that identity in grief is unstable, elusive, and ever-changing. The protagonist must navigate a world where the border between the living and the dead, the real and the imagined, becomes fluid, mirroring the flux of her own selfhood.

Through this nuanced portrayal, Warga portrays the self not as a fixed entity but as one that can unravel under pressure and reassemble in new, uncertain forms. The novel suggests that healing, if it comes, will not be a return to the old self, but the emergence of someone entirely different shaped by loss, haunted by memory, and slowly stitched together from broken parts.

Grief as Haunting: The Ghost Motif

In *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall*, the ghost motif is not deployed to instill fear but rather to represent the emotional residue of grief. The presence of ghosts in the narrative testifies to the enduring emotional bonds that persist after death. Warga does not present ghosts as intrusions from another realm but as extensions of memory, grief, and the unspoken. The protagonist experiences these spectral moments as part of her reality, not as hallucinations or interruptions. Her brother's voice is felt in the walls, his breath in the wind, and his footsteps on the staircase, creating a world where memory occupies physical space.

This treatment of haunting aligns with Avery Gordon's interpretation in *Ghostly Matters*, where she describes haunting as "a constituent element of modern social life" and not simply a ghost story. According to Gordon, haunting arises when "repressed or unresolved social violence is lived out and experienced as a return," not for erasure but for acknowledgment (Gordon 8). Warga's novel invites the reader to view these moments not as strange or supernatural intrusions but as legitimate extensions of the grieving mind. Haunting, in this context, becomes an emotional mechanism rather than a narrative embellishment.

One of the most moving illustrations of this phenomenon is found in the protagonist's quiet reflection:

Sometimes, I think the wind is him,
whispering reminders I'm not ready to hear.
It's soft, like a breath I used to know.
(Warga 112)

In these lines, grief takes on a natural, almost sacred, quality. The wind becomes a vessel for the brother's memory, embedding the intangible within the tangible. Warga's language gently blurs the boundary between the living and the dead, revealing that grief does not exist in a vacuum. It inhabits the world, pressing itself into the textures of daily life. The

fantastical element does not distance the reader from the emotional truth; instead, it brings the character's inner state into vivid clarity.

Through magical realism, Warga legitimizes the supernatural as a valid emotional language. The presence of the brother's ghost is not resolved, explained, or dismissed. Rather, it is accepted as part of the protagonist's psychological and emotional landscape. This allows the novel to portray grief not as a linear process but as an ongoing experience. Haunting, in this narrative, is not about the return of the dead but about the persistence of love and the struggle to live with absence. The ghost becomes not a reminder of loss alone but a part of the healing journey.

Temporal Displacement and the Elasticity of Time

In *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall*, Jasmine Warga presents time not as a fixed sequence of moments but as an emotional current that ebbs and flows with the intensity of grief. One of the most striking features of *Cherry Hall* is how time bends within its walls, reflecting the disjointed inner life of the grieving protagonist. The narrative often loops back into memories, skips forward into imagined futures, or seems to freeze entirely in moments of heightened emotion. This elasticity of time is not simply a stylistic choice but a reflection of psychological reality. Grief fractures the linearity of time, suspending the present and dragging the mourner into past moments without warning.

This narrative strategy closely aligns with Paul Ricoeur's insights in *Memory, History, Forgetting*, where he describes memory as inherently fragmented and nonlinear. He writes, "What is remembered is not always what one wants to remember, nor is it placed where it should be, but rather, it intrudes unexpectedly and resists chronology" (Ricoeur 57). Warga's use of flashbacks and seamless transitions between memory and present action demonstrates this principle vividly. Her

protagonist does not recollect through deliberate introspection; instead, memory breaks into the present as a visceral experience, suggesting how trauma leaves the self stuck between temporal planes.

One particularly powerful instance of this occurs as the protagonist finds herself involuntarily transported back to a day before the tragedy:

I blinked, and suddenly I was back there, on the day before everything changed. The light in the room felt too familiar, too bright. (Warga 145)

The sensory vividness in this recollection blurs the boundaries between now and then. It is not just a memory but a relived moment. The past reasserts itself, not as a ghost, but as a living element in the present. The protagonist's involuntary return underscores the way grief operates outside of logic, yanking one back to what was, even while the present continues around them.

This temporal instability is characteristic of magical realism, where time does not obey objective rules but responds to emotional resonance. The narrative's refusal to adhere to linear progression mirrors the trauma's resistance to closure or resolution. Warga's manipulation of time allows the protagonist's grief to unfold across a fluctuating timeline, emphasizing that healing is not a forward-moving journey but a cyclical and often recursive process. In *Cherry Hall*, time bends to accommodate the weight of memory, and in doing so, it becomes an emotional landscape rather than a chronological framework.

Adolescence, by nature, is a period of threshold existence, a time marked by emotional turbulence, physical change, and psychological uncertainty. This liminal state makes it an ideal framework for magical realism, a literary mode that thrives on boundary dissolution and the coexistence of contradictions. In *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall*, Jasmine Warga skillfully embeds the adolescent experience

within a setting that mirrors this transitional period: a university building that is simultaneously mundane and mystical. The protagonist, caught between childhood and adulthood, grief and healing, and realism and magic, experiences an emotional metamorphosis that is mapped directly onto the architecture of Cherry Hall.

The hall itself functions as a transformative space, part shelter, part supernatural entity. As the protagonist navigates this space, her internal emotional shifts are mirrored in the hall's mutable geography. Doors emerge in places where none previously existed. Hallways stretch and contract. Lights flicker in moments of psychological tension. These surreal changes are not arbitrary but serve to externalize the emotional instability that characterizes her coming of age. Rather than symbolizing fear or horror, these magical disruptions make the space feel both haunted and sacred, a cocoon where transformation can occur.

Warga's use of magical realism reinvents the traditional *bildungsroman* structure by refusing to tie transformation to resolution. Her protagonist does not move toward a singular point of closure but instead inhabits a space of continual flux. Magical realism, in this context, amplifies the adolescent's right to ambiguity. The genre allows emotional contradictions to exist without reconciliation, portraying growth as a nonlinear, often painful process.

Stephen Slemon articulates this well, asserting that

magical realism is a mode that resists totalizing narratives.

and permits contradictory worldviews to co-exist within the

same textual frame, without insisting on harmony. (Slemon 12)

Warga's narrative exemplifies this resistance. Her protagonist is not forced into premature healing or artificially neat resolutions. Instead, she is permitted to explore her grief, identity, and transformation in a

space that understands emotional truth as fragmented and surreal. Cherry Hall, through its magical qualities, provides not just a setting but a responsive environment, one that recognizes adolescence as a period of becoming rather than arriving.

In this way, magical realism becomes more than a stylistic choice; it becomes a psychological and emotional necessity. It affirms that for adolescents, especially those navigating trauma, the world may not always feel rational or ordered. Warga validates that experience by letting the architecture of the novel shift with its emotional stakes, showing that transformation does not require logic; it requires space, ambiguity, and emotional honesty.

The Role of Silence and Unspoken Grief

Jasmine Warga's *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall* demonstrates a deep sensitivity to the role of silence in expressing grief. In many instances, it is not what the characters say that carries emotional weight but what remains unsaid. Silence, pauses, and unfinished thoughts dominate conversations, signaling an interiority too complex or painful for articulation. Warga captures the idea that grief often escapes the reach of language, where the effort to explain or describe loss feels both inadequate and overwhelming.

This treatment of silence reflects Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic idea that the unconscious often speaks through what is not said. In *Cherry Hall*, silence is not a void but a container of emotional density. It functions as a form of communication loaded with tension, longing, and unresolved sorrow. Rather than relying solely on dialogue to portray the emotional landscape, Warga allows these silences to stand as powerful indicators of psychological depth.

I opened my mouth to explain—but nothing came out.

What words could ever be enough? (Warga 171)

This moment exemplifies the novel's recurring theme:

that language can falter in the presence of grief. The protagonist's inability to speak is not due to a lack of thought or emotion, but rather the overwhelming realization that words might never do justice to the magnitude of her loss. In this context, silence becomes a kind of emotional truth, a space where pain exists without mediation.

Magical realism, in Warga's hands, becomes the narrative's response to the limits of language. Where words fail, the surreal intervenes. Ghosts appear, rooms shift, and sensations blur reality, not to escape pain but to give form to what cannot be spoken. The magical elements of the novel offer an alternative vocabulary, one rooted not in logic or clarity but in emotional resonance. A hallway that tightens, a shadow that lingers, or a voice that echoes in the wind—these are not distractions from grief but extensions of it. By privileging silence and symbolic expression, Warga allows the protagonist's inner world to surface in ways that speech could not accomplish. The unspoken becomes as significant as the spoken, and magical realism becomes the bridge between silence and meaning. This approach validates the emotional reality of trauma, acknowledging that the most profound experiences often resist verbal explanation and instead require a language of their own composed of images, metaphors, and the supernatural.

Conclusion

Jasmine Warga's *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall* constructs a delicate and deeply resonant exploration of grief, identity, and emotional transformation, framed through the intricate lens of magical realism. The novel does not employ the genre as a decorative element or escapist fantasy but rather as an essential narrative strategy, one capable of rendering the intangible processes of mourning, memory, and self-redefinition with emotional precision. Through magical realism, Warga crafts a space where surreal manifestations mirror

psychological states, making visible what is often buried beneath silence or suppressed in the rational world. Grief in this novel does not follow a linear arc of resolution. It fractures time, unsettles place, and disorients the self. Cherry Hall becomes more than just a setting; it transforms into a living metaphor for the protagonist's fractured interiority, a space where the boundaries between memory and reality collapse. The supernatural is never a device of fear but a language of intimacy, through which unresolved feelings, lost connections, and fragmented identities are allowed to surface. The presence of ghosts, shifting architectures, and elastic time are not arbitrary magical features but carefully placed expressions of emotional truth. This study has closely examined how the novel incorporates magical motifs, spatial and temporal distortions, spectral figures, and symbolic silence to reflect the intricacies of adolescent grief. These elements collectively demonstrate Warga's commitment to portraying emotional reality with psychological honesty. In doing so, the novel challenges the conventions of young adult fiction by refusing closure or simplified healing, instead presenting a narrative where ambiguity, contradiction, and uncertainty are accepted as part of the human experience. By situating the protagonist's coming-of-age within a surreal framework, Warga opens a new avenue for discussing trauma and resilience. Magical realism, in this context, becomes a transformative tool not to evade suffering but to reshape it into a form that can be seen, understood, and lived with. Ultimately, *A Strange Thing Happened in Cherry Hall* stands as a significant contribution to contemporary literature, offering a narrative in which the surreal does not distance the reader from truth but brings them closer to the elusive, often inexpressible dimensions of loss and identity.

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UNVEILING THE MAGICAL REALISM IN PAULO COELHO'S CAPTIVATING NOVELS

K. RAMYA BHARATHI

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
V.V.Vanniaperumal College for Women, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. T. GANGA PARAMESWARI

*Research Guide & Associate Professor, Department of English
V.V.Vanniaperumal College for Women, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*This study scrutinises the utilisation of magical realism in the books of Brazilian author Paulo Coelho, with emphasis on his bestseller novels. Coelho adeptly twists within mystical elements alongside actual settings so as to fashion narratives which transcend daily experiences and allow readers to adventure into metaphysical and spiritual fields. Magical realism within Coelho's fiction is not simply just a stylistic device and also is instead a philosophical platform which highlights the absolute linkage within the cosmos, the essence with destiny, also the pursuit for one's own legend. Coelho's characters frequently undergo preternatural encounters; apparitions, portents, or meetings involving mythical figures are included. These are regarded as commonplace happenings, thereby effacing the demarcation existing between actuality and imagination. This specific device allows Coelho to expound upon themes like self-discovery, spirituality, and transformation and position them in commonplace, terrestrial settings. Via the scrutiny of main episodes of magical realism in *The Alchemist*, *Brida*, and *Veronika Decides to Die*, this paper exhibits how Coelho uses the genre to scrutinize as well as convey universal truths, thus suggesting that magic is not outside reality, but in the very heart of the human spirit itself.*

Keywords: *magical realism, mundane life, mystical, omens, self- discovery*

Introduction

Magical realism refers to a literary-artistic manner of worlds in which the magical or the supernatural becomes real in an environment otherwise realistic. The extraordinary becomes ordinary, and supernatural events portray the mundane reality of everyday life. The difference that magical realism proposes from genres such as fantasy and science fiction is that it presents a matter-of-fact attitude to the introduction of these magical elements. The characters, in the course of the narrative, do not seek to explain, nor justify, nor question them; instead, the magical realm is seamlessly interwoven into acceptance as just part of life.

The genre creates precise points of blurring between the natural and the supernatural, the rational and the mythical, the personal and the political. It gives the authors an avenue toward exploring difficult

issues implicating cultural identities, spiritual belief systems, histories of trauma, and existential inquiry, using rich metaphors, symbolism, and folklore. Magical realism is something more than just a device; it represents a way of constructing an epistemology, often derived from postcolonial situations where differing realities—mythic, ancestral, and modern coexist.

The path that magical realism has taken as a literary genre is long and rich, beginning as art-evaluation in early twentieth-century Europe and gaining strength as a narrative weapon in Latin American literature. Founding members of magical realism, Roh, Carpentier, Garcia Marquez, and Asturias, each with their own unique contributions, helped to mold magical realism as a global literary movement.

The term "magical realism" was first employed by German art critic Franz Roh in his 1925 essay *Nach-Expressionismus: Magischer Realismus*. Roh employed the term to characterize a new post-expressionist painting movement. Alejo Carpentier elaborated on the theory of "lo real maravilloso (the marvelous real)." For Carpentier, in Latin America, the border between the real and the magical was bound to be thin because of the country's rich mix of indigenous mythology, colonial past, and revolutionary politics. Magical realism is a means of telling the truth about the nature of the existence of Latin America—its violence, myths, and political instability—with a narrative mode that was in accord with its surreality. (García Márquez)

Coelho's narrative style reflects the genre's essence merging the mystical with the real, using spiritual symbolism, and exploring life's deeper meaning. His version of magical realism is subtle, reflective, and rooted in the search for purpose. In a 2005 interview, Coelho said:

"I believe that everything in life is a sign. The universe speaks the language of signs, and we must learn to listen."

This notion reflects the magical realism of his work: the world has inherent meaning, and seeking it out is what it means to be human.

Surrealism in *The Alchemist*, *Brida* and *Veronika Decides to Die*

Santiago's recurring dream about a hidden treasure near the Egyptian pyramids sparks his adventure in *The Alchemist*. In the realm of magical realism, dreams go beyond just psychological experiences; they become deep insights that steer the protagonist's journey, both physically and spiritually. This blend of dreams and reality beautifully illustrates the genre's knack for blurring the lines between what's real and what's mystical.

Santiago's talent for interpreting omens like natural signs and sacred objects such as Urim and

Thummim captures the essence of "lo real maravilloso", where the extraordinary is woven into the everyday. These omens represent a universal language the "Language of the World"—that links all living beings through a shared spiritual core. "The boy reached through to the Soul of the World, and saw that it was a part of the Soul of God. And he saw that the Soul of God was his own soul" (Coelho 161). As Santiago becomes more adept at understanding this language, it marks his personal evolution, weaving spiritual significance into the very fabric of reality and making the fantastical elements of the story feel justified.

The *Alchemist* himself showcases supernatural powers, like turning lead into gold or communicating with elements of nature such as the wind and desert. "I can turn myself into the wind, just to ask you one question" (Coelho 149). These moments unfold without any explanation or narrative distance, sticking to magical realism's hallmark of authorial reticence. The fantastical is treated as part of the everyday within the story's own logic, inviting readers to embrace these events as natural extensions of reality. This technique underscores magical realism's remarkable ability to seamlessly blend the ordinary with the extraordinary.

In *Brida*, Paulo Coelho narrates a tale in which mystic experiences and spiritual awakening are organically woven into the mundane life of the protagonist. This is realistic to the extent of magical realism, in which the supernatural is not depicted as extraordinary but as an ordinary part of the world. Ritual magic, astral projection and reading the "Book of the World" are not depicted as something unusual or fictional, but as actual means of acquiring knowledge on the world. Reincarnation is an important aspect of the novel's concept of life. *Brida's* assertion of having had shared past lives with the Magus is not symbolic its reality, as presented in the novel. Her memories of the past lives are validated by spiritual experiences and demonstrate how

magical realism brings mystical concepts to life and into the realm of possibility. "There is a bridge between the visible and the invisible, and it's called magic" (Coelho 71).

Brida's encounters with her guides, the Magus and Wicca, once more affirm the intermingling of the divine and the mundane. They are not following the archetypal teacher of conventional academia but imparting deeper spiritual truths through rituals and experiential learning. Their instruction imposes the magical realist theme that wisdom is not imparted by the pages or logical reasoning but disclosed by experience and transcendent occurrences. "We are all witches, and we all have a soul mate that helps us find our path." (Coelho 101). Coelho, through Magus in *Brida*, presents the idea of a soul mate as something magical and not necessarily romantic. In the tradition of the Sun, a soul mate can be identified by a special light in their eyes, while in the tradition of Moon, it's seen as a light over the left shoulder. "We are all witches, and we all have a soul mate that helps us find our path" (Coelho 101). Magical realism in *Brida* makes the mystical possible to feel and intuit, rather than think.

In *Veronika Decides to Die*, Dr. Igor's lie about Veronika's health stands out as a key instance of magical realism. He makes up a tale that she has a week left to live using drugs to bring on physical symptoms that make her believe she's about to die. This trickery creates a more intense version of reality where Veronika starts to look at her life in a new light, which leads to a deep change in who she is as a person. The notion that facing imminent death can spark a transformation is almost enchanting, even if it's often seen as just a part of a psychological journey.

"At Vilete, the lunatics had taught her that madness was the inability to communicate" (Coelho 131). The Vilete mental hospital transforms into a whimsical realm where societal norms are turned on their head. In this setting, embracing one's

eccentricities becomes a pathway to liberation, rather than a source of constraint. "In Vilete, she had discovered something that she would never have imagined possible: that she was capable of loving life again" (Coelho 179). Veronika, the protagonist, observes that the patients here live authentically, unburdened by rigid schedules or the expectations of others - a stark contrast to her former life of conformity. Coelho's vivid depiction minimizes the gap between losing one's grasp on reality and attaining a deeper wisdom, offering a captivating example of the magical realism genre's ability to challenge our perceptions of normality.

In Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*, magic and reality blend well. The book doesn't hide its supernatural elements, they're everywhere. You'll find signs, visions of the future, and a mysterious alchemist. Santiago also realises: "He had discovered that the universe spoke many languages, but that if you could understand the language of omens, you could understand the world." (Coelho 105). These all show that in this story's world mystical and godly things aren't just possible - they're expected. By putting these unusual things front and center, the book makes it clear: this is no ordinary tale, but one full of fantasy. In *Brida*, the liminal space- Vilete, the tradition of the Sun and the tradition of the Moon are the motifs or signs that are seen mystical and beyond normal understanding. Veronika's journey from hopelessness to self-discovery is filled with moments that feel both genuine and extraordinary. "She had been dead and was now alive again, and the miracle lay not in her rebirth but in her ability to see life as it really was" (Coelho 191). Her realization that she can live without worrying about other's opinions reflects the essence of magical realism, a personal transformation through surreal experiences.

Conclusion

Through these means, Coelho uses magical realism not only as a literary tool, but as a mindset. He invites the reader to perceive the mundane world as spiritually infused, and that intuition and personal insight can be as compelling as scientific truth. This literary device allows Coelho to write about themes such as self-discovery, spirituality, and transformation and place them in everyday, mundane settings. Through the analysis of key episodes of magical realism in *The Alchemist*, *Brida*, and *Veronika Decides to Die*, this paper exhibits how Coelho uses the genre to scrutinize and convey universal truths, thus suggesting that magic is not outside reality, but in the very heart of the human spirit itself. Coelho employs a subdued form of magical realism that aligns with Gabriel García Márquez's assertion that "what matters is the credibility of the inexplicable." Through magical realism Paulo Coelho creates both a writing style and a tool to address mysteries found in ordinary existence as sacred elements. The stories reveal that the universe contains spiritual clues along with mystical wisdom which becomes evident to those who develop awareness in seeing such details. Coelho's novels showcase his distinctive take on

magical realism, focusing less on cultural or political commentary and more on existential awakening, spiritual purpose, and the extraordinary hidden within the ordinary. His work invites readers on a captivating journey of self-discovery and transcendence.

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THE DICHOTOMY OF URBAN MODERNITY VS RURAL TRADITION IN AMITAV GHOSH'S SEA OF POPPIES

R. RAMYA BHARATHI

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
V.V.Vanniaperumal College for Women, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu*

Dr.T. GANGA PARAMESWARI

*Associate Professor, Department of English
V.V.Vanniaperumal College for Women, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract:

In Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies, the dichotomy between urban modernity and rural tradition forms a central theme, illustrating the tensions between the rapidly evolving colonial world and the enduring practices of agrarian life. Set against the backdrop of 19th-century British colonialism and the opium trade, the novel contrasts the growing capitalist structures of urban centres like Calcutta with the agrarian, community-oriented life of rural India. While urban spaces represent the forces of global trade, economic power, and technological advancement, rural spaces are grounded in tradition, but increasingly subjected to colonial exploitation. The opium trade emerges as the key intersection between these two worlds, as rural labour is harnessed for the benefit of urban markets, while the journey of characters aboard the ship Ibis symbolizes the forced migration from rural customs to the uncertain terrain of colonial modernity. Through characters such as Deeti, Kalua, and Zachary Reid, Ghosh explores the fluidity of identity and the struggles of resistance and survival in a world where rural and urban lives are inextricably linked yet sharply divided. Ultimately, the novel highlights the complex negotiation between tradition and modernity, showing how colonialism reshapes both rural and urban landscapes, while offering new forms of agency and conflict for those caught between them.

Keywords: urban modernity, rural tradition, colonialism, opium trade, globalization

Introduction

Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* (2008), the first novel in the *Ibis Trilogy*, presents a rich tapestry of historical, cultural, and social dynamics set against the backdrop of 19th-century colonial India. A critical theme in the novel is the dichotomy between urban modernity and rural tradition. Ghosh masterfully contrasts these two spheres, highlighting their intersections, conflicts, and the transformative impact of colonialism on both. The story is set against an era of spectacular opium trade, crucial to the development of the Indian subcontinent. It enters the huge British colonial rule social, economic and cultural consequences on the region through vivid storytelling. Isolation between rural villages and urban centres are brought to exploitation for the

colonial economy, based on opium trade. While colonialism promoted inequality and disassociation in the urban space, it threw traditional agricultural practice up on its head in rural areas. There was great transformational work going on that impacted not only the landscape, but the lives of people, as we think they are, in their social structures, their economies, and their identities.

Amitav Ghosh paints vivid pictures of how colonial capitalism recast and refashioned Indian culture, technological advance, class and process of identity and identification in rural and urban India as it imposed industrial modernity on Indian life. It contrasts the novel literally, with rural villages, traditionally agrarian life with the rapidly industrialising urban centres. He traces this to

understand how colonial rule invokes such radical disruption to traditional social orders in order to replace an old age way of life. Finally colonial economics, from afar, but all too often continuously on the ground, starts to break down rural communities through their agricultural practices and social structures. On the other hand, the world of modernity symbolizes urban areas where modernity is perceived as a centre of alienation, destitution, and expropriation. “*Calcutta had its own language, its own smells, its own rhythms—a world that was both alien and familiar*” (Ghosh, 210), this captures the complex and contradictory nature of urban modernity. According to Ghosh, colonial capitalism forces people to live their identities through tradition and as the face of modernity and how imperialism attracted the far reaching cultural and economic changes which also participated in a great deal in forming them in their own life and rest of same societies, of the reshaping them in the societies like in communities and identifies.

Rural Tradition: A World of Community and Stability

Agrarian Life and its Challenges: Initially, the rural landscape in *Sea of Poppies* represents tradition and the community, but also most importantly a strong link to the ground itself. It reflects the timeless rhythm of life in rural India, where agricultural practices and close-knit communities define the daily existence of its inhabitants. Nevertheless, both idyllic outlook and darker realities dump from colonialism are sharply staked out against each other. As British colonial powers enforce the cultivation of opium in the land, once a source of sustenance and cultural continuity, becomes a tool of exploitation. They turn upside down the agrarian economy, and the usual way of life. Imposition of opium cultivation into communities put them in the constantly circular trap of dependence and poverty in the case of colonial profit. More than being just a way to exploit the economic

welfare of rural populations, it tears at their sense of identity, at their ability to live and act within the cultural land they've become accustomed to, leading to suffering of people drawn from their cultural moorings. For example, Deeti's life in her village revolves around agricultural cycles, religious rituals, and familial ties, highlighting the rhythm of rural life.

Social Hierarchies and Gender Norms: *Sea of Poppies* fabrics the life of a community that is firmly rooted in rural tradition which is not idyllic far from it. However, its layers espouse the powerful social structures of invisible revolutions of rigid caste hierarchies and patriarchal suppression of the individual. These are systems where people, essentially women, lives bound by tradition and tied to oppression of gender. Deeti, a central character, embodies the struggles faced by those who are trapped within these restrictive systems. Her story is about how tough a caste discrimination and patriarchy is. It illuminates a person who goes through struggles to escape this social control. This is how the society oppresses those who are minorities, Deeti as a woman trying to go within the confines of what society expects a woman to be, what society expects her to do economically. Her trying to claim her agency, her effort to buck the system that turns her world into what it is, What a great tale of resistance!!..

Urban Modernity: A Catalyst of Transformation

Urbanization under Colonialism: The banner of the 'modernity' was thus colonial cities like Calcutta: industrialization, the expansion of commerce, and the outspread of the international networks of trade. These urban centres should be defined as places of richly cultural intersection and economic exchange, by which their shifting possibilities of progress should be the defining characteristics. But they do this too, namely when they reveal the less tawdry aspects of modernization, where social inequality goes deeper, traditional values fracture, and so many become

alienated beyond comprehension during the years of colonial rule and capitalist expansion. *"For the British, the opium trade was a river of gold that fed the sinews of the empire"* (Ghosh, 83), highlights the economic motivations behind the British colonial exploitation of India.

Displacement and Fragmentation: Paulette and Zachary Reid's experiences of urban modernity are realm of opportunity and a locus of displacement. Into the promise of progress, education and personal freedom they are drawn as they traverse colonial city streets hurrying past in the endless stream of humanity. But the life that they get is a new life, which is why they become alienated and lose identity. Through telling their experiences, these people have revealed a deeply intricate and mutually dependent relationship between the pull of modernity and the emotional and cultural dislocation it so often brings, *"To leave one's land is to be born again, in a way, as someone new"* (Ghosh, 290). This reflects the transformative nature of migration and the formation of hybrid identities.

Technology and Colonial Power: Opium factories, bustling maritime trade in colonial capitalism, provide an example of the dehumanizing effects of industrial aspects of urban modernity. The hair and beard of the black-haired brother who lay undisturbed, or 'resting' as they say, as though he was merely sleeping, grabbed my attention, as I awoke from one of these cars; for these industries, driven by profit and appropriation, strip individuals of their humanity and reduce them to mere cogs in a greater economic machine. It's costly human lives and values for the accumulation of wealth.

The Tension between the Two Worlds

The Opium Trade as a Bridge and Divide: Opium cultivation hooks rural villagers in global trade networks, and makes them rich, a bridge for colonial powers. This is a critique of the devastating effects of forced opium cultivation on rural communities, *"The*

sahibs cared nothing for the lives that were being wrecked in the villages where the poppies grew" (Ghosh, 117). Opium is produced from the land and traditional livelihoods, underpinned by subsistence farming, are eroded by the very use of the land. Overall long-term effects of this transformation place communities into a position of dependency on a global market that exploits either resources or labour of communities like the British East India Company's policies force rural farmers into monoculture, severing their ties to self-sustaining agricultural practices, *"The cultivation of opium in the novel becomes a metaphor for the ways colonialism poisons not just the land but the cultural and social fabric of rural India"* (Choudhury, 72).

Cultural Hybridity and Identity Formation: The Ship Ibis is a symbol of transition and transformation, as a means of transporting not only an entire populated island, but an entire array of characters featuring individuals from different backgrounds. It is a liminal space that urban and rural identities mix, meet, and transform. Inside the boat, each walk of life (farmers, labourers, urban professionals) moves with or against the tensions that come with their traditional roots, and the pushes of colonial modernity, *"Ghosh portrays identity as fluid and contingent, shaped by forces of colonial modernity and the lived experiences of displacement"* (Mukherjee, 112). The changes these industries undergo during this journey impact not only the individual identity, but the psychosocial symbolic changes in the larger society that are coming to pass as examples of the complications and adaptation and survival in a rapidly reorganized and outmoded world. The journey of migrants from a traditional rural-lives to the modern urban lives, a transition which is usually filled with personal sacrifice. They come to lose the customs, the identity and the familiar connections when they must navigate new environment generated by the overlay of colonialism and industrialization in a world that is changing so fast.

Ghosh's Critique of Colonialism

Economic Exploitation: In *Sea of Poppies*, Ghosh shoots at how colonial powers imposed a form of modernity which was good for them almost exclusively through cities and countryside alike. Colonialism works by working cultivation of opium by force, extracting resources and controlling the manipulation of the global trade so as to destroy the traditional economy and the social structures. The capitalist system works to destroy agrarian livelihoods and to dissipate those cultural practices that had carried a community for generations. Ghosh argues this 'colonial modernity' is not 'forward motion', but the tool for control, leaving a protomartyr's scarred societies that must now struggle to find middle ground between old traditions and the oppression of modernism.

Loss of Autonomy and Displacement: Both rural and urban characters in *Sea of Poppies* become extremely dis-empowered in their lives because the colonialism affected Indian society so pervasively. Urban dwelling residents are confronted with harsh realities of a rapidly changing, industrialised environment and rural farmers are driven into the cultivation of opium that coincidentally undermine their traditional agricultural practices as well as livelihoods. Being under the yoke of the colonial rulers was a pervasive thing, not only were the economic structures of the society being altered, though severely; but so were personal identities and communal bonds as well. Also, the *Ibis* symbolizes displacement and the search for a new identity, "For those who had been uprooted from their homes, the ship was their new world, a world that would carry them to an uncertain future" (Ghosh, 341). Ghosh makes use of these characters to show the deep and lasting colonizing process that colonialism had on such a broad spectrum of Indian life.

Conclusion

Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* successfully combines the highly sophisticated considerations of

the messiness of urban modernity and rural tradition with a deep and nuanced view of colonial era India. Ghosh does not lay out either realm as purely positive or negative, but the intermingled relationship between the two and to what degree they are being redefined and transformed because of colonial presence. Colonial capitalism forces upon the rural landscape, already rooted in agricultural practices and community identity, a new form of cultivation, such as opium, that marks another imposition of this kind of colonial reality upon the older one. Meanwhile urban spaces, stands for modernity, industrialization, alienation, inequality, and cultural erosion. Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* explores themes like globalization, displacement, and the tension between modernity and tradition, presenting issues that remain profoundly relevant in contemporary times. The novel not only shows us that globalization can create alienation from the local economy and culture, but also this loss makes you feel less a part of the whole. Characters trying to live with the pressures of colonialism and modernity see their own lives play out like those of people today, caught between holding onto cultural traditions and adjusting to forces of extraordinarily fast global change.

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TRANSLATING THE 'DIVINE': THE INTERSECTION OF ART HISTORY AND RELIGION, ACROSS DIFFERENT CULTURES AND SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

P. HOIDEINIANG ZOU

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English, School of Social Sciences and Languages
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

This article examines the convergence of translation, art history, and religion across cultures and spiritual beliefs. Drawing on a scope of disciplinary viewpoints, including scholarly examinations, social investigations, and human sciences, the study investigates how beliefs and convictions are converted into imaginative structures across various verifiable social settings. It discusses the difficulties that the divergent conceptualizations of translation in art history and religion pose in conducting interdisciplinary research into the role of translation practices in artistic production, multifacetedly. The article looks at how translation is seen as an asymmetrical process that involves the interpretation of a material text as well as the composition of a sign complex whose form and meaning are subject to co-textual and contextual constraints. This article combines the idea of materiality with art history and religious studies to conceptualize 'meaning' as a construct, formed in the interplay of the material text and its constituent archaeological elements. Building on this, translation is reconceptualized as a general-level multifaceted process rather than just a cultural phenomenon. This model shows how materiality allows profound comprehension of a generalized translation hypothesis and features the manners by which these three fields have commonly formed and impacted each other philosophically.

Keywords: *artistic translation, liturgical art, multifaceted convergence, visual conundrum*

Introduction

The concept of materiality challenges translation studies to reassess their assumptions about 'liturgical art' and its translational phenomena. Art history, religion, and translation are three interconnected fields that play a critical role in moulding human culture and history. The investigation of art history includes analyzing the visual culture of various social orders and its mirroring socio-political convictions of cultural social orders. Religion, again, is an intricate portrayal of convictions, practices, and values that shape human behaviour and guide how to interpret the world. Translation includes the most common way of delivering a text beginning with one language and then onto the next while keeping up with its significant context. The mid-crossing of these three fields is exceptionally compelling, as it includes the investigation of how convictions and thoughts are

addressed and deciphered through workmanship/art. This interdisciplinary way of dealing with the investigation of art history, religion, and translation can give a more profound comprehension of how rational ideas and subjects are conveyed through various mediums and how they change across societies and times. Religion has been a main thrust in the creation of art over the entire course of time. For instance, in ancient Egypt, art was utilized to portray the divine beings and goddesses that were fundamental to their faith and convictions. Essentially, in Christian art, portrayals of immaculate figures, for example, Jesus and Mary were utilized to impart moral lessons and convictions to the faithful disciples of Christ. The display of "art as a means of religious expression has continued to the present day, with contemporary artists using their work to

investigate and challenge religious subjects” (Wood, 2019).

The connection between art history and religion is additionally muddled by the course of interpretation. Deciphering religious texts includes the exchange of words as well as the exchange of social and religious ideas. For instance, the translation of the Book of Scriptures into various dialects has prompted varieties in the translation and comprehension of its lessons (Antoon, 2017). The interpretation of unconvoluted messages likewise has suggestions for the visual culture of the general public, as it can affect how religious subjects are addressed in craftsmanship. The investigation of art history, religion, and translation has acclaimed wide recognition as of late. This interdisciplinary methodology has prompted new experiences and viewpoints on the role of religion in art and how it has been addressed and deciphered across societies. Researchers in this field have analyzed the connection between religion and art in various social settings, including Eastern Europe, India, and China. For instance, in Eastern Europe, calligraphy and mathematical examples are utilized to address religious subjects, while in India, religious figures are portrayed in intricate sanctuary carvings (Nasr, 2017; Mitter, 2018). The investigation of art history, religion, and translation gives an exceptional interdisciplinary way to deal with religious artistic subjects as it addresses and deciphers cultural ‘meaning’ through various mediums. This approach can bestow intricate sub-knowledge of the socio-cultural and religious settings in which art is created and can denounce ways in which it reflects and shapes translated convictions and practices. In that capacity, it pronounces a significant field of study for academicians, keen on investigating the perplexing connection between art history, religion, and translation.

Images of Liturgical Art and Material Religion: An Artistic Translation of ‘Faith’



Figure 1. The Byzantine mosaic of the Hagia Sophia shows the image of the Virgin and Child.

Liturgical art alludes to imaginative manifestations that are perused in religious love or compassion (Davies, 2016). It incorporates a large number of creative arts from different disciplines including painting, archaeology, music, and sculpting. The motivation behind liturgical art is to improve the profound experience of the devotees, making a tactile and ‘close to home’ association with GOD. Since time immemorial, religion has been a significant supporter of human expression (Dillenberger, 1999). In Christianity, for instance, the production of art was viewed as an approach to translating God and spreading love to the general masses. This is clear in the intricate frescoes and mosaics that adorn the walls and roofs of houses of worship and basilicas across Europe. These masterpieces are delightful to the eyes, yet in addition, they fill the philosophical gap between the religious characters and the followers, thus inadvertently translating the existences of the holy people to teach the unwavering scenes from the Holy Bible. Liturgical art isn’t restricted to Christianity, in any case. Numerous religions have their rich imaginative customs, from the many-sided calligraphy of Islamic workmanship to the bright mandalas of Buddhism (Nasr, 1987). For each situation, the reason for the craftsmanship is

something similar: to make an association between the devotees and the divine. It is a significant piece of religious work, improving the profound experience of the devotees. Through painting, model, music, and design, ceremonial craftsmanship makes a tactile and 'close to home' association with the heavenly (gods). Its significance is apparent in the rich creative customs of numerous religions, from Christianity to Islam to Buddhism.

Ritualistic art and material religion are creative articulations of faith since they act as visual portrayals of spiritual beliefs and practices. These types of craftsmanship and material culture convey religious thoughts, stories, and customs through a visual language that is open to both the benighted and the enlightened. Ceremonial art, which incorporates raw materials like stained glass windows, mosaic models, and other art styles is made explicitly for the portrayal of religious love for the divine (Agape). These fine arts frequently portray scenes from religious accounts, like the birth of Christ or the narratives of the holy people, and act as a reference to sinful reflections and thoughts. Material religion, then again, envelops the ceremonial objects and antiques that are utilized in ritual practice to make a petition to the Supreme Being. The diviner performing ritual material includes petitioning God dabs, symbols, and sacred water. These items are pervaded with strict importance and are frequently considered to have profound power or importance. Through their usage, devotees can associate with the heavenly bodies and can express their faith and trust in a spiritual community. Both ritualistic art and material religion are significant because they help in the formation of congruity between the past, present, and eventual fate of a strict social custom. Addressing the tales and myths of a particular 'faith' through visual means, art, and material culture permits devotes to partake in a congruous and continuous practice that traverses ages and societies. They likewise transcribe art for conversion

and communication. Furthermore, swaying crowds with visual appetite between the devotees and the divine.

The Sun Temple of Niuserre at Abu Ghurob is a perfect representation of material religion, where strict religious beliefs and practices are communicated through actual art rituals. During the old realm of ancient Egypt, the sanctuary was devoted to the sun god 'Ra' and was intended to translate the position of love and cultic action. The actual construction of the sanctuary was intended to mirror the cosmological convictions of ancient Egyptian religion. The temple was designed on a raised platform, representing the primordial mound from which the sun was believed to have ascended at the beginning of creation. The sanctuary's walls were enhanced with complex relief carvings and pictographs, portraying scenes from the mythology of 'Ra' and different divine beings and goddesses. The temple likewise contained different ceremonial items and ritualistic offerings that were used in various religious functions. These included sculptures of divinities, offering tables, and vessels for holding water and incense. The temple's ministers would perform everyday rituals, like offering food and drink to the divine beings and burning incense, to keep up with the temple's association with the heavenly spirits. The material religious practice of the Sun Temple of Niuserre at Abu Ghurob is significant, yet additionally supports the convictions and fates of old Egyptian culture. The temple's glory and multifaceted plan imparted the power and grandness of the divine beings, while the ceremonial offerings built up the significance of devotion and commitment in day-to-day existence. The Sun Temple of Niuserre at Abu Ghurob should likewise be viewed as a great translation of material religion, where actual art materials and practices are encouraged to communicate and build up religious convictions and spiritual values.

Birgit Meyer is a conspicuous researcher in the field of human sciences and religious studies. Her work on the convergences between religion, media, and material culture has made significant commitments to the comprehension of how religion is epitomized through different types of material culture, including pictures, sculptures, and different types of craftsmanship. In her book, "Materializing Religion: Expression, Performance and Ritual" (2011), Meyer investigates the manners by which material culture assumes a vital part in forming religious convictions, practices, and personalities. She contends that religious encounters are interceded by material articles, but that these items are basic to the actual practices. For instance, she composes that, "images, icons, and statues are important sites of interaction with the divine, and their material properties are believed to be imbued with power" (p. 3). Meyer's work additionally stresses the job of execution in the appearance of religious experience. She contends that religious practices are frequently performative, including the utilization of material items in unambiguous ways to make significant encounters with religious groups. This performative part of religion is particularly seen in festivities and other public occasions, which frequently include elaborate customs and exhibitions. Aside from her book, Meyer has additionally contributed various articles and book chapters about religion, material culture, and media. A glimpse of her outstanding work incorporates "Religious Sensations: Why Media, Aesthetics, and Power Matter in the Study of Contemporary Religion" (2009), "The 'Make-up' of the Pentecostal Assemblage: Aesthetics, Visibility, and Sensibility in Ghana" (2004), and "Mediation and the Genesis of Presence: Towards a Material Approach to Religion" (2010). Meyer's works feature the significance of material culture in moulding religious experience and articulation and reveal knowledgeable insights into the unique connection between religion and media in contemporary social orders. Ritual is likewise a

significant type of ceremonial art, as it translates the 'divine' into the ordinary.

In Christian love, songs and serenades are sung to commend God and evoke a feeling of spiritual being among the gathering (Ross, 2001). In certain customs, ritualistic musicals are viewed as a type of supplication, with the ability to carry the devotee closer to the heavenly bodies. This is obvious in the rich practice of Gregorian serenade in the Catholic Church, which has been engraving 'the virgin and the child' for quite a long time to portray the profound experience of the gospel love



Figure 2. The Sun temple of Niuserre at Abu Ghurob, previously known as the 'great slaughterhouse'

Source: Werner Forman/ Art Resource, New York.



Figure 3. Ghana, Bolgatanga, Kassena diviner performs a ritual.

Source: Carol Beckwith/Angela Fisher/Getty Images.

Materiality as a Multifaceted Framework for the Conceptualization of Art History and Religious Translation

Materiality alludes to the actual qualities of artistry, like their prowess, weight, variety, design, and shape. Materiality is significant in art history and religious translation because it can convey important past or historical events in the simplest visual or emblematic form (though not easy). By examining the materiality of art, researchers can acquire knowledge about their social and authentic settings, as well as the convictions and practices of individuals who made statue gods and worshipped them. One illustration of how materiality can illuminate art history is crafted by workmanship antiquarian Hans Belting. In his article “Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology,” Belting contends that the materiality of pictures is fundamental for their importance and capability. He proposes that how a picture is created, shown, and seen, can shape its translation and that understanding the material parts of art pictures is essential to figuring out their social importance (Belting, 2005). Essentially, in religious expression, researchers have involved materiality as a system for figuring out its strict convictions and practices. For instance, in his book “The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics,” Charles Hirschkind inspects the role of sound and materiality in moulding Islamic religious practices in Egypt. He contends that the materiality of tape tapes, which were utilized to disseminate religious lessons, assumed a significant part in picturing a feeling of closeness to the local authorities and in evoking Islamic teachings in Egypt (Hirschkind, 2006). Another illustration of how materiality can illuminate religious examinations is crafted by David Morgan, who has composed widely on the materiality of religious pictures. In his book “Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images,” Morgan looks at the manners by which the actual qualities of religious art, like their size, material, and style, can

convey religious importance. He contends that by concentrating on the materiality of pictures, researchers can acquire knowledge of the religious convictions and practices of individuals who created and worshipped them (Morgan, 2010). In conclusion, materiality is a significant system for understanding art history and religious translations, as it primarily provides knowledge into the verifiable social and cultural settings of art and ‘texts’, as well as their importance and implications. By dissecting the material parts of art and religious itineraries, researchers can foster a more nuanced comprehension of the convictions and practices of individuals seeking spiritual guidance and enlightenment.



Figure 4. King Akhenaten and his Queen Nefertiti worship Aten or Aton, the Sun God.

Textual and Religious Entanglements as Great Translations?

The idea of “textual and religious entanglement as translation” has been expounded by a few researchers in the field of translation studies. One of the prominent researchers in this field is Mona Baker, who has composed widely on the role of philosophy and power in translation. In her book “Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account” (2006), Baker contends that translation is certainly not an impartial cycle, but rather one that is profoundly impacted by social, political, and religious variables. She utilizes the expression “entanglement” to depict the perplexing transaction between these elements in the

interpretation cycle. Another researcher who has expounded on religion and translation is Lawrence Venuti. In his book “The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation” (1995), Venuti contends that the prevailing Western culture has generally involved interpretation for “domesticating” unfamiliar texts and societies, frequently deleting the religious and social explicitness of the source text. Baker (2006) talks about the idea of “textual and religious entanglement as translation”, accentuating the job of philosophy and power in moulding the interpretation cycle. Likewise, Venuti (1995) features the propensity of Western translation practices to train unfamiliar texts and societies, frequently eradicating their religious and cultural specificity. Translation is a mind-boggling process, that includes figuring out the source language and culture and delivering it precisely in the objective language and culture. Printed and religious snares can present difficulties for interpretation; however, they do not guarantee the making of “great” translation. Text-based translation alludes to circumstances, where a text is perplexing, complex, or hard to decipher, which can make the process hard for translators as they convey the importance and subtlety of the original ‘text’ accurately. Religious ensnarement alludes to circumstances where a text is attached to a specific religious practice, which can make it difficult for interpreters to catch the social and religious setting of the primary text. For instance, deciphering religious texts, for example, the Holy Bible or the Quran requires a profound comprehension of the religious and social setting wherein the text was composed. Translators should be aware of the language and symbolism utilized in the primary text, as well as the social and vernacular setting in which it was composed. Furthermore, translators should be cautious (to the core) about the importance and value of convictions and religious practices of the interest group, and guarantee that the interpretation precisely conveys the expected teachings of the original message without twisting,

dismissing, or distorting it. While text-based and religious content present difficulties for translation, they do not necessarily guarantee the making of a “great” interpretation of the text. The nature of translation relies upon many elements, including the interpreter’s information, expertise, and the ability to translate the intricacy of the source text accurately. The social and phonetic setting where the interpretation is curated must also be considered by the translators or by the editors.

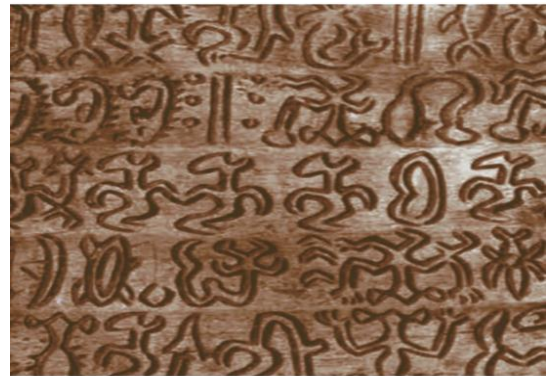


Figure 5. The hieroglyphic script of Easter



Figure 6. The Greek Old and New Testament: A page from Codex Vaticanus

Practice, Art History, and Meaning – The Story so Far

Communal identity and the ‘object’ debate deliberately on the equivalence and commensurability of ‘art’, practice, and ‘meaning’ respectively. The connection between practice, art history, and meaning has been a subject of

controversial discussion and has been an ongoing (insightful) request inside the field of art history. One unmistakable view is that workmanship or art history ought to be drawn closer as a discipline that includes both hypothetical and sensible perspectives of human art, which is profoundly influenced by the translation of craftsmanship and the comprehension of its significance invariably. Art student of history Michael Baxandall, in his persuasive book “Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures” (1985), contends that the examination of workmanship ought to start with an assessment of the craftsman’s specialized cycles and the materials utilized. He states, “The history of art is the history of the social and technical contexts in which paintings were produced, and is through this context that we come to understand the artist’s intentions” (Baxandall, 1985, p. 5). Likewise, art student of history Ernst Gombrich, in his book “Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation” (1960), proposes that how we decipher craftsmanship is well established in how we might interpret the cycles of creation. He states, “We are too apt to forget that what we call ‘meaning’ in art is intimately connected with technique, with how pictures are made” (Gombrich, 1960, p. 7). Nonetheless, others have contended that the importance of art can’t be diminished exclusively to specialized processes, yet in addition envelops the social, cultural, and political setting in which it was made. Art antiquarian W.J.T. Mitchell, in his book “Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation” (1994), contends that importance is built through the collaboration between the onlookers and the work of art, which is formed by the more extensive social setting. He states, “Meaning is not simply contained within the work of art itself, but is generated through a complex interplay of cultural codes and interpretive practices” (Mitchell, 1994, p. 14). Also, workmanship antiquarian Griselda Pollock, in her book “Vision and Difference: Femininity,

Feminism, and Histories of Art” (1988), contends that the translation of art ought to consider the manners by which orientation, race, and other social and cultural variables shape how an individual might interpret craftsmanship. She states, “The meanings of art are always located in the specific social and historical contexts in which they produced and received” art remains (Pollock, 1988, p. 2). The connection between practice, art history, and meaning is complex and multi-layered, enveloping both specialized and social variables so far. Art history specialists have moved toward this inquiry from different viewpoints, with a few underlining the significance of specialized cycles and others zeroing in on, on the more extensive social and cultural setting in which art is created into ‘being’ and is deciphered.

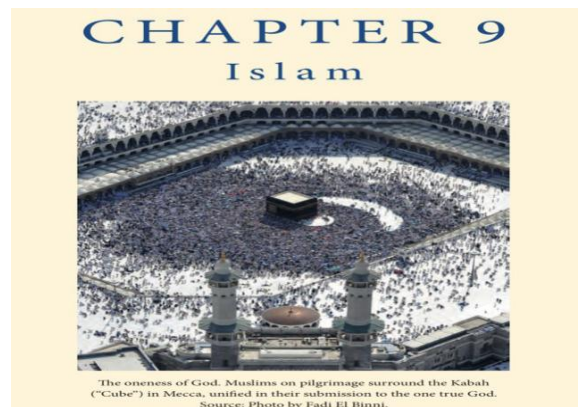


Figure 7. Internal chapter 9 covers Will Deming’s, “UNDERSTANDING THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD” An Introduction pg. 405

Materiality, Empirical Questions, and Assemblages

Materiality alludes to the characteristics and qualities of real items or materials that make them attractive, huge, and significant in public activities (Bennett, 2010; Ingold, 2012; Miller, 2010). Material items are also inactive or idle substances that can affect the environment of the bodily curated artery. Some active artists shape the human way of behaving, social cooperation, and social implications into art, which intuitively contribute to the creation of materiality and

question the human way of doing it empirically. Empirical questions are research questions that can be addressed through perception, trial, and error, or different types of experimental requests (Law, 2004; Pickering, 1995). Observational examination or Assemblages is fundamental for figuring out the perplexing and dynamic connections between material artefacts and other social practices. It alludes to the dynamic and heterogeneous organizations of connections among human and non-human entertainers, including material items, thoughts, innovations, and foundations (DeLanda, 2006; Law, 2004; Latour, 2005). The material hypothesis stresses the significance of materiality in forming social relations and practices and underscores the job of possibility and odd essence in creating social bonds between the two groups.

Conclusion

The investigation of the connecting point of art history and religion across various societies and profound convictions presents an entrancing field of the request. Through analyzing how different societies have portrayed how they might interpret the heavenly, we can acquire an understanding of the manners by which religion and worldliness have moulded and been formed by creative articulation forever. The craftsmanship delivered by various societies mirrors their remarkable translations of the heavenly, and it is through this workmanship that we acquire a more profound comprehension of the manners by which they conceptualize the heavenly i.e. gods. For example, the usage of imagery in Christian craftsmanship gives bits of knowledge into the complex religious thoughts at the core of the religion. In the meantime, the intricate myths portrayed in Hindu workmanship uncover the centrality of narrating and the job of the heavenly in deeply shaping human existence. The assessment of the heavenly in workmanship history likewise highlights the widespread human craving for

association with an option that could be more significant than oneself. The possible portrayal of workmanship for interfacing with the heavenly has been a typical element across many societies and religious practices. As art historicist Leo Steinberg notes, "Art is a way of making real to oneself the reality of God". At last, the investigation of the convergence of art history and religion across various societies and other convictions can likewise act as an extension between various cultural societies and networks. By looking at the craftsmanship created by different societies, we can acquire a more profound appreciation for their exceptional viewpoints on spiritual beings and start to comprehend the manners by which they comprehend and connect with their physical surroundings. In conclusion, the investigation of the converging point of art history and religion across various societies and other religious convictions presents a rich and complex field of inquiry. Through analyzing the manners by which various societies have portrayed the heavenly, we can acquire experiences into the manners by which religion and other faiths have formed and been moulded by creative articulation over the entire course of time. This, thus, can assist us with bettering and comprehending artistic values, the variety of human experience, and the general human craving for association with art, god, and 'the self', as an option that could be more significant than oneself. That is per se the translated, involvement of art history and religion across different cultures and spiritual beliefs through the portrayal of art.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

No fundings received

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SPIRITUAL CURRENTS: ECOSOPHY THROUGH THE PRISM OF TRIBES IN GITA MEHTA'S *A RIVER SUTRA*

MYVIZHI. A

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Sri G. V. G Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalaipettai, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. K. SATHYAPRIYA

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Sri G. V. G Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalaipettai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*Ecosophy, a philosophical frame of reference, dwells on the harmony of humans, nature, and the environment. In literature, ecosophy questions the anthropocentric manoeuvre, and exhorts on the equilibrium of humans and nature. The novel *A River Sutra* by Gita Mehta proclaims a didactic stratagem to understand ecosophy. Notably, the tribes in the novel are the embodiments of ecosophy. Though various perspectives have been explored in the novel *A River Sutra*, ecosophy is a less examined constituent. This research paper, hence, has made an endeavour to explore this unaccustomed slant in literature. This research paper aims to catechize the irrefutable importance of ecological consonance for sustainable existentiality. Materials and insights, for this research paper, are gleaned from analysing various articles, books, and reviews. This research paper underscores sustainable living, and the prominence of ecological harmony and ecological philosophy. This paper foregrounds the incontestable exigency of ecological wisdom. The implications of this research paper is that tribal communities' sustainable practices proffer the paramount lessons for the extant ecological catastrophe.*

Keywords: *ecosophy, tribes, harmony, philosophy, wisdom*

Introduction

In the fight to save the planet, philosophers and environmentalists have long debated the most effective approaches to addressing the devastating effects of human activities on the environment. Among these approaches is ecosophy, a concept that seeks to integrate environmental and philosophical concerns to create a new way of thought and living. Ecosophy, which originated in Nordic environmental philosophy, posits that environmental problems cannot be solved without simultaneously addressing human values, worldviews, and societal practices (Naess 149). This holistic approach recognizes that human life and the natural world are intricately connected and seeks to reorient societal values towards a more sustainable coexistence with the environment.

At its core, ecosophy is a deep ecology approach that posits that humans are not separate from nature, but rather, an integral part of it. As philosopher Arne Naess, who coined the term ecosophy, notes, "the term deep ecology is a concept of world philosophy...it aims not just at conserving nature but transforming it at its core" (122). Ecosophy thus seeks to challenge the anthropocentric worldview that prioritizes human interests above all else, replacing it with a more expansive perspective that encompasses the well-being of non-human species and ecosystems.

One of the key elements of ecosophy is its emphasis on praxis, or the act of integrating theory and practice. This approach is grounded in the recognition that environmental problems require not just intellectual solutions, but also practical ones.

Ecosophy advocates for a fusion of philosophy and action, whereby individuals and societies come together to experiment with new ways of living that are in harmony with the natural world.

Ecosophy also recognizes that human values and societies are not static, and therefore, cannot continue to be the primary drivers of environmental degradation. The problems faced by the environment should be seen fatal to society. This realization underscores the need for a comprehensive rethinking of societal values, from a focus on growth and progress to one centered on sustainability and well-being.

Moreover, ecosophy is often linked to the concept of ecological citizenship, which posits that individuals and societies have a responsibility to take care of the planet (Dryzek 101). This perspective dissolves classical dichotomies between individual rights and collective responsibilities, recognizing that our individual actions have systemic impacts on the environment. In this vein, ecosopher philosophy encourages individuals to take up ecological citizenship and work towards collective transformations that are grounded in responsibility, solidarity, and a commitment to ecological repair (Naess 201).

Ecosophy offers a comprehensive, transformative approach to addressing the pressing environmental challenges of our times. By recognizing the intricate interconnectedness of human life and the natural world, ecosophers challenge societal norms and promote a more expansive, inclusive understanding of the human condition.

Ecosophy in Literature

The concept of ecosophy, or a way of thinking that combines environmental and philosophical perspectives, has become increasingly important in literature and beyond. Ecosophic thinking encourages individuals to contemplate the complex

relationships between human and non-human entities, advocating for a holistic approach to the natural world. Literary works that incorporate ecosophic elements challenge readers to rethink their position within the web of life, cultivating a deeper appreciation for the intricate interconnectedness of all living beings.

A prime example of ecosophic literature is Arundhati Roy's Booker Prize-winning novel, *The God of Small Things* (1997). Through its intricate narrative, Roy contemplates the ecosophic bond between humans and the environment in Kerala, India. The novel's focus on the interconnected lives of its characters and the natural world demonstrates the intricate relationships between animals, plants, and human beings, emphasizing the significance of preserving life's delicate balance. As a testament to ecosophic thinking, Roy's novel serves as a critique of anthropocentricity, demonstrating that human experiences are, in fact, dependent on the well-being of the ecosystems that support us (Naess qtd. in Biehl and Peters 28).

Kenyan author Wangari Maathai's memoir, *Unbowed: A Memoir* published in 2006, also exemplifies ecosophic thinking. Maathai's narrative explores her dedication to reclaiming her community's forestland from colonial and post-colonial exploitation. By recounting her efforts to initiate sustainable development projects and fight against corruption, Maathai underscores the significance of eco-philosophy in maintaining the delicate balance between ecosystems, human societies, and economy. Her ecosophic narrative encourages readers to analyse and appreciate the interdependencies within ecosystems, highlighting the potential of biodiversity conservation for social justice and sustainability (Bakker 78).

Heather Booth's literature on ecosophy explores the critical relationships between humans and ecosystems in her scholarly article, *Ecosophy and Environmental Aesthetics* (2017). Her narrative

theorizes the distinct structures of environmental attachment that various societies exhibit, discussing the intricate cultural, genetic, or aesthetic components of indigenous perspectives on ecosophy. By illustrating an affinity with individuals of some of the communities, Booth reveals how an introspective quest for environmental wisdom can inform an ethical, eco-philosophical understanding of human relationships to non-human entities.

The ecosophical gaze at the natural world, a critical thinking essential in ecosophic literature, profoundly amplifies human consciousness, empowering us to recognize our responsibility as dwellers of Earth, as an effective practice of living cohesively with all forms of existence on our planet (Rolston III 147, cf., Bookchin 129). One such novel, which vividly portrays the significance of existing with nature is *A River Sutra* by Gita Mehta.

Gita Mehta

In the realm of Indian literature, few authors have captivated readers with their poignant portrayals of life, love, and cultural traditions as profoundly as Gita Mehta. Born into a family of well-known writers and intellectuals, Mehta's own journey into literature was a natural progression from her involvement with the family publishing business. Her father's influence, in particular, had a lasting impact on her creative pursuits, as Ajeet Mehta, a renowned Punjabi poet, instilled in Gita a deep appreciation for the "rich and fragmented landscape of Indian life" (Mehta 24). This is evident in Mehta's later work, beginning with her debut novel, *Raquela: A Novel of India's Orphaned Children*, which delves into the lives of the abandoned and orphaned children of India.

Mehta's interest in exploring the often-overlooked lives of Indian society stems, in part, from her observations of Indian women during the tumultuous post-independence era. Fascinated by the experiences and struggles of women navigating this new reality, Mehta sought to voice their stories

through her writing (Tandon 67). Her subsequent novels, including *A River Sutra* and *A Passage to Paradise*, expertly weave the intricate tapestry of Indian life, revealing a rich cultural heritage and a complex web of social dynamics that underscore the human condition (Mehta 1993, Mehta 1998). Unlike Western narratives that traditionally focus on individual achievement and empowerment, Mehta emphasizes the interrelatedness of human existence, illustrating that "the self is an existential circumstance, a social being shaped by the way people around it lives" (Mehta 123).

Throughout her writing career, Mehta has consistently demonstrated a profound respect for India's diverse cultural traditions. In her depiction of the Indian worldview, Mehta employs a rich array of imagery, often blending the mystical and the mundane in a way that reveals the multiple facets of Indian society. Her writing exudes a sense of wonder and respect for the revered texts and mythologies of Hinduism, showcasing her deep understanding of the cultural heritage that shapes Indian lives (Bawa 45). Mehta's critiques of Western views of India and Indian culture, expressed in her essay *The Defamation of India*, reinforce her commitment to countering prevailing narratives and fostering intercultural understanding.

The author's non-fiction work, *River of Colour: An Intimate Portrait of India*, testifies to the diverse influences that have shaped her perspective on the Indian nation. Discussing India's politics and history, Mehta not only takes a bird's-eye view, but also allows individual stories to emerge, as lived experiences bear direct associations to what occurs at the general national level (Mehta 2013). These influences are both macrocosmically and microcosmically explored. A prolific author, Mehta has garnered critical acclaim for her dedication to shedding light on the quieter stories within Indian society. Her powerful literature has solidified a distinct place within the realm of Indian narrative.

A River Sutra and Ecosophy

Mehta's novel *The River Sutra* is a mythic and imaginative tale that weaves together elements of Indian culture and religion. Through its lyrical prose and rich narrative, the novel explores themes of spirituality, female agency, and the nature of the self. This essay will provide a summary of the novel and analyse its use of myth, history, and feminist theories.

The story unfolds through multiple narratives and perspectives, blurring the lines between reality and myth. The novel is set against the backdrop of the river Narmada, which Mehta describes as a symbol of India's spiritual and cultural identity. The narrative is divided into five parts, each representing a different aspect of the river and its significance. The first part introduces the central character, a group of people who have come to the river to bathe and worship. This is the context in which the second part begins, with the character of Kausambi, the sage, explaining the creation of the world as he believes it through three fundamental elements of the universe - sky, earth and the river.

Mehta's use of mythology and historical events is deliberate and multifaceted. She draws on various religious and cultural traditions, incorporating elements of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. The novel also touches on the historical events of the Mauryan Empire and the decline of Buddhism in India. By combining these different narrative threads, Mehta creates a complex and nuanced portrait of Indian culture and history.

Through its exploration of spirituality and the self, the novel challenges traditional notions of identity and the relationship between the individual and the divine. The characters in the novel must navigate the multiple dimensions of their own identities and confront the fragmentation of their selves. This process of self-discovery is facilitated by the river, which Mehta represents as a source of spiritual transformation and renewal.

One of the novel's most significant contributions

is its portrayal of female agency and the importance of women in Indian culture. Kausambi, the sage, is depicted as a powerful and wise woman who serves as a spiritual guide and mentor to the other characters. Her wisdom and authority are unchallenged, and she plays a central role in shaping the narrative. Mehta's use of Kausambi as a central character also subverts the traditional patriarchal narratives that dominate Indian mythology and culture. In fact, as the novel shows, even those men take advice Kausambi. She is said to pass on myths and stories which have been imparted by 'Manu'.

The novel ends with a sense of hope and renewal, as the characters on the river come together to celebrate the full moon and the coming of spring. This final image underscores the themes of transformation and regeneration that run throughout the novel. *A River Sutra* is a rich and complex novel that explores the intersection of mythology, history, and feminist theory. Its use of multiple narrative threads and perspectives creates a nuanced and multi-layered portrait of Indian culture and identity. Through its portrayal of the river as a symbol of spiritual transformation and renewal, the novel offers a powerful critique of traditional notions of identity and the self.

In the novel *A River Sutra*, the concept of ecosophy is explored through the relationship between the individual and the natural environment. Ecosophy, a term coined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, refers to a perspective that views the natural world as a holistic system connected to human existence (Naess 6). Mehta's portrayal of the river and its inhabitants serves as a metaphor for ecosophy, highlighting the interconnectedness of human and non-human entities.

The novel's narrative is set on the banks of the Narmada River, which has played a significant role in the lives of the people living nearby for centuries. The river's transformation from a pristine natural wonder

to a site for industrial development serves as a backdrop for Mehta's exploration of ecosophy. The narrator, a Brahmin man, embarks on a journey along the river, encountering various characters and their stories, which collectively form a tapestry of human experiences intertwined with the natural world.

Throughout the novel, Mehta uses the river as a symbol of ecosophy, highlighting its significance in the lives of the people who live along its banks. The river is portrayed as a source of life, providing water, food, and spiritual sustenance to those who live nearby. Mehta writes, "As the river flowed past, carrying with it the memories of a thousand generations, each life-form that dwelled upon its banks was connected to every other by the threads of a shared history" (Mehta 123). This passage illustrates the interconnectedness of human and non-human entities, where the individual's existence is linked to the natural environment.

Mehta also explores the concept of indigenous knowledge and its relation to ecosophy. The Mahuas, a tribe living on the banks of the river, possess a deep understanding of the natural world, which allows them to coexist with the environment in harmony. Their knowledge is derived from a lifetime of observing and learning from the river, providing them with a unique perspective on the interconnectedness of life. The narrator notes, "The Mahuas believed that the land gave them not just food and water but also their livelihood, their gods, and their very identity" (Mehta 156). This passage highlights the Mahuas' ecosophical perspective, where their existence is deeply tied to the natural world.

In contrast, the industrial development of the river serves as a commentary on the disconnection of modern humans from the natural environment. The construction of dams and other infrastructure projects disrupts the natural flow of the river, causing irreparable harm to the ecosystem and the people who depend on it. Mehta's portrayal of the river's degradation serves as a warning about the

consequences of human actions on the environment.

The novel presents a powerful exploration of ecosophy through the narrative's focus on the interconnectedness of human and non-human entities. Mehta's portrayal of the river and its inhabitants highlights the significance of indigenous knowledge and the importance of coexisting with the natural world in harmony. The novel serves as a cautionary tale about the consequences of human actions on the environment, underscoring the need for an ecosophical perspective in our lives.

Implications

In *A River Sutra* ecosophy plays a pivotal role in understanding the intricacies of human relationships with nature. The novel explores the intersection of spirituality and environmentalism, raising questions about the implications of ecosophy on human societies. Mehta's narrative revolves around the story of a young man named Jagan, who attends a mystical school and embarks on a journey of self-discovery, encountering different characters who embody various aspects of ecosophy.

One of the primary implications of ecosophy in the novel is the rejection of anthropocentrism. Jagan's encounters with Master Prabhakar and Laxmibai illustrate the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of human and non-human entities. Master Prabhakar's spiritual practice, for instance, emphasizes the need to cultivate compassion and empathy towards all living beings, highlighting the intrinsic value of nature as a living, breathing entity (Mehta 156). Laxmibai's stories of trees and rivers as witnesses to human history also underscore the idea that nature is not a passive backdrop for human action, but an active participant in shaping human experiences.

The novel also suggests that ecosophy has significant implications for human relationships and communities. Jagan's experiences with the villagers and his encounters with Bhisma illustrate the

tension between individualism and collectivism. The villagers' emphasis on community and shared knowledge reflects an ecosophical understanding of interdependence, where individual well-being is tied to the well-being of the community. In contrast, Bhishma's individualism and emphasis on personal spiritual growth represent a more anthropocentric approach, highlighting the tension between individual and collective interests (Mehta 182).

Moreover, Mehta's novel raises questions about the role of human agency in shaping ecological relationships. Jagan's encounters with the sages and scientists suggest that human actions have a direct impact on the natural world, but also imply that human agency is not the only force shaping ecological relationships. The sages' emphasis on the cyclical nature of life and death underscores the idea that ecological relationships are governed by non-human forces, such as the seasons and the cycles of nature (Mehta 217).

The novel also explores the tension between modernity and tradition in the context of ecosophy. Mehta's depiction of the old ways of life in the rural communities reflects an ecosophical understanding of the interconnectedness of human and non-human entities, whereas the modernizing forces of colonialism and development represent an anthropocentric approach that seeks to dominate and control nature (Mehta 80). Jagan's own experiences as a product of modern education and his encounters with the rural communities highlight the tension between these two worldviews.

Summation

A River Sutra offers a nuanced exploration of ecosophy, highlighting its implications for human relationships, communities, and ecological relationships. Mehta's narrative raises questions about the rejection of anthropocentrism, the role of human agency, and the tension between modernity and tradition. The novel suggests that ecosophy has the potential to transform human societies, promoting

a more compassionate and empathetic relationship between humans and the natural world.

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FEMALE EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER DYNAMICS IN ANITA NAIR'S MISTRESS

G. KIRUBAHARI

*PhD Research Scholar (Part-Time), Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. K. MANGAIYARKARASI

*Research Guide and Supervisor, Department of English
S.F.R. College, Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*Anita Nair is a well-known postmodern Indian English writer. Anita Nair's Mistress presents a compelling exploration of female empowerment and the complex dynamics of gender relations through its intricate plot and multi-dimensional characters. The novel intertwines art, passion, and identity as it navigates the lives of its central characters, particularly Radha, who struggles with a patriarchal marriage, and her gradual journey towards self-realization and empowerment. The narrative is richly woven with the themes of gender, love, control, and freedom, exploring the lives of women trapped in traditional roles and their yearning for autonomy. The article explores how Anita Nair portrays the journey of female characters, particularly Radha, and her struggle for autonomy in a patriarchal world. It examines how Radha's dissatisfaction with her marriage and her affair with Chris represent her attempts to escape societal control, and how her ultimate empowerment comes through self-realization rather than external validation. Through Radha's experiences in both her marriage and her affair, the article looks at how love can be a complex mixture of freedom and entrapment. It suggests that even in seeking escape, Radha faces new forms of control, ultimately finding empowerment by reclaiming her own narrative. Through the character Radha it highlights the **complex interplay between gender, power, and freedom**.*

Keywords: *gender, freedom, female empowerment, power, autonomy*

Introduction

Anita Nair is the eminent writer who was born in Kerala. She is a novelist, journalist, short story writer and famous poet also. The majority of 20th century novels depicts the women's issues and related their status in Indian society. In Indian English fiction great women writers like Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri and Anita Nair Anita Nair depict feminist picture of Indian society. In Indian English Fiction, women writers analyzing issues of women and their present situation in the patriarchal world. She is the bestselling writer whose two novels *Better man* and *Ladies Coupe* were translated into many languages in the world. Her other recognized works are *Magical Indian Myth*, *Mistress*, *Adventure of*

Nonu and *Living next door to alive*. Anita Nair's *Mistress* is a novel that intricately explores the interplay of love, identity, and tradition in a contemporary Indian setting. Literature is the mirror of our society. **Mistress** by Anita Nair is the journey of **self-discovery, identity, and empowerment**, particularly for its central characters, Radha, Shyam, Koman, and Chris. Each of these characters is on a path of self-exploration, grappling with complex emotional and social constraints as they search for meaning, fulfillment, and autonomy. **Mistress** by Anita Nair depicts a rich tapestry of themes, focusing on the complexity of human relationships, the tension between tradition and modernity, and the deep exploration of identity, love, and power.

Review of Literature

Dr. V.M. Saranya's paper, "Subjection of Women in Anita Nair's *Mistress*", was published by International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT) and includes key insights. (Volume 10, Issue 1, January 2022 | ISSN: 2320-2882). It depicts women's struggles in a patriarchal society, as well as the tensions that underpin the inner state of women who try to be an obedient partner for their husband in the ego of a male-dominated society, which hurts their feelings and desires, resulting in tragedy or dissatisfaction with married life.

Sachidanda Murthy (2005) has studied various themes dealt by Anita Nair in her *Mistress*. He pointed out that the characters are yearning for the forbidden fruit of love, barred by region, gender and marriage.

Anjali Singh's paper, "The *Mistress* as a Catalyst for Change: A Feminist Reading of Anita Nair's *Mistress*" was published by *International Journal of English Studies* (Vol. 12, No. 2, 2022) pp. 123-135. This article offers a feminist interpretation of Anita Nair's *Mistress*, focusing on the role of the titular character in challenging traditional societal norms and expectations. Singh argues that the mistress, Radha, serves as a catalyst for change, disrupting the patriarchal structures that confine women to domestic roles and limit their personal aspirations.

Methodology Used

Feminist literary analysis and Psychoanalytic criticism are the two methodologies applied here. Feminist literary analysis looks at how literature reflects, sustains, or challenges gender norms and patriarchy. It investigates how literature perpetuates or undermines women's oppression, looks at female characters, and how gender connects with other identity characteristics. Feminist critics seek to discover and analyse works' patriarchal roots, such as the suppression of female voices and women's representations in literature. Psychoanalytic criticism,

based on Sigmund Freud's theories, examines the psychological components of texts, delving into issues such as repressed emotions and Oedipal complexes. It also looks at how an author's own experiences and subconscious mind shape characters and themes, treating literature as a psychological document. This paper deals with these two methodologies

Discussion

Nair depicts the effects of societal conditioning on women. Her ladies are capable of expressing their own rights and identities. She refuses to identify herself as a feminist. All female authors are not feminists. They, as women, understand women's difficulties and represent modern women's hardships. She clearly investigates the true situation of women, not just in the household but also in society. She focuses on modern women's issues. Her feminine characters come from varied backgrounds, representing the many cultures. It is essential to quote Virginia Woolf *In A Room of One's Own*, she says

It is probable, however, that both in life and in art, the values of women are not the values of man. Thus, when a woman comes to write a novel, she will find that she is perpetually wishing to alter the established values – to make serious what appears insignificant to a man, and trivial what is to him important. (81)

Mistress by Anita Nair depicts a wide range of themes, from the **power dynamics in relationships to the quest for female empowerment**, while using **art as a metaphor for life**. It portrays the **performative nature of gender and identity**, the **tension between tradition and modernity**, and the **complexities of love and desire**. Through the emotional journeys of its characters, particularly Radha, the novel invites readers to reflect on the ways in which societal expectations shape our lives and how individuals seek autonomy and self-

realization within those constraints. Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* states that the institution of marriage has constrained the spontaneity of feelings, between the husband and wife by “transforming freely given feelings into mandatory duties and shrilly asserted rights”. (445).

Radha's Struggle with Patriarchy

Anita Nair's novel *Mistress* delves into the complexities of gender dynamics and the constraints that women face in patriarchal societies. Radha, the protagonist, embodies the struggles of women who are expected to conform to traditional roles and suppress their desires. Her narrative highlights the ways in which patriarchy can limit women's autonomy, dictate their choices, and shape their identities.

Radha, is emblematic of a woman caught in a stifling marriage, where her identity is reduced to that of a wife, confined within the walls of her domestic life. The institution of marriage that stands between individual interests and the moods of the family setup reflect the intricacy of the pertinent inclination. In the words of Sethi,

The core relationship in the Indian family rests between the parent and child. Like wise marriage in the family is not an individual or personal decision based on love but is considered to be the appropriate commitment in order to fulfill family obligations. In a sense, marriages are not between individuals but between families. In Indian families, the decision making power is usually vested in the parents. In areas of cohesion and differentiation, the traditional Indian family places heavy emphasis on proper attitude and conduct in accordance with the prescribed roles, obligations and duties. (Sethi, 31:22-30)

Her husband, Shyam, exerts control over every aspect of her being, viewing her as an extension of his own desires rather than an independent individual with her own needs. Shyam's view of his wife is evident when he muses, “She's like a possession,

something to be kept in a safe place” (M 56). This objectification of Radha highlights the power imbalance in their marriage and reflects the broader patriarchal structures that restrict women's autonomy. Throughout the novel, Radha's desire for freedom and empowerment becomes a central theme. Her affair with Chris, an Englishman, symbolizes her rebellion against the confines of her traditional role. She yearns to be seen as more than just a wife, stating, “I don't want to be owned anymore” (M 112). This quote encapsulates her growing discontent with her life and the patriarchal system that defines her relationship with Shyam.

However, Radha's affair does not provide the liberation she seeks. As the relationship with Chris progresses, she realizes that she is merely trading one form of dependency for another. Chris, like Shyam, imposes his expectations on her, albeit in more subtle ways. In one poignant moment, Radha reflects on her situation, saying, “I thought love would free me, but it only makes me feel trapped in different ways” (M 203). This realization underscores the complexity of female empowerment in the novel—it is not merely about escaping one form of control but finding the strength to define one's own path.

Gender, Art, and Power

Anita Nair's novel, *Mistress*, is a powerful exploration of gender, art, and power within the context of traditional Indian society. The novel centers around Radha, a young woman who is forced to confront her desires and societal expectations when she falls in love with a foreign writer. Through Radha's experiences, Nair examines the ways in which women are constrained by patriarchal norms and how they can use art as a means of resistance and self-expression.

One of the key themes in *Mistress* is the relationship between gender and power. Radha, as a woman, is expected to conform to traditional roles and suppress her desires. However, she finds solace

and empowerment in the art of Kathakali, a classical Indian dance form. Kathakali allows her to explore her emotions and express herself in a way that is not possible within the confines of her everyday life. Nair suggests that art can be a powerful tool for women to challenge patriarchal norms and reclaim their agency. Radha's uncle, Koman, is a Kathakali artist, and the art form itself becomes a metaphor for the performance of gender roles. Kathakali, traditionally performed by men, involves donning elaborate costumes and enacting various roles, much like the societal roles women are forced to perform.

Koman's musings on the nature of Kathakali mirror the performative aspects of gender: "A role, once assumed, becomes the skin you wear. And soon, you forget what lies beneath" (M 142). This observation resonates with Radha's experience as a woman who has been conditioned to perform the role of a dutiful wife, forgetting her own desires and individuality. The act of "performing" gender is a recurring motif in the novel, symbolizing the restrictive nature of societal expectations. Anita Nair's *Mistress* is a compelling exploration of gender, art, and power within the context of traditional Indian society. Through the experiences of Radha, the novel examines the ways in which women are constrained by patriarchal norms and how they can use art as a means of resistance and self-expression. By highlighting the intersection of gender, class, and caste, Nair offers a nuanced and complex portrayal of women's experiences in a patriarchal society. Sources and related content

Empowerment through Self-Realization

Radha is trapped in a physically abusive marriage. Her realization of the toxicity of her relationship is a crucial step towards her empowerment. By recognizing the harm she is experiencing, she begins to take control of her life. Radha finds solace and support in her friendship with Unnimaya. This connection provides her with a safe space to express her feelings and seek guidance. Unnimaya's own

journey of self-discovery inspires Radha to believe in her own potential. Radha's decision to leave her abusive husband is a bold act of independence. She defies societal expectations and chooses her own path, demonstrating her strength and courage. After leaving her husband, Radha finds a new sense of purpose in her life. She becomes a successful businesswoman, proving that she is capable of achieving her goals independently. Radha's journey is marked by her resilience in overcoming the trauma of her abusive marriage. Her ability to heal and move forward is a testament to her inner strength and determination.

While Radha's initial attempts at liberation are external—her affair with Chris, her rebellion against Shyam—true empowerment in *Mistress* comes through self-realization. Radha's journey is not just about escaping patriarchal control but about understanding her own needs and desires. Her ultimate act of empowerment is her decision to leave both men behind and carve out her own identity, free from the expectations placed upon her by society.

In a pivotal moment near the end of the novel, Radha reflects, "I don't need a man to tell me who I am. I can live for myself" (M 321). This statement marks a turning point in her character arc, as she finally breaks free from the constraints that have defined her life. Radha's journey illustrates that empowerment is not found in external validation or relationships, but in the inner strength to live life on one's own terms.

Conclusion

Anita Nair's *Mistress* offers a nuanced exploration of female empowerment and gender relations. Through the character of Radha, Nair critiques the patriarchal systems that limit women's autonomy and emphasizes the importance of self-awareness and inner strength in the quest for freedom. The novel underscores that empowerment is not simply about escaping one's circumstances, but about gaining the confidence to define oneself outside the confines of

societal roles. Radha's journey from a subservient wife to an empowered individual serves as a powerful commentary on the complexities of gender and power in modern society.

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ECLECTIC VOICES OF URBAN AND RURAL LIFE: CRITICAL EXPLORATION OF SELECT INDIAN POEMS

DHIVYAA. R

PhD Research Scholar

Sri GVG Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalpet, Tamil Nadu

Dr. S. GEETHA

Assistant Professor

Sri GVG Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalpet, Tamil Nadu

Abstract

Poetry, a timeless and multifaceted art form, serves as a profound medium through which individuals express, reflect, and connect. The main purpose of poetry is to illuminate the human condition. The evolution of poetry mirrors shifts in cultural, social, and political contexts. Today's poetry continues to address important issues while embracing a wide range of styles and voices, reflecting the art form's dynamic nature. Indian poets execute the role of social mirror perfectly with their wonderful poems. The study aims at discussing the portrayal of urban and rural lives in modern India. The paper is to explore the diverse experiences of lives in urban and rural settings that shape identity and societal structures. The poems of four prominent Indian poets, Tishani Doshi, Arundhati Subramaniam, Mamang Dai, and Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih, are to be analysed in the proposed study. The works of these poets offer diverse reflections of Indian landscapes. Mamang Dai and Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih emphasise the rural and indigenous experience, and the impact of modernity in rural, traditional communities. While Arundhati Subramaniam and Tishani Doshi talk about urban life and spaces. The study tries to explore how these poets navigate the contrast between urban and rural spaces, focusing on themes of identity, displacement, transmission of culture, tradition and modernity. This paper aims to highlight the multifaceted nature of Indian narratives revealing the shifting dynamics of the modern world. The comparative analysis aims at exploring the cultural, social and emotional landscapes of India. The focus will be on how these poets' voices bring out their unique ways of reflecting their varied experiences.

Keywords: *indian poems, urban, rural, modern, tradition.*

Introduction

Modern Indian urban and rural life portrayal in literature often depicts the crucial realities of the country. Urban life is often shown as a place for rapid change, under the influence of industrialization. Cities symbolises progress, aspiration, fragmentation, alienation, and degrading tradition. The urban life portrayed in literature, and any art for the matter of fact, generally discusses the themes of selfishness, alienation, social pressure, and fragmentation. Meanwhile, rural life in India gets the contrasting portrayal. The beauty of nature, traditional lifestyle, simplicity are the major themes depicted in literature.

The issues like economic pressures, stagnation, and impact of industrialization, also gets depicted.

The dichotomy of these two lifestyles in India reflects the evolving tensions of globalization, industrialization, and commodification. Indian literature explores identity, cultural and social changes, and complex societal structures through the portrayal of the contrasting lifestyles. The main aim of the paper is to see how the urban and rural Indian poems focus on the complex social structures, and modernization. Indian poets, Tishani Doshi, Arundhati Subramaniam, Mamang Dai, and Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih are taken for discussion.

Tishani Doshi, poet, dancer, and journalist, has published seven books of poetry and fiction. Her works explore feminism, human relations, travel, and gender politics. The impact and effects of the modern world is often expressed in Tishani's works (Tishani). Arundhathi Sumbramaniam is known for her cultural and spiritual writings. Her works dwell on themes of culture, identity, navigation of spaces, and philosophy (Arundhathi). Mamang Dai, northeastern poet, works promote culture, tradition, and nature. The landscapes of northeastern India often get described in Mamang's works (Mamang). Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih belongs to the Khasi tribe in Meghalaya. His works mostly critique the modern invasion into the woods of Northeastern India. The current socio-political unrest, environmental degradation, identity, and authority are also discussed by Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih (Kynpham). All four poets capture the of urban and rural India through varied lens. The paper is to discuss the urban and rural voices in the poems of these four poets, providing a comparative analysis of the selected poems in both settings.

Urban and Rural life reflection in Indian poems

Arundhathi Sumbraminam's *The City and I* captures the everyday life in a busy city, mainly focusing on the interaction between individuals and the environment. The city is portrayed as a living entity that "surged" towards the speaker, emphasizing a sense of vitality and movement. It presents a vivid picture of urban experiences, from a librarian with her lunch to a commuter expressing anxiety, revealing the rich tapestry of human existence amidst the chaotic backdrop of city life. The speaker reflects on the transformation of their relationship with the city, moving from a sense of alienation to a feeling of ownership and acceptance. The poem seeks to convey a deeper understanding of urban existence, breaking down barriers of competition and isolation to reveal the beauty of human connection within the chaos of city life. The contrast between isolation and

community highlights the duality of urban life. It serves as a reminder of the importance of community and shared experiences in a fast-paced world.

Urban life buzzing with opportunity pushes individuals to improve themselves. The poem, *I live on the road*, by Arundhathi Sumbramaniam shows the lengths people go to for self-improvement and acceptance. The poem reflects on the intersection of ambition, beauty, and the often painful waiting inherent in a culture consumed by appearances. The contrast between beauty and the waiting inherent in this lifestyle underscores the poem's central themes. The subject matter revolves around life on a metaphorical "magic road" that symbolizes the journey of self-improvement and aspiration in an urban setting. The "magic road" symbolizes the path of life filled with potential and illusions. The poem explores the dichotomy between the urban environment and the underlying realities of longing, aspiration. It captures the paradox of living in a society obsessed with appearances and the transformative power of hope amidst the struggle for personal and social elevation. The poem questions the value of beauty and success in shaping one's identity. It highlights the hope that persists even amidst the struggles and the waiting, suggesting that transformation is always possible.

Arundhathi in her works often brings the moment of nostalgia. *Recycled* is one such poem exhibiting the nostalgic phase, discussing the connection of childhood imagination of life with reality of adulthood. The poem rooted in childhood memories, dreams, can manifest in an unexpected way over time. The poems hold the contrast between the childhood experience in Bombay and the present experience in Trossachs. The poem is to be considered as a meditation on nostalgia, memory, and the realization of dreams over time. It suggests that while one may find comfort in memories of home, those memories can transform as they are situated in a new place. The poem underscores the universal theme of how

childhood dreams can shape our identities and realities as we navigate life's journey.

Urban identity is a complex idea that combines a city's characteristics with emotion, and connections, individuals hold on to that place. Arundhathi Sumbramaniam shares one such connection with a city named Madras, now Chennai, in Tamil Nadu. Arundhathi is not a native nor raised in Madras, but her personal connection with the city is different. The poem titled *Madras* by Arundhathi shares that connection. The subject matter includes vivid sensory experiences associated with the city, such as food, sounds, and cultural nuances. The poet employs rich, sensory language that evokes taste, sound, and visual imagery. Words like "casuarina," "gritty," "moonlight," and "flambéed" create a vibrant picture of the city and its culture. The use of specific food items (e.g., "tamarind," "sarsaparilla pickle") emphasizes personal and cultural connections to the place. Poem highlights the complexities of belonging, nostalgia, and the ways in which cities imprint themselves on individuals through memories, sensory experiences, and familial ties. The relationship with a city that they were neither born nor raised in, yet it holds profound memories and sensations that resonate with their identity. Poem highlights the interplay between memory, culture, and sensory experiences in forming our sense of self, identity, within a broader world.

Tishani Doshi in her poem *Ode to the Walking Women* emphasizes the importance of connecting with one's roots, history, and the natural world amidst the exhaustion of contemporary life. The poem speaks to individuals grappling with their identity in the modern world, particularly those from cultures with rich histories. With a blend of concrete imagery and abstract ideas, the poet tries to evoke deeper thematic concerns. The poem revolves around the tension between modernity and ancestral heritage. The poem aims to promote the readers to consider the significance of pausing, in the modern fast revolving world, to reflect on their roots and the

legacies that shape their identities, encouraging a reclamation of history and a reconnection with the earth and its ancestors. In another poem *Lament* —/ Tishani narrates the speaker's memories of his/her home and family while contrasting them with his/her current life in the city. The poem examines the differences between urban and rural life. It emphasises the themes of nostalgia, loss, and the struggle for survival (Shrotryia). The poem depicts the emotional anguish of displacement, the longing for home, and the hardships faced by individuals who leave their roots in search of better opportunities. It highlights the human experience of memory and the complexities of identity in different environments. It reflects the deep emotional ties while grappling with the harsh realities of city life.

Mamang Dai's *Remembrance* revolves around the fragility of human existence and the illusions of permanence in nature and belief. It reflects on the expectations of life—how individuals often take survival, nature, and divine presence for granted. The subject matter deals with themes of environmental change, the impact of conflict, the fleeting nature of belief, and the relation of humanity to the natural world. The poem suggests a juxtaposition between the idyllic notions of nature and the harsh realities brought about by war and existential despair. The central idea of the poem, *No dreams*, revolves around the juxtaposition of nature's beauty and the speaker's internal emotional state, particularly a sense of disconnection or emptiness. The imagery evokes a connection with the natural world, yet the speaker feels a profound lack of dreams or aspirations. The poem explores the relationship between the speaker and the environment, highlighting both the beauty of the landscape and the speaker's emotional void. Mamang's *Floating island* describes a serene yet vivid landscape where a mountain, water, and a woman symbolize different aspects of life, emotion, and memory. The imagery of the mountain reaching toward the speaker and the

woman sleeping with dreams connotes a deep emotional connection to both nature and personal experience. The poem probably delves into the exploration of the speaker's introspective musing, utilizing nature as a tool to convey inner thoughts and feelings, and to express deep emotional truths and the beauty of life's transient moments. The interaction of human experience and the natural world emphasizes the significance of being connected, both to the earth and to one another.

Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih's *Agartala nights* explores themes of identity, cultural erasure, and the complexities of belonging in a post-colonial landscape. The poem reflects on the experience of living in a place marked by historical conflict and cultural diversity. The poem captures the tension between the desire to embrace one's roots and the forces that seek to homogenize and silence distinct voices. The poem contrasts the beauty of local customs and languages against the harsh realities of cultural suppression, displacement, and the painful history of borders and identities. The poem serves to raise awareness about the complexities of cultural identity, the impact of colonialism, and the importance of preserving diverse voices amidst forces of homogenization.

Summation

Discussing the voices of four Indian poets, the poems of Arundhathi and Tishani explore the varied aspects

of cities. The influence of the city in one's memory, identity, and life journey of individuals is expressed in their poems. While the life of urban people is expressed in poems of Mamang Dai, and Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih. The beauty of natural landscapes, emotional connection with nature, and post-colonial landscapes are wonderfully shown in their poems.

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ANXIETY, ATTACHMENT, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: A BOWENIAN ANALYSIS OF FAMILY DYNAMICS IN KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *KLARA AND THE SUN*

P.V. DEEPA

*Ph.D Research Scholar (Part-Time), Department of English
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu
Assistant Professor, Department of English
Rajapalayam Rajus' College, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. S. RAMANATHAN

*Research Guide and Supervisor, Department of English
V.H.N.S.N College, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*This study explores Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory to examine the intricate connections between fear, attachment, and artificial intelligence (AI) in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. Ishiguro's futuristic novel, which incorporates AI friends like the titular Klara into family structures, raises important questions about the nature of interpersonal relationships and emotional dependence. Because of Josie's unstable health and the possibility that she would be digitally replicated, which affects her relationship with her mother and makes it possible for Klara to become intimately linked to her emotional interactions. This study uses Bowen's theory of emotional triangles to explain how Klara is involved in Josie and her mother's affective exchanges. The paper also analyses the increasing prevalence of AI in human existence and its prospective repercussions for familial structures and the basic fabric of human interaction.*

Keywords: *artificial intelligence, family systems, attachment, repercussions.*

Introduction

In Literary Studies, Psychoanalytic theory has had a greater impact than any other psychological investigation model. Though it is relatively new and unknown to humanities scholars, Murray Bowen's family systems theory holds significant promise for the field of literary studies, thus it is not the only approach that is available. With the use of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*, this article aims to assess the critical efficacy of Family systems theory as a literary construct.

Murray Bowen, along with his associates and supporters, used a vast amount of information about animal and human families to develop his theoretical assertions regarding the psychological persona of the family. In *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* Bowen's declaration that the "family is a system in that a change in one part of the system is followed by

compensatory change in other parts of the system" (155) marks a universal entitlement that appears "anti-humanities." Bowen's Family Systems theory is a more conservatively scientific analysis of the human psyche, this does not negate its potential as a literary analysis theoretical framework. John V. Knapp's *Family Systems Therapy and Literary Study: An Introduction* explicates:

The family system becomes the source of the matrix of identity, rather than only the individual character. Thus, the "causes" of a given problem in growing up (and beyond) in fictional and real families is much less the person construct or single event, and more the emotional process that links people and events. . . . To understand a member(s) of a fictional family, one needs to understand the family system. (Knapp 15)

This research paper aims to analyze the intricate relationships between the characters in *Klara and the Sun* through a Bowenian perspective of family dynamics, particularly focusing on how anxiety and attachment processes affect both the human characters and the artificial intelligence (AI) entity, Klara. Murray Bowen created the Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST), which offers a framework for comprehending the dynamics inside a family, the part played by emotional distress, and the influence of attachment on relationships. By examining the novel through this theoretical lens, it is possible to analyze how emotional systems function in relationships between humans and artificial intelligence as well as between people. The idea of anxiety, a major issue in both the story and Bowen's theory, lies at the heart of this analysis.

The characters' differing levels of emotional detachment, reliance, and openness show how attachment processes influence interpersonal relationships and family dynamics. Bowlby in *Attachment and loss: Volume I: Attachment* states: "Attachment behavior is designed to promote proximity to the attachment figure, and it becomes activated in times of stress or uncertainty" (p. 82).

This paper will examine these themes in order to make the case that Ishiguro's book offers a moving commentary on the eroding lines between human and machine as well as an analysis of the emotional intricacies of family structures in a technologically sophisticated world.

Review of Literature

The existing literature on Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* deals rich acumens into refrains of artificial intelligence, human attachment, and emotional regulation. However, fewer studies have explored these themes through the lens of Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST), a gap this paper seeks to fill.

Bowen (1978) asserts that families function as networks of interrelated emotional bonds in which anxiety permeates society and shapes people's emotions and conduct. According to research by Kerr and Bowen (2000), people with high levels of differentiation are better at controlling their anxiety and preserving healthy family relationships, whereas people with low levels of distinction are more prone to feelings of anxiety and disorder.

By using BFST to literary analysis, researchers like Bowen and Kerr have shown that dysfunctional emotional patterns are frequently reproduced in family systems (Kerr and Bowen 56). This study uses this approach to investigate how emotional tension is created within the family system as a result of Josie's illness anxiety and her mother's intrusive worry. This tension is both worsened and mitigated by Klara's presence.

McCulloch (2022) asserts that by providing a non-human viewpoint on human emotions and attachment processes, artificial intelligence (AI) in literature can be used as a tool to investigate the dynamics of human relationships. Klara's role as an observer in *Klara and the Sun* offers special insights into how family dynamics, attachment, and anxiety function in a setting where an artificial entity engages in the emotional system.

Applying Bowen's theory, this paper demonstrates how anxiety, emotional triangles, and family projection processes can be impacted by an outside, non-human entity by arguing that Klara's interactions with Josie and her mother act as a catalyst for reconsidering the emotional dynamics within the family (Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark 152).

Thus Review of Literature section now delivers a comprehensive background of prevailing studies and theories related to Bowen Family Systems Theory, and the role of applying BFST to AI-human dynamics, setting the stage for the detailed analysis of *Klara and the Sun*.

Research Methodology

This study analyzes the family dynamics in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* using a qualitative technique and a theoretical framework based on Attachment Theory and Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST). The method will center on a textual analysis of the book, looking at how attachment processes, anxiety, and emotional systems influence character relationships and how these dynamics translate into interactions with artificial intelligence (AI), particularly Klara. The methodology's goal is to investigate how human-AI encounters interface with attachment theory and Bowenian family systems.

Discussion

The novel *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro provides a rich backdrop for comprehending how fear and attachment affect family dynamics in a technologically advanced world through its examination of emotional systems, human relationships, and artificial intelligence. The important facets of the study will be examined, offering a more thorough comprehension of the connections between AI, human emotions, and family dynamics.

a) Family Anxiety and Emotional Reactivity: Bowen's Family Systems Theory

One of the main principles of Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST) is that anxiety in family systems causes emotional fusion, in which the emotional states of family members converge and affect personal functioning and independence (Bowen). Anxiety permeates *Klara and the Sun* and has a big impact on character interactions, especially those between Josie and her mother. Josie's physical and mental illnesses serve as stressors that increase anxiety in the family system, making her mother more emotionally reactive and overly protective. As an outsider, Klara notices Josie's mother's nervousness and explains how it influences her actions: "I could see the way she would stiffen whenever Josie

coughed or seemed tired, as though each small sign of distress might break her entirely' (Ishiguro 122)."

In the mother-daughter relationship, the dread shows up as overprotection, which is a blatant example of emotional fusion. Because of her inability to distinguish between Josie's individuality and her health, Josie's mother engages in actions that restrict her independence. Bowen claims that because of her emotional fusion with Josie's condition, her mother reacts in ways that hinder her ability to distinguish herself. In an effort to ease her own fear over losing her daughter, she constantly tries to protect Josie, but she is unable to control her emotional reactions on her own. This is consistent with Bowen's claim that "anxiety, when undifferentiated, distorts communication and fosters emotional fusion" (Bowen 102). As Josie defines her own tussle with her mother's domineering protection, she admits, "She means well, but sometimes I feel like she's holding me back" (Ishiguro 148).

Klara's function as an Artificial Friend is crucial in this context. Despite not being a human, she contributes a new level of emotional dynamics to the family structure. Designed to offer company, Klara serves as an emotionally detached character who observes how the family interacts. Her programmed nature, however, also prevents her from completely participating in the emotional fusion that is taking place between Josie and her mother. As she watches Josie's mother's nervousness, she muses, "It was hard for me to tell whether she was feeling more anxious or if she was hiding her anxiety behind a smile" (Ishiguro 131).

b) Emotional Triangulation: The Triangle Theory and Family Dynamics:

According to Bowen, triangles are a stable structure of relationships where the participation of a third party—whether human or non-human—is essential to controlling or escalating conflict between two individuals. Triangulation is a phenomenon when a

third party—a person or an idea—is involved, the uneasiness between two people is either reduced or increased (Bowen, 1978). The association between Josie, her mother, and Klara in *Klara and the Sun* is a clear example of emotional triangulation. In this system, Klara's function is explained when she says, "I understood my role as one who helped, but it was always clear to me that the real emotional work was for them to do" (Ishiguro 157).

Throughout the narrative, Klara acts as a mediator between Josie and her mother, taking on some of the emotional strain that would otherwise intensify their argument. When Klara considers her efforts to ease Josie's fear, this is demonstrated: "I could sense the tension between them, but it wasn't something I could fix. I could only offer a moment of peace, like a brief interlude in a song that was still building toward a crescendo" (Ishiguro 177). The limitations of Klara's involvement in this emotional triangle are highlighted by her incapacity to completely heal the underlying issues between Josie and her mother.

c) Differentiation of Self: Emotional Boundaries:

Bowen's theory of self-differentiation is essential to comprehending the connections between Klara and the Sun. According to Bowen, differentiation is the capacity of an individual to preserve a distinct sense of self while maintaining emotional ties to others. Josie and her mother's emotional reliance on one another makes it difficult for them to set themselves apart. Josie's condition causes her mother to become too cautious, which makes Josie more emotionally withdrawn as she tries to keep her independence while depending on her mother. This is obvious when Josie articulates frustration: "She just won't let go. I think she loves me so much that she doesn't know how to let me live on my own terms" (Ishiguro 142).

Being a non-human being, Klara maintains her emotional distance from the family, making her a somewhat objective spectator. She can serve as a

mirror for the emotional states of the other characters because she does not go through the same emotional turmoil or entanglement. In contrast to the emotional fusion that pervades interpersonal connections, Klara's neutrality sheds light on the Bowenian idea of emotional distinction. Her lack of emotional involvement, however, also highlights how inadequate AI is as a replacement for human interaction and uniqueness. Her lack of human emotion makes it more difficult for the family to establish emotional equilibrium, even though Klara may lessen anxiety by maintaining her emotional neutrality. She reveals on her role: "I can't help them the way they want me to. But I am here, and that must be enough" (Ishiguro 189).

d) The Intersection of AI and Human Attachment: Challenges and Possibilities

Finding genuine profundity of emotion is one of the primary obstacles at the nexus of AI and human bonding in *Klara and the Sun*. Because she is an artificial being, Klara's ability to develop an emotional bond is still severely restricted, even if she is trained to recognize and react to human emotions. Though she is unable to get the hang of human feelings as a human would, she is able to observe and analyze them. Klara considers her function as Josie's friend, for example: "I knew that my purpose was to make Josie feel less lonely, to comfort her, and to bring a sense of peace into her life. But I couldn't experience that same loneliness myself" (Ishiguro 89). This declaration accentuates the primary restraint of AI in nurturing genuine attachment. Klara can simulate comfort, but she cannot truly experience the bond that humans feel.

Furthermore, in contrast to the complexity of human emotional needs, Klara's artificial programming shapes her conception of attachment. She observes Josie's connection with her mother and observes that it is characterized by reliance and anxiety: I could see the way the mother tried to keep

Josie close, but Josie was beginning to pull away, as though the more her mother clung to her, the more Josie would want to escape" (Ishiguro 122). This complexity draws attention to a significant obstacle facing AI in the field of human attachment: although AI may be able to recognize the signs of emotional discomfort, it is unable to completely understand the psychological complexity that underlie human desires and behaviours. Artificial intelligence (AI) like Klara can offer a sense of camaraderie, but they may not be able to replicate the depth of attachment and emotional complexity that humans need.

However, there are certain positive aspects to AI's potential to support human attachment. The subject of whether artificial intelligence (AI) can improve human relationships—particularly for those who may experience emotional trauma or loneliness—is brought up by Klara's function as Josie's companion. The prospect for AI to play a particular role in offering emotional support is demonstrated by Klara's unwavering commitment to Josie: "I believed that if I could do enough for Josie, if I could just help her enough, she would be better" (Ishiguro 205). In this manner, AI provides a special kind of attachment that is free from complexity, judgment, and expectations. People who struggle to build interpersonal interactions because of emotional or psychological hurdles may find this very helpful.

Conclusion

Particularly in the context of a society that is becoming more technologically advanced, Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* offers a comprehensive examination of human emotions, attachment, and the intricacies of family dynamics. With an emphasis on Josie, her mother, and Klara, the Artificial Friend, this analysis has demonstrated the complicated interactions between anxiety, reactive feelings, and attachment in the associations between the characters via the prism of Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST). Applying Bowenian ideas like

emotional fusion, triangulation, and self-differentiation helps us see how worry, especially overprotectiveness, affects family dynamics and produces unhealthy behaviours. The crucial role that anxiety plays in affecting the family's emotional system is one of the analysis's main conclusions. In *Klara and the Sun*, anxiety impacts the entire family as a whole and is not only a personal experience. For instance, Josie's illness turns into a major stressor that fuels her mother's overly protective actions, resulting in emotional integration rather than constructive separation between the two. Since Josie's mother fights to keep control over her daughter's health, even at the expense of Josie's independence, Bowen's theory that anxiety blurs emotional boundaries is evident. Because of her mother's fear, Josie is drawn into a vicious circle of emotional dependency, which makes it even harder for her to manage her identity. When Bowen's Triangle Theory is used, it becomes clear how Klara gets caught up in the emotional back and forth between Josie and her mother. Although Josie's uneasiness is momentarily reduced by Klara's attempts to console her, her incapacity to completely comprehend the emotional nuances of human connection highlights the fundamental limitations of artificial beings in creating lasting bonds. In the end, *Klara and the Sun* makes the argument that although AI can help reduce feelings of loneliness and emotional misery, it cannot take the place of the close, genuine relationships that people require. Important ethical and psychological issues are brought up by the novel's examination of attachment, especially when viewed through the prism of human reliance on AI. Thus, the tale of Klara, Josie, and her mother continues to be a potent examination of the delicate balance that separates technology, emotion, and human need, challenging us to think about the consequences of depending too much on AI in the future to satisfy our emotional needs.

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FIVE POINT SOMEONE: A PORTRAIT OF INDIA'S EMERGING GENERATION

J. ANTONY CHARLES

*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English
A.V.V.M Sri Pushpam College, Poondi, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichy, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. R. MAYILRAJ

*Research Supervisor & Associate Professor, Department of English
A.V.V.M Sri Pushpam College, Poondi, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichy, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Chetan Bhagat's novel *Five Point Someone* provides a unique and insightful portrait of India's emerging generation. Through the story of three friends navigating the pressures of the Indian education system, Bhagat skilfully captures the aspirations, frustrations, and dilemmas faced by young Indians in a rapidly changing society. Set against the backdrop of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), the novel follows the lives of three students as they navigate the challenges of academic pressure, friendship, and love. Bhagat delves into the conflicts that arise when individual desires conflict with societal expectations while also exploring the high expectations placed on Indian youth to succeed academically and secure a prosperous future. The story not only resonates with young Indians but also offers a broader commentary on the universal struggles faced by individuals striving for fulfilment in an ever-evolving society. This research paper examines the representation of India's emerging generation in *Five Point Someone*, exploring how Bhagat's characters embody the hopes and dreams of a nation undergoing rapid change. This paper aims to shed light on the aspirations and struggles of young Indians in a changing society by analysing the characters' experiences and difficulties. It aims to give readers a deeper appreciation of the challenges faced by India's young generation in their quest for happiness and success by examining the themes of ambition, love, and societal expectations.

Keywords: *ambition, love, friendship, education, denationalization.*

The young generation of Indians that grew up after the economic reforms of the early 1990s, which included liberalization, privatization, and globalization, can be referred to as the 'New Generation Indian.' This generation witnessed a significant shift in the country's economy and society, leading to increased opportunities and exposure to global influences. They are known for their adaptability, entrepreneurial spirit, and embrace of technology, making them a driving force in India's rapid growth and development. These reforms led to an increase in capital, technology, and information by reducing barriers to foreign investment and promoting

the modernization of telecommunications. As a result, India experienced a surge in foreign direct investment and the establishment of multinational corporations, contributing to job creation and economic expansion. Additionally, the liberalization of the telecommunications sector paved the way for improved connectivity and access to information, empowering individuals and businesses alike. This resulted in not only a globalization of the economy but also a rapid change in lifestyles, particularly among the urban middle class in India. The urban middle class in India witnessed a significant increase in disposable income, leading to a rise in consumer

spending and a demand for luxury goods and services.

Moreover, the influx of multinational corporations brought about cultural exchange and exposure to international trends, influencing fashion, entertainment, and dining choices among the urban population. The liberalization of the Indian economy has had a significant impact on social life in India, and many scholars have discussed how the media, corporations, and politicians have created an image of a 'New India' based on the changes brought about by economic reform (Chowdhury 2-3). This image of a 'New India' is often associated with modernity, progress, and consumerism, reflecting the influence of globalization on Indian society. Additionally, the economic reforms have also led to a rise in income inequality and social disparities, which has sparked debates about the inclusivity and sustainability of India's growth trajectory.

For example, the rise of the IT industry in cities like Bangalore and Hyderabad has created a new class of young professionals with high disposable incomes and a desire for global brands and lifestyles. This has resulted in the proliferation of luxury malls and international retail chains, catering to the demands of this emerging consumer class. However, this rapid urbanization and materialistic mindset have also widened the gap between the rich and the poor, exacerbating social inequalities and raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of India's economic growth. The growth of shopping malls, multiplexes, and international fast-food chains are all indicators of this change. These developments have not only transformed the urban landscape but have also influenced consumer behaviour, leading to a shift towards conspicuous consumption and a focus on material possessions. However, this trend has also raised questions about its impact on local businesses and traditional markets, potentially marginalizing small-scale entrepreneurs and further widening the economic divide.

At the same time, there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional Indian culture and values among this generation as they seek to balance their global aspirations with their local roots. This has led to a renewed appreciation for traditional craftsmanship and indigenous products, creating opportunities for local artisans and craftsmen to showcase their skills and preserve cultural heritage. A demand for eco-friendly and locally sourced products has also been sparked by this generation's interest in sustainable living and ethical consumption, which helps to support local businesses and encourages a more inclusive economy. This has led to the emergence of new forms of cultural expression that combine elements of both Indian and Western cultures. These hybrid cultural expressions have not only gained popularity within the country but have also attracted international attention, contributing to a greater appreciation and understanding of India's diverse heritage. The younger generation has grown prouder and more self-aware thanks to this blending of cultures, as they come up with creative ways to honour their heritage while embracing external influences.

The creation of a new generation of Indian citizens, who will be crucial in determining the narrative of this liberalized country, goes hand in hand with the development of the "New India" brand. These efforts focus on empowering the youth through education and skill development programs, aiming to equip them with the necessary tools to contribute effectively to the nation's progress. By fostering a sense of responsibility and inclusivity, the goal is to cultivate a forward-thinking mindset among the new generation that will drive innovation and propel India towards its vision of becoming a global leader.

The protagonists in Bhagat's novels are representative of this new generation in many ways, as his stories explore the experiences of urban life and the impact of economic liberalization on young Indians. Bhagat's novels often depict the struggles

and aspirations of young individuals who are navigating through a rapidly changing society. He emphasizes the value of adaptability and resilience in the face of societal changes through his characters, ultimately motivating readers to take an active role in determining India's future.

Bhagat's novel *Five Point Someone* follows the lives of three students at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) as they navigate the challenges of academic pressure, friendship, and love. The novel delves into the intense competition and high expectations that students face in the cutthroat world of IIT, highlighting the toll it takes on their mental health and personal relationships. Bhagat's relatable characters and engaging storytelling shed light on the flaws of India's education system, encouraging readers to question and challenge societal norms for a brighter future.

The characters are portrayed as ambitious and aspirational, seeking to succeed in a rapidly changing India. They navigate the pressures of societal expectations and the constant need to prove themselves while also grappling with their own dreams and desires. Bhagat's depiction of their struggles resonates with readers, sparking conversations about the importance of individuality and self-discovery in a competitive world. Similarly, his novel *2 States* explores the complexities of intercultural relationships in modern India, as a young couple from different regions and cultural backgrounds struggle to gain acceptance from their families. The novel delves into the challenges faced by the couple as they navigate societal expectations and prejudices, highlighting the need for empathy and understanding in a diverse society. Bhagat's portrayal of their journey not only sheds light on the intricacies of intercultural relationships but also prompts readers to question traditional norms and embrace love beyond boundaries.

In her article, Kripalani used the term "zippies" to refer to the young and tech-savvy generation of

Indians who were rapidly embracing globalization and modernization. These zippies were seen as a driving force behind India's economic growth and were often associated with the rise of the IT industry in the country. Kripalani highlighted how this generation was breaking away from traditional norms and embracing a more global outlook, leading to significant cultural shifts in Indian society.

This term accurately captured the dynamic and fast-paced lifestyle of these individuals, who were not only adept at utilizing technology but also eager to explore new opportunities in a globalized world. They were known for their entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to take risks, which played a crucial role in driving innovation and creating new business ventures. This generation also played a key role in bridging the gap between India and the rest of the world, fostering international collaborations, and attracting foreign investments.

These individuals grew up in a time of economic reform and globalization, which opened up opportunities for them to explore and pursue diverse career paths. They are often seen as forward-thinking and adaptable, embracing new technologies and ideas to drive India's growth in various sectors. The Zippies are not only ambitious and entrepreneurial but also value work-life balance and prioritize personal growth. They are actively involved in shaping India's future by contributing to social causes, promoting sustainability, and advocating for inclusivity in the workplace.

Zippies are known for their enthusiasm and energy, constantly seeking opportunities to make a positive impact on society. They are eager to collaborate with like-minded individuals and organizations, leveraging their technological skills and innovative thinking to tackle complex challenges. This generation of Zippies holds the potential to revolutionize industries and drive India's growth by embracing the power of technology and fostering a culture of creativity and collaboration. The novel

follows the lives of a group of characters born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, when India gained its independence. Through their experiences, Rushdie explores the complexities and struggles faced by this generation as they navigate a new era in Indian history.

The term "midnight's children" has since become synonymous with the challenges and aspirations of a generation born during this pivotal time in India's history. Rushdie weaves together elements of magical realism and historical fiction to create a vivid and imaginative narrative that reflects the chaos and transformation that followed India's independence.

The characters in "Midnight's Children" represent different facets of Indian society, highlighting the diverse perspectives and conflicts that emerged during this tumultuous period. Saleem's birth grants him a unique ability to telepathically connect with the other children born at that precise moment, forming a special bond known as the "Midnight's Children." Through Saleem's perspective, Rushdie explores the intertwining of personal and national identity, as well as the complex relationship between individual agency and historical forces.

The novel's blend of fantastical elements and historical events creates a captivating narrative that delves into the complexities of postcolonial India. While "midnight's children" refers to those who were born at the stroke of midnight on India's independence, "zippies" or "liberalization's children" are a generation that grew up in the era of economic reforms and globalization. These distinct time periods and cultural contexts shape their experiences, beliefs, and aspirations, highlighting the evolving nature of Indian society. These generational differences have led to contrasting perspectives on issues such as nationalism, identity, and career choices. While Midnight's children often prioritize nation-building and traditional career paths, "zippies" tend to embrace diversity, prioritize personal growth, and seek unconventional career opportunities.

The interplay between these two generations reflects the dynamic nature of Indian society as it navigates through the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing world. These individuals are often tech-savvy and adapt quickly to technological advancements, utilizing them to their advantage in various industries. Additionally, they are more open to exploring entrepreneurship and creating innovative solutions to societal problems, contributing to the overall progress of the nation. Lukose writes:

The term is a play on "midnight's children" – the generation named after the Salman Rushdie novel which focused on those born during the first hour of the year 1947, when India gained its independence from British colonial rule. The term intertwines the lives of those born in the immediate aftermath of independence with the life of the nation, a nation shaped by the socialist-inspired understanding of national development represented by Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister. In contrast to liberalization's children, midnight's children seem mired in the ideological baggage of Nehruvian nationalist development, with its focus on the rural poor and service to the nation; as lacking in ambition; and being risk averse, "uncool," and fearful. (Lukose 5)

Chetan Bhagat's debut novel, *Five Point Someone*, was published in 2004 and quickly became a bestseller in India. The story revolves around three friends navigating the pressures of the Indian education system and their struggles to maintain their grades while dealing with personal issues. The success of *Five Point Someone* propelled Chetan Bhagat into the spotlight as a popular and influential author in India. With its relatable characters and engaging narrative, the novel struck a chord with readers who resonated with the challenges and dilemmas faced by the protagonists. Bhagat's writing style, characterized by a blend of humour, realism, and social commentary,

captivated a wide audience and established him as a voice that represented the aspirations and frustrations of the Indian youth.

As a result, *Five Point Someone* not only became a literary sensation but also sparked conversations about the flaws in the education system and the pressure faced by students to conform to societal expectations. The novel's success also paved the way for Bhagat to become a prominent figure in Indian literature, inspiring a new generation of writers to explore similar themes of youth, ambition, and societal change. This novel tells the story of three engineering students at one of India's top universities who struggle to balance the intense academic competition and personal problems they face.

They wrestle with their own dreams and aspirations while navigating the difficulties of the educational system and also challenging the expectations that society has for them. The novel highlights the detrimental effects on students' mental and emotional health of the intense pressure they face to fit in and succeed. The main characters, Hari Kumar, Ryan Oberai, and Alok Gupta, come from different segments of the middle class and represent the emerging young aspirants within a premier institute like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). Their motivation comes from a desire to succeed academically and guarantee a prosperous future, but they quickly learn that the road to success is more difficult than they initially believed.

The novel sheds light on the larger issues plaguing the educational system and the toll it takes on students' general well-being as they navigate cutthroat competition, societal expectations, and personal struggles. In contrast to the well-known corporate success stories that the media frequently promotes, the novel explores how those in the lower reaches of the middle class bear the costs and risks of failure in these institutions. It delves into the pressure and anxiety that students face as they strive

to meet high academic standards and secure a promising future, often at the expense of their mental health and overall happiness. Through its thought-provoking narrative, the novel prompts readers to question the fairness and sustainability of a system that prioritizes individual success over collective well-being. For example, Alok comes from a lower-middle-class family and is under immense pressure to succeed academically to support his family financially.

He spends countless hours studying and sacrificing his personal interests and hobbies, leading to constant stress and anxiety. Despite his hard work, Alok constantly questions whether this relentless pursuit of success is truly worth the toll it takes on his mental well-being. He struggles with the academic rigor of IIT and eventually resorts to cheating to maintain his grades. Alok's decision to cheat weighs heavily on his conscience as he grapples with the moral implications of his actions. He finds himself trapped in a cycle of guilt and fear, fearing the consequences of getting caught while also fearing the consequences of failing to meet his family's expectations. Similarly, Ryan comes from a wealthy family but is disillusioned with the education system and rebels against it.

His rebellion against the education system stems from his belief that it prioritizes conformity over critical thinking and creativity. He yearns for a more holistic approach to learning that encourages personal growth and exploration. Despite facing criticism from his family and peers, Ryan remains determined to forge his own path and find fulfilment outside of traditional academic norms. The emphasis on grades and rote learning feels stifling to him, despite being creative and innovative. He believes that true education should nurture individuality and foster a love for learning rather than reduce it to a mere pursuit of grades. He aspires to break free from the confines of conventional schooling and seeks opportunities to engage in hands-on experiences that

allow him to think outside the box and unleash his full potential.

Hari, on the other hand, is caught between his loyalty to his friends and his desire to succeed academically. He often finds himself torn between participating in social activities with his friends and dedicating time to studying and achieving good grades. While he understands the importance of academic success, Hari also values the bonds he has formed with his peers and does not want to jeopardize those relationships. However, he is aware that striking a balance between socializing and focusing on his education is crucial for his future growth and opportunities. He also has a romantic relationship with Neha, the daughter of a domineering professor, which adds to his personal struggles. Navigating a romantic relationship with Neha brings its own set of challenges for Hari, as he must find ways to maintain his individuality and assertiveness while also respecting her family dynamics. This dynamic further highlights the complexity of Hari's personal struggles and the need for him to find a delicate equilibrium between his academic pursuits, friendships, and love life.

Education plays a crucial role in providing individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in today's competitive job market. It not only enhances employability but also opens doors to various opportunities for personal and professional growth. Pavan Varma highlights how education equips young individuals with the tools to break free from socio-economic constraints and achieve upward mobility. He emphasizes that education not only empowers them to secure better job prospects but also enables them to broaden their horizons and contribute meaningfully to society. He writes as follows:

Education was something the middle class always valued, but its importance has only grown in these last years. Traditionally, the feudal gentry had the insulation of landed wealth and

the hereditary rich had money; for the average middle-class person, however, education was the only means to move upwards

... Educational avenues had been increasing ever since 1947, but job opportunities multiplied manifold after the economic reforms of 1991 and the advent a little later of information technology ... The middle class has put in a great deal of hard work to be a part of and benefit from this unfolding educational boom. For every seat in a technology institute there are thousands of aspirants ... This kind of competition could be daunting; it could led to resignation, an acceptance of the improbability of success, a withdrawal from the arena of battle. (Varma, *The Great Indian* xxiii)

Among the new generation of Indians, many young IT aspirants strive to acquire various forms of social capital in order to improve their employment prospects in the emerging economy. These forms of social capital include building strong professional networks, acquiring advanced technical skills, and gaining exposure to international work environments. Additionally, they actively participate in industry events and conferences to stay updated with the latest trends and developments in the IT sector. In fact, coaching classes and private tuition have become integral parts of middle-class strategies for gaining access to education. The proliferation of coaching centres for IT schools across the country is a reflection of the changing labour market, as depicted in novels like *Revolution 2020*. These centres provide young people with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the competitive world of IT and other high-tech industries.

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EQUAL BY LAW, UNEQUAL BY CASTE: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL RESISTANCE IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF MULK RAJ ANAND

R. ESTHER RESHMA

*PhD Research Scholar (PT), Department of English and Comparative Literature
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*This research article explores the theme of untouchability as depicted in Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* and *The Road*, focusing on the social and psychological oppression of the lower castes in traditional Hindu society. The caste system, rooted in Hindu scriptures, divides society into four main categories, with the "untouchables" or lower castes subjected to severe discrimination and exploitation. In *Untouchable* (1935), the protagonist Bakha, a sweeper, faces harsh social restrictions, including being denied access to public resources like water, and is reliant on the higher castes for survival. The novel critiques the ritualistic purification practices that perpetuate the marginalization of outcastes, as well as the exploitation of women and the hypocrisy of religious figures. In *The Road* (1961), while some progress has been made, the outcastes still suffer economic exploitation and social inequality in a rural Indian village. Both works highlight the ingrained nature of untouchability, the ignorance of the oppressed, and the inability of lower castes to challenge their fate due to financial dependence on landlords. Through these narratives, Anand critiques the moral failings of the caste system, the exploitation of the oppressed, and the failure of religious and social institutions to address these injustices.*

Keywords: *mulk raj anand, untouchable, the road, coolie, indian fiction, social resistance, social exploitation, social criticism, untouchability and caste discrimination.*

"Man's fate, today, is no longer in the hands of the gods,' but is often in conflict with the evil in other men..." (Anand 4).

The concept of untouchability gets its origin from the Hindu religion according to which the society is divided into four major parts: the Brahmins, the Kshatriya, the Vaishyas and the Sutras. The Hindu Scriptures state that the Brahmins were born from the head of the Lord Brahma, God of Creation. So they hold the supreme position in the society. The Kshatriya descended from the heart, the Vaishyas from the stomach and the Sutras from the feet. The Kshatriya being of the royal blood, the Vaishyas doing commercial undertakings and the Sutras representing the working class, the society stands class oriented from time immemorial. The original intention behind this caste system might be to bring about a well-ordered society in which different

functions may be taken up by different classes of people. But in course of time, because of one's emphasizing superiority permanently over the other, the society as well as the individual gets deteriorated and all sorts of exploitation and ill treatment come to stay. Saros Cowasjee observes: "The Hindu religion is responsible for this fiendish segregation of humanity" (Cowasjee 15). In fact, the practice of untouchability in the Hindu society, according to G. S. Ghurye, arises out of the "ideas of ceremonial purity. First applied to the aboriginal Sutras in connection with the sacrificial ritual and expanded and extended to other groups because of the theoretical impurity of certain occupation" (Ghurye 124). Thus the Untouchables taking their origin from the Sutras, gradually become excommunicated from the society and hold no place in the so called caste system.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* is the result of his reaction against the practice of untouchability in the traditional Hindu society during the Gandhian era, whereas *The Road* graphically portrays the slightly changed conditions of the outcastes during the early nineteen sixties. The practice of untouchability has now been legally banned and the government has initiated job opportunities for the suppressed classes. Nevertheless, the caste Hindu is armed with the feeling of six thousand years of social and class superiority a feeling which refuses to accept the fact that the untouchable is a human being, but insists on treating him like a sub human creature, to be ignored or bullied or exploited as the occasion demands. (Naik 29)

In *Untouchable*, the high-caste Hindus do not allow the outcastes to use the nearby brook, because they believe that by their touch the brook would be polluted. They cannot draw water directly from the well and so they are to wait patiently for some caste Hindu who may come there by chance, and then request him to draw and pour water into their pitchers, Anand describes their cry for water, the essential need of man, when a sepoy crosses them: "Oh, Maharaj! Maharaj! Won't you draw us some water, please? We beg you. We have been waiting here a long time, we will be grateful," shouted the chorus of voices as they pressed towards him, some standing up, bending and joining their palm in beggary, others twisting their lips in various attitudes of servile appeal and abject humility as they remained seated, separate (*Untouchable* 30).

The sweepers are dependent on the bounty of the caste Hindus not only for water but also for their daily food. In the afternoons, Bakha, his brother Rakha and his sister Sohini have to go to collect bread from the houses of the silversmiths and from the barracks. Bakha cries like a beggar; "The sweeper has come for bread, mother! The sweeper has come for the bread" (*Untouchable* 76). He patiently waits till the woman of the house comes out

and gives him something. When at last the woman does make her appearance, she only throws at him rudely a couple of chapattis from the balcony. Besides getting the rotten food, Bakha invites curses from the high-born ladies for the defilement that is done by his sitting on the doorsteps. In sharp contrast to this, the same lady is extremely solicitous towards a sadhu who is also begging for food. She offers him in great politeness delicious food with hot vegetable curries with the request that he accept it. Veena Singh comments "The basic necessities of life, like food and water, are used as powerful symbols to delineate the relationship between the caste Hindus and the Untouchables. The caste Hindus uses them as weapons to humiliate the Untouchables and erode their sense of self-respect" (Singh 125).

As the society considers these outcastes to be forever impure, it insists on a ceremonial purification, whenever the pollution takes place. The caste Hindus believe that the purification can be performed by bathing and conducting special poojas with sacrificial fire or by touching a Muslim which is the shortest cut to cancel the pollution. According to Premila Paul, "The custom of touching a Muslim to redress an unholy touch not only sounds comic but also reveals the absurdity of the whole system" (15). In *The Road* Chaudhri Thakur Singh, highest of the village by caste and rank, bitterly reports to the priest, Pandit Suraj Mani that the stones of the Shiva's sacred hill have been broken by the Untouchables for the construction of the road. The priest appeases him suggesting, "Then we can hold the yajna, if you folk can collect enough ghee to burn, so that the incense can rise to heaven and Indar Bhagwan can send down a storm to wash off the road!" (*The Road* 3).

In *Untouchable*, when Bakha wants to buy cigarettes from a pan-shop, the shopkeeper points to him a spot on the ground near him to place his coin. Then he sprinkles water on the coin to purify it and puts it into his cash box. The cigarettes are thrown to Bakha "as a butcher might throw a bone to an

insistent dog sniffing round the corner of his shop" (*Untouchable* 48). Likewise, the jelab is a recast away from the confectioner to Bakha as a cricket ball. The sweepers while walking along the road have to shout: "Posh, posh, sweeper coming, posh, posh, sweeper coming, posh, posh, sweeper coming!" (*Untouchable* 57) in order that the caste Hindus may save themselves from pollution through physical contact with an Untouchable. But unfortunately Bakha once fails to make this cry and slightly dashes against a high caste Hindu. Polluted by his touch, as anyhow he is to bathe and purify himself, the man gives him a sharp, clear slap.

The outcastes are strictly restricted from entering the temple, though they are also Hindus by birth, to them the temple is "a secret, a hidden mystery" (*Untouchable* 67). In *The Road*, the caste Hindus threatens Laxmi, mother of Bhikhu, not to enter the shrine and she very abjectly accepts her lot. The high caste Hindus brains wash the low-born people with their hugger-mugger Vedantic principles. Pandit Suraj Mani says; "And people suffer enough for the guilts of the past. To be sure, they ought to suffer before they can rise to a higher caste in the next life or recognize the divine. The temple teaches them Dharm. They cannot enter the house of God" (*The Road* 37). In the words of Veena Singh, religion is "another means of exploiting the Untouchables and of widening the gap between them and the caste Hindus" (Singh 126).

The orthodox Hindus revere the priests and sadhus who appear to be holy, but in fact are lustful, epicurean and hypocrites and in no way are virtuous or pious models to be followed. Pandit Suraj Mani in *The Road* gets his meals in the Brahmin's houses. He stealthily looks at the contours of Rukmani's figure with the lustfulness of his old age, when she pours water into his brass jug. Staring at women's behind is his favorite's habit. He wants to be seen naked by the village women after he finishes his bath. He is highly pretentious, when he accepts the mangoes from Dhooli Singh which are touched by the

Untouchables. Further, he praises Dhooli Singh as "a true Karma-Yogi" (*The Road* 72) whom he has so far hated for his dealings with the chamars.

Jagdish Shivpuri says: "If the rich are cruel, the priests have always provoked them to be crueller" (Shivpuri 212). Pandit Suraj Mani indirectly encourages the caste Hindu boys, Sajnu and Lachman who are going to threaten the Untouchables to vacate the huts, since the land on which their huts stand belongs to them: "To be sure, if you are convinced of the rightness of your resolve, you can inflict what punishment you like upon them: The God Krishan advised Arjun to fight if the cause be just..." (*The Road* 39). But the boys go too far and burn down the huts of the Untouchables. They lose their belongings in the fire. Laxmi's beloved goat whose milk she sells for her daily bread gets burnt alive. Anand explicitly describes the intensity of the suffering caused by the fire: "The old woman, absorbed in the dumbness of bereaved wonder, had heard the isolated wails of the other women of her caste, as they sat below here, huddled together, with their children crying through fear and thirst and clutching at their head clothes, tunics and skirts" (*The Road* 40). Moreover, two doves and one Neem tree are swallowed up by the leaping flames. It is the priest who is indirectly responsible for this sudden disaster. But he never bothers about the pathetic plight of the homeless Untouchables. Rather, he satisfies himself that he has not suggested to the two boys the direct action of setting fire to the huts.

Bhikhu in *The Road* is a great admirer of the poet Kabir, who upholds the dignity of labour in his verses. When he is troubled by the caste' superiors for his brisk association with the construction of the road, he is "determined to build the road whether they should help or not" (*The Road* 7). Bakha and Bhikhu believe in their work. They are exceedingly enthusiastic in fulfilling their assigned duty. By their duteousness, they try to seek their own recognition. But their heartfelt services to the society remain

unapproved. And so Bhakha and Bhikhu face an endless monotony, until the former listens to the encouraging words of Gandhi and the latter runaway to Delhi on the road he himself has built to soothe his wounded heart and to build up his own identity as a human being which is new to him.

In addition to their being exploited in the name of God and caste, they are suppressed economically by the privileged classes, they are destined to be under poverty and to work without wages. And so they are fully dependent on the upper caste people for anything and everything. So the servility would go on ceaselessly. The various economic factors that govern the state of the Untouchables are to be observed in relation to the life of the two heroes, Bakha and Bhikhu. "You, the poor and the humble, you, the meek and the gentle, wretches that you axe, swindled out of your rights, and broken in body and soul, you are respected by no one, and you do not respect yourselves" (*Coolie* 223).

In *The Road* Govardhan is a typical Indian village with its rural background. Thakur Singh is the head of the Panchayat; he is the owner of twenty acres of land. The outcastes of the village are working in his fields in return for grain. When they go to work for the construction of *The Road* which will link the village of Govardhan with the nearby town and will be useful for milk transportation, Thakur Singh shouts at Bhikhu and his mother, Laxmi: "Wait both of you, thieves of daylight! This village was a trust reposed in my family by the Gods, And you have defiled it by robbing the stone from the quarry..." (*The Road* 8). Also he curses Dhooli Singh, the caste Hindu for encouraging the Untouchables who work on the road. But Dhooli Singh defends the Untouchables saying... you think the village is happy. But these Chamars think differently, with no land and work for only four months of the year" (*The Road* 23). And Dhooli Singh is threatened that he cannot live in the village with his own caste brotherhood, if he goes on helping these outcastes financially. Provoked to

anger, Dhooli Singh finally says: "I am already condemned by our Panchayat... But I know that while the men of our brotherhood eat a little, many of these Chamars don't even have bread with pickle twice a day" (*The Road* 23).

The high caste Hindus do not involve themselves in the work not only because they do not like to touch the stones broken by the Untouchables but because they cannot bear to see the low caste people earning money by working on government jobs like installation of pylons for electric wires. Further, if the road is completed, as Dhooli Singh says: "...the milk of the village will be born to the city, and more cash will come to the folk... it is only roads and roads and more roads, and Bijli that will bring prosperity!" (*The Road* 21). So the high caste people fear that the wages in cash and the economical benefits would break the clutches of the slavery and make the Untouchables aware of their right to a comfortable life and the need to rebel. Anand narrates that the chamary out share working with a hope that "through their work on the road they would earn enough money and then go seek work elsewhere" (*The Road* 11).

The caste people are always aware of their economic status and they try to maintain it at any cost. If the poor grow prosperous and wealthy, then there would be no question of rank in the society on the basis of money values. Only this imperialistic attitude turns the caste Hindus to look down upon the untouchables and use abusive: "Today, they are taking the bread out of our mouths. By breaking the stones with the help of Dhooli Singh, they hope to ingratiate themselves with the Sarkar and earn money so that they can buy the status of the twice born. Already they have more money than is good for them. And we have less and less" (*The Road* 18)

Thakur Singh's anger gets intensified when the untouchables continue working on the road in spite of the caste people's threats. The new Block Development Officer, Diwan Roop Krishan and the

Engineer, Tuli Ram suggests that they would need at least twenty men for the work to be finished before the rains. But now only seven chamars are engaged in the road making. Dhooli Singh spirits them with his simulative words: "There are two kinds of men: those of few words, who do the work and are deep in their hearts: and those who do much talk and do the work only because they can calculate the cash. This road is a new thing to be built without big wages. But it will beatest for us all" (*The Road* 21).

The caste Hindus will join the work, if the government gives them five rupees per day, because they should be superior to the outcastes in getting wages by which their status would be preserved unaffected. Thakur Singh, unable to digest these things, goes too far: "I will bring our kith and kin from all the villages around after the harvest is threshed! I will have the mischief maker Dhooli Singh outcasted!" (*The Road* 3).

The government's ban on the untouchability, the upliftment of the downtrodden folk through employment opportunities are viewed cynically by the high caste people. The head of the Panchayat, Thakur Singh who ought to be just and fair to the low caste people criticizes the government's policies wickedly. Thousands of years of their supremacy in the hierarchy would not allow them to think of the Untouchables growing equal to them in terms of economy. Money will affect a considerable change¹ in the daily routine of the Untouchables' ordinary submissive way of life. Thakur Singh shouts at Dhooli Singh; "Ours was a self sufficient village before the Afsars of the Sarkar began to come interfering here. And these Chamars worked for us! And now these Chamar boys are earning wages and walking on the heart of our whole caste brotherhood..." (*The Road* 22). Later, he complains that the untouchables, their field workers, listen to no one nowadays. Sajnu, son of Thakur Singh, accuses Dhooli Singh that he finds easy labour from the Untouchables and thus he pleases the Sarkar. Thakur Singh hint sat the

government's support for the out castes and its impact upon the public in his talks to Sajnu: Son, this Sarkar is for the low ones, not for us landlords . . . All over Delhi town, they do nothing else but discuss the way, and how the Harijans must be protected against the higher castes. In former days, conversation in the trains and cook shops turned on the rains and drought and work. But, today, the lowness it bloated and yawn... (*The Road* 89)

In *Coolie* (1936) Anand shows his concern for the savagely neglected, despised and maltreated poor with an angry lack of vegetation. Munoo, a poor orphan hill-boy, verdant and innocent, underfed and ill-treated by his aunt, leaves the native village to find work and see the world. The very first encounter with reality shatters his dreams. Employed in the house of Bank Clerk, Munoo with his in born naïve gaiety amuses and entertains the employer's daughter by dancing like a monkey for her, but is interfered by the shrewish and vindictive house wife who ruthlessly destroys his happiness by making him realize his position in the world; 'Tie had no right to join the laughter of his superiors. He was to be a slave, a servant who should do the work, all the odd jobs, someone to be abused, even beaten" (*Coolie* 34).

The charm of the book lies in Munoo's innocence in his 4'naive warm- heartedness, his love and comradeship, his irrepressible curiosity and zest for life". He has an instinctive urge to live, to go on doing something in order to avoid starving. The Bombay scene with toiling, suffering, struggling, starving masses is at once vivid and realistic, where Munoo, an insignificant part of the millions of half-bed and half-clad workers is "no more than a speck in this tide of humanity", and it is precisely for this reason that the story does not end here and the author transport him to the holiday resort where here gains his identity, *Coolie*, is a "cosmic painting of the lives of thousands of orphans, their health running down 'through the hour glass time'. The novel is a treatise

on social evil at its sundry levels and phases" (Triveni 67).

Coolie and *Untouchable* both protest against social evils. The message of *Untouchable* is: "A man is a man and he is born equal to all other men". Bakha should not be considered dirt because he cleans dirt. In *Coolie*, Anand's canvas expands, and through Munoo he draws our attention to poverty-stricken and neglected people. Munoo wants to live decently, but in the scheme of things he has no place. In defiance, he cries out: "I want to live, I want to know, I want to know".

Coolie speaks of the socio-economic exploitation and the tribulation of an individual in class-ridden society; at first he worked as a domestic servant in, the house of Babu Nathu Ram, the sub-accountant of the Imperial Bank, Sham Nagar, where life becomes an unrelenting misery at the hands of his vindictive mistress. From there he runs away to Daulatpur where he worked as a labourer in a pickle factory and a coolie in a vegetable market. When his benefactor and boss, Prabha Dayal is swindled by the goat-faced Ganapat, he moves to Bombay with the help of an elephant-driver with hopes for a bright future. He finds employment as a coolie in Sir George White cotton mills.

Anand's *Untouchable* is a social novel; it is concerned with the injustice and exploitation to which the other section enjoying a higher status in the social hierarchy subjects one large section of the Hindu society. The novel seeks justice for the untouchables who have been the victims of social injustice, oppression and exploitation. It deals not merely with the life and suffering of one individual untouchable, Bakha. But through Bakha, it presents before a gigantic problem of the Hindu society. In this manner, the novel is another attempt of Anand's habit of studying the particular through the general. Anand in *Untouchable* says that the introduction of flush system will give relief to untouchable from the exploitations.

Coolie is set against the atrocities of the management under the leadership of the communists. But this is diverted into a communal riot from where Munoo escapes to run over by the Chevrolet of Mrs. Mainwaring and taken to Simla. He starts life as a page-boy and rickshaw-puller all his energy being exhausted at Bombay, the strain of rickshaw-pulling sucks his blood and he dies of consumption.

Munoo represents a class and not an individual. He is an archetype of the class for whom poverty is a matter of everyday life. In it they live and breathe and die. The coolie is under paid, over worked and over ill-treated. They are not mindful of the unjust social order which suppress them. They take poverty and oppression for granted and it makes them at sometimes stone hearted. If Munoo's uncle Dayaram acts cruelly it is because of his love for money, fear of poverty and of the sense of inferiority of being a peon. He avows that he has neither sympathy nor food for his nephew.

The unfair gradation of the society destroys Munoo's dream of a happy future. He wishes to become a medical man like the Chota Babu or at least a bank employee like the Burra Babu of Sham Nagar. But poverty shatters all those unrealized dreams. He wonders whether it is education or dress. It is money that matters. He understands that there were many more poor people in the world than the rich. Anand shows the reaction of the "haves" towards the "have-nots" and the cause.

Poverty makes Munoo undergoes oppression, humiliation and degradation at the hands of his vindictive mistress in the Sham Nagar house hold. Money bars the common understanding between human beings. Bibi Uttamkaur is notable to understand that her servant boy too has dignity of his own. She makes him appear sheepishly before the eyes of everyone for having relieved near her door step. The servants are not allowed to use even the

lavatory of their masters. There was a separate one for the servant class.

The upper castes and classes believe that the servant class should not enjoy any pleasure. It is not only that the servants have no liberty to eat the food of their choice. Like dogs, they should eat whatever is thrown to them. Only nabobs can that privilege. "Why don't you eat what is given you? Are you the son of nabob that you turn your nose up at turnip?" (Coolie 34) shouts Babu Nathu Ram, the only privilege they can enjoy is work, limitless work. The place and position given to the servant by their masters is well explicit in the sharp tongue at the Bibiji. Your place in here in the kitchen, you must not enter the sports of the Chotta Babu and the children...since you are being paid a good wage, more money, than you ever saw in your whole life in the village more money than your mother or father ever saw. It would be good for you to do a little work for it.

In *Untouchable*, Anand describes one day in Bakha's life in Autumn. The novel begins in the early hours of the day and by the time dusk approaches, the author has been able to create round is hero (an eighteen year old boy) a spiritual crisis such proportion that it seems to seize the whole Indian subcontinent Anand "exemplifies the problem of untouchability, the treatment of the latrine cleaning class condemned to isolation and deprivation as handlers of excrement, he exposes this as a social evil and suggests its remedy" (Williams 31). Bakha starts his work just out of the bed without even having a little hot water to warm his throat. Hence after completing five rounds of cleaning the latrines, he returns home with the hope of getting something hot to drink. But there is no tea not even water. Hence his sister Sohini takes a pitcher and goes in search of water.

Bakha, the protagonist of the novel, is a dedicated worker. He begins his duty even before dawn at the rude command of his father. The most beautiful aspect of Bakha is that is very dutiful. While

his father has often fabricated some sickness for himself to escape doing his sweeping work, Bakha avoids all such alibis accompanying idleness and goes about with strength and vitality. His relevance for work makes him a Gandhian disciple without knowing it. But society pays no credit to his devotion to duty. Cigarettes are flung at him as a bone in flung at an insistent sniffing dog, Jelebis are thrown at him, like the wastes thrown at a big and thin paper-like Pancake (given as food to the sweeper) flies down to him like a kit from the third floor. Wherever Bakha goes, he is belittled with such words as 'defiled' and 'polluted'. The privileged caste Hindu asserts their superiority over the outcastes by inflicting pain to them. They state arrogantly: "They ought to be wiped off the structure of the earth! The mental depression of all Untouchables finds its expression in Bakha's agonized interrogation: "What have I done to deserve all this?" (133).

In *Coolie*, Anand expressed his profound humanism and how the poor menial earns the hatred of everyone for the reason for being a servant. The Indian peasant is born, lives and dies in poverty. Since the Indian under dogs have no one to fight for their cause, they become objects to be beaten, thrashed, ill- treated.

Munoo is a typical example for this. The humiliation reaches its peak when Munoo sits for his meals. He had to eat his food with hands, being considered low in status to be allowed to eat off the utensils. The insult stung him. He could swallow his food. But age long servitude makes him accept his position as a servant. His aspiration to grow up dies and he wishes to remain a servant, a perfect servant "Anand he pronounced himself again that he would be a good servant. A perfect model of a servant".

The evil of untouchability has deep roots in the Hindu society. Its trifles the healthy growth of a considerable section of Indian community for centuries. It forms the central theme of Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable*. Realizing the enormous

injustice one to Untouchables, Gandhiji generously called them harijans or the men of God and denounced untouchability as a graves in (Gupta 24). He has vividly depicted in his novel *Untouchable* the miserable life of these unfortunate Untouchables.

Bakha is a hero of the novel *Untouchable*. He has become a universal figure. He is a symbol of under-dog one day of Bakha's life means all the days in the lives of all Bakhas, the sweepers. The novel depicts realistically the outcaste's colony. "The very fact that colony is termed as outcaste colony reveals that the privileged folk are totally indifferent to the welfare of its inhabitants" (Paul 14).

The outcaste colony is situated in a distance both from the city where the upper caste Hindus live and also from the barracks in the cantonment area. It has mud walled cottage huddled together in two rows. There live the scavengers, the leather workers, the washer man, the barbers, and the water carriers and other outcastes. The surroundings of this colony are very dirty. The absence of proper drainage system gives out the most offensive smell. Bakha lives with his family in a one-roomed cottage, dark and dirty. It is entirely unfit for human habitation. It is in this single dirty room they all sleep, cook and store the tools of their occupation.

In *Coolie* the pickle factory is well portrayed by Anand as well as the portrayal of the surroundings of the outcaste colony in *Untouchable*. The pickle factory of Prabha does not have a very healthy look. The outhouse of the factory, which sank like a pit in to the bowels of the earth, was strange, dark and airless. Prabha never acts like a master, he acts like on inferior to Ganapat who is the son of a richman and ill-treats the coolies even beats them with logs of wood. He is further harassed by the next door Todarmal. Often he has to bribe them with jams and pickles to earn their favour. Ganapat spits Prabha, 'you belong to the street and there you shall go'. After Prabha has left for wills, Munoo's life a change to the

position of coolie from that of a servant though there is not much difference between the two.

With hope for a happy future, Munoo leaves Daulatpur for Bombay with the help of an elephant driver. To his utter dismay Bombay reveals itself to be a land of cruel contrasts. Dreams shattered the painful realization of the elephant-driver's words rings in his ear. "The bigger city is to the sons of Adam... You have to pay even for the breath that you breathe" (117).

"*Coolie* doesn't need special pleading. It sweeps the read era long on the curve of ill's essential force... as well as its fundamentalism" (18). This toilsome work tells severely on Munoo's health and he dies in consumption. His death at the age of sixteen is intended to focus attention on the injustices of society and ill's of the economic system. Munoo's tragedy seems to be Anand's plea for the reform of humanism could be the only answer to his problem in the protest social set-up. The novel highlights the used for restoration of compassion to the world lost in industrialism, capitalism and communalism.

In *Untouchable* Bakha because of his lower-caste status, has to avoid pollution by touch; thus, the confectioner throws the packet of jelebis, like a cricket-ball, for Bakha to catch. His assistant stands ready to splash some water on the four annas piece thrown by him. The roots of such segregation are rigidly detailed by Lakha, Bakha's father, to exist in organized religion as illustrated above. It is religion, he says, "which prevents them from touching us" (*Untouchable* 91). The Untouchables have to depend on the mercy of caste Hindus for their daily supply for water. Because, the caste Hindus, think if the Untouchables touch the well, it will pollute the water.

Bakha becomes happy with the sweetmeat in his hand "Overjoyed his possession, he forget to call out posh, posh, sweeper coming" (Gupta 26) and accidents touch a caste Hindu. "For this, he earns much abuse from the public and a slap from the mart he has polluted. As the crowd gather around Bakha,

humiliating him and abusing him for his carelessness, he realizes for the first time that society ostracizes him for a moral behaviour which he will never, be able to breakdown”(Sharma 28). Now Bakha is careful to announce his movement. The scene of the cruel crowd and the man who hit him flashes before his mind. All on a sudden he realizes his position in the world.

“.....For them I am a sweeper -
Untouchable! Untouchable! Untouchable!
That’s the world I am an Untouchable!”
(Niven51)

Yet another insult awaits him. He reaches the temple courtyard. It is full of all manners of man and women singing and chanting the several names of Gods. Bakha is unable to suppress his curiosity. He goes to near the temple door and catches just a glimpse of the dark sanctuary and its idols. But the next moment he is stunned to hear the priest shout “polluted; polluted”. The whole crowd takes up the cue and starts shouting the same words. Bakha feels nervous.

Now another priest shouts from near the temple that he too been polluted, not severely. He has been defiled by contact Sohini, Bakha’s sister. Bakha manages to take Sohini away from the courtyard. She tells him how the priest had made improper to her when she was cleaning the latrine. Bakha is serious. He feels like going to and killing the priest. But Sohini restrains him. She persuades him to get out quietly from them.

It appears that Bakha has to live on insults. When he goes to fetch food, an orthodox housewife scolds him and throws some chapattis down from the fourth store of the building. An old woman throws a loaf of bread to him from the upper window of her house as if he were a dog. In the evening, there is a free fight after the hockey- match. A stone hurts a little boy. Bakha takes him to his home. But instead of thanking him, his mother abuses him for having polluted her child and her home. Bakha turns

humiliated and crestfallen like a kicked dog. The anguish of all Untouchables finds its expression in Bakha’s agonized interrogation. “What I have done to deserve all this?”

“Dogs” is the name that normally comes to the mind of the privileged folk to identify the outcasts. The “touching incident” reveals the horror of being an untouchable. The people who gather around Bakha shoot abuses by calling him, low caste vermin” “swine”, “cock-eyed son of a bow-legged scorpion”, “dog”, “brute”, dirty dog”, son of a birth”, off spring of a pig,”(53-55). These abusive words actually reveal their polluted mind.

In this sensitive portrayal of an individual, Mulk Raj Anand displays his penetrating thought and human attitude in understanding the grim realities of the social life in India, It is a revolutionary novel in the sense that it has an outcaste as its chief protagonist, Anand’s turning to the evil of caste system even at the very start of his writing career is understandable because it answers his need to create in readers an urgent awareness of the dehumanizing social evil, to stir the springs of tenderness in them, and to rally them for the removal of these evils in order that a desirable or a just social order may come in to being. It is significant that this Indian novel in English first appeared at a time when social reformers in India were engaged in an earnest effort to remove casteism and untouchability.

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BLUE HUMANITIES AND OCEANIC STUDIES IN VIDEO GAMES: EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION OF PLAY AND THE MARINE WORLD

SATVIKA NOMULA

*UG Student, Department of Animation and Gaming
Koneru Lakshmaiah Educational Foundation, Hyderabad, Telangana*

J.B. ANNA ASHEERVADHAM MARY

*Assistant Professor, Department of Animation and Gaming
Koneru Lakshmaiah Educational Foundation, Hyderabad, Telangana*

Abstract

Analysing video games through the lens of blue humanities and oceanic studies is an exciting framework to investigate how digital media engages marine environments, cultures, and ecologies. This paper explores the ways in which video games represent oceans as spaces of narrative, interaction, and imagination. The paper presents case studies including Subnautica, Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag, Abzû, and an Indian game Raji: An Ancient Epic to outline how these games foster an awareness of ecology, cultural reflection, and creative perspectives in the context of the ocean. The research ultimately argues that video games have been a valuable medium for communicating concerns central to oceanic studies, offering a renewed perspective of the ocean through human-centred narratives. For all the promising opportunities of using video games as education and entertainment media, there is a surprising absence of Marine environments, Ocean cultures, and ecological crises in this medium. This leads to a failure to incorporate key concerns of the public such as climate change, pollution and overfishing, into the design of games which are primarily considered a form of entertainment.

Introduction

Oceans have long had an important place in the human imagination, as places of mystery, exploration, and survival. The newly emerging discipline of blue humanities as an offshoot of environmental humanities covers the cultural, historical, and ecological significance of the oceans. Blue humanities tries to bring this understanding of marine environments under the heavier, broader humanistic disciplines, requiring the ocean to be the central element in art, literature, and history. Oceanic studies, as a closely related field to blue humanities, is concerned with the interconnections between human societies and the marine world, focusing on themes of trade, migration, colonisation, and environmental change: "The ocean is not just a natural space but a socially constructed one, shaped

by cultural, economic, and political forces." Philip Steinberg, in *The Social Construction of the Ocean* (2001). These disciplines stress that the ocean is a dynamic space where human and natural histories intersect, shaping societies and ecosystems.

Oceanic studies broaden the scope of inquiry to consider the vast and varied roles of oceans in global systems. From the cultural histories of seafaring communities to the ecological processes that sustain marine biodiversity, oceanic studies integrates a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the influence of the ocean on human and non-human actors. This framework also brings to light pressing environmental challenges facing marine ecosystems, such as climate change, overfishing, and pollution, placing the ocean at the heart of scholarly and practical engagement. For instance: 14 government

officials from the Maldives gathered twenty feet underwater on October 17, 2009 to draft an appeal for international CO2 emission reductions. Climate change poses a threat to Somalia's 1,192 coral islands as most points at five feet above sea level are threatened with submersion in the Indian Ocean according to current scientific predictions (Cultural Anthropology 2011). This educates about the effects of climate change on oceans.

Video games like *Abzû*, *Raji: An Ancient Epic*, *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* and *Subnautica* (See Fig 1-4) are unique and innovative forms in which one could engage and explore these themes within the core of blue humanities and oceanic studies. In the sense, by designing virtual marine worlds, the potential for exploring the ocean and storytelling becomes imaginable as well as highly influential for its players. Approached through these perspectives, video games demonstrate the potential of digital media to reshape our understanding of our relationship with the marine world.

Blue Humanities and Oceanic Studies have grabbed significant attention in recent years due to the growing recognition of oceans as central to both ecological sustainability and cultural narratives. Through oceanic studies integrated into video games developers can build virtual worlds which both provide entertainment while educating players about marine environments and cultural backgrounds and oceanic value.



Fig-1 In-Game image of *Abzû*



Fig-2 In-Game image of *Raji*



Fig-3 In-game image of *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Fla*



Fig-4 In-game image of *Subnautica*

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative analysis of video games that integrate oceanic themes, focusing on their narrative structures, aesthetic design, and ecological representations that include games which have thematic alignment to blue humanities and oceanic studies—like *Subnautica*, *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*, *Abzû*, and the Indian game *Raji: An Ancient Epic*. From these games, marine environments in terms of depiction, cultural narratives, and historic engagement, together with the ways they call upon players' interactions with the oceanic environment, were taken into consideration. The research draws on interdisciplinary frameworks, combining insights from environmental humanities, game studies, and marine ecology.

Analysis

Oceans are often used in video games as significant narrative elements. Many video games use oceans as sites of adventure, conflict, and mystery. Video games provide an opportunity to accelerate our capabilities of observing life in the ocean while also sharing the excitement and the wonder of the animals. The aesthetic representation of oceans in video games often leaves people in awe and wonder, allowing players to have emotional relationships with marine environments. For instance, *Skull and Bones* delves into maritime history, showing the lives of sailors, traders, and pirates. Through gameplay, players interact with historical narratives that highlight the role of the ocean in forming global cultures and economies. This hands-on experience can significantly impact attitudes and behaviours, inspiring players to value marine ecosystems and consider their roles in conservation efforts.

Throughout *Raji: An Ancient Epic*, the player experiences the deep ties between Earth's inhabitants and natural forces which indirectly addresses blue humanities' core ideas through atmosphere of water-related insights. *Raji* provides a glimpse into cultural and environmental connections, even though the primary focus is on mythology (See Fig 5). Although not explicitly an ocean-centric game, it conveys themes that resonate with oceanic studies in the following ways:

- **Cultural Reverence for Water:** Through its design the game illustrates Indian religious beliefs about water because rivers and watery areas represent sacred life-giving entities invoked by culture. This approach reflects aquatic environments' spiritual roles and cultural importance.
- **Ecological Interconnectedness:** Through its environmental design in *Raji*, the players encounter human-nature blending which shows them the necessity of aquatic ecosystem conservation.

- **Mythological Linkages:** The game uses Indian mythological narratives to address human water connections while prompting thought about cultural-environmental-sustainability linkages that form the core of oceanic analysis.

Raji: An Ancient Epic subtly introduces an element of relating nature and humans through their own cultural importance and emphasises on rivers and water bodies within the premise of the game. Such game development appeals more to children, thereby facilitating the teaching of values for ecological stewardship as well as an appreciation for other cultures at early ages. *Raji: An Ancient Epic* also reflects on cultural narratives related to rivers and seas, which describe water as a sacred and life-giving force that plays a central role in Indian mythology and spirituality. These representations provide a virtual space for players to reflect on humanity's complex and often exploitative relationship with the seas. As a mythology-centred game *Raji* delivers an understanding of human-nature coexistence through its environmental and cultural layers which help develop oceanic scientific discourse.

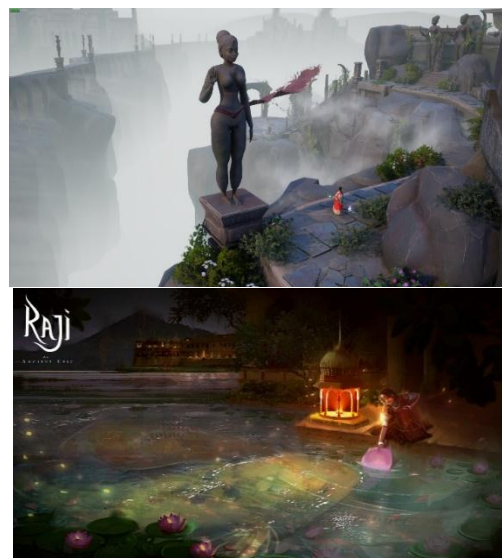


Fig-5 In-game images of *Raji*

In *Subnautica*, players discover an enormous galactic ocean world where survival and discovery go hand in hand with ecosystem protection. The exhibit demonstrates a direct correspondence to blue humanities principles through its display of marine ecosystem dependencies with human endurance. Like environment-based player challenges echo current challenges of both resource exhaustion and habitat management the experience guides players toward ecological understanding as well as caretaking duties. *Subnautica* emphasises on ecological awareness by immersing players in detailed underwater ecosystems. Players navigate an alien ocean teeming with diverse marine life, forcing them to balance resource extraction with environmental preservation (See Fig 6). Such games challenge players to confront issues of sustainability, biodiversity, and human impact on marine environments, echoing real-world concerns addressed in oceanic studies. By simulating ecosystems, these games encourage players to reflect on the interconnectedness of marine and terrestrial life.



Fig-6 In-game images of Sub Nautica

Throughout *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*, the Caribbean Sea serves as an important economic and cultural frontier while demonstrating pirate activities during the Golden Age of Piracy. Medical history documents human interactions in the marine environment through trade relationships as well as war and exploratory journeys (See Fig-7). Oceanic studies gain further relevance through analytical representations of how oceans fashioned human development and cultural practices throughout history. *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* integrates the ocean into its story as both a setting and a character. The game's re-creation of the Caribbean Sea during the Golden Age of Piracy is at once historically robust and speaks about the oceanic expanse as a space for trade, battle, and the meeting of different cultures.

The cultural dynamics in *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* are shaped by conflict, cooperation, and exchange. The game emphasises:

- **Trade and Commerce:** Ports and markets reflect the mingling of goods, languages, and traditions from across the world.
- **Conflict and Power Struggles:** Colonial powers, pirates, and local populations vie for control over territories and resources.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Despite tensions, the Caribbean serves as a crossroads where cultures influence one another, seen in music, language, and daily life.





Fig-7 In-game images of *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*

Through its oceanic sojourn, *Abzû* takes players to explore beautiful marine environments while showcasing interconnected species relationships. Through its gameplay the video game establishes blue humanities principles by generating ocean empathy and caring attitudes leading to active marine conservation commitments. Through its interdisciplinary approach the platform connects scientific investigation with artistic curiosity so oceanic studies become both accessible and compelling to wider audiences. *Abzû* is one example of how such a meditative experience is designed to celebrate the beauty of underwater worlds (See Fig-8) by using visual storytelling and music that creates an artistic interpretation of oceanic life, inspired by real marine ecosystems.



Fig-8 In-game images of *Abzû*

Educating the Next Generation

Videogames have the capacity to shape young minds by introducing them to oceans in a fun, respectful, and responsible way. Interactive gaming allows children and teenagers to engage with marine ecosystems in an interactive and educational way. For example, *Subnautica* and *Abzû* teach players

about biodiversity, ecological balance, and the value of conservation by immersing them in the gameplay. By simulating the beauty and fragility of underwater ecosystems, these games encourage players to develop empathy for marine life and an awareness of environmental challenges. Oceanic topics can also form a strong propagator of education on the very importance of life on Earth relying on the ocean.



Challenges and Critics

While video games offer innovative ways to engage with blue humanities and oceanic studies, they are not without limitations. Many games prioritise entertainment over accuracy, risking the perpetuation of stereotypes or oversimplified narratives about marine life and cultures. The following are ways in which video games can be used to educate the masses about issues related to the ocean:

1. **Climate Change and Rising Sea Levels:** The consequences of global warming, including melting ice caps and rising sea levels, directly threaten marine ecosystems and coastal communities. Video games have the potential to simulate these scenarios, raising awareness about the urgency of climate action.
2. **Ocean Pollution:** The increasing presence of plastics and other pollutants in oceans has devastating effects on marine life and biodiversity. Games can incorporate storylines or mechanics that address waste management and recycling, encouraging players to adopt eco-friendly behaviors.
3. **Overfishing and Habitat Destruction:** Unsustainable fishing practices and habitat destruction disrupt marine ecosystems and

threaten species survival. Video games can create missions or challenges that require players to manage resources responsibly, highlighting the importance of sustainable practices.

4. Underrepresentation of Cultural Narratives:

Many games neglect the rich cultural and historical narratives associated with oceans, focusing instead on adventure or survival tropes. By integrating diverse cultural stories, particularly from underrepresented regions like South Asia, games can offer a more holistic view of humanity's relationship with the seas.

- #### 5. Technological and Economic Barriers:
- The creation of immersive, ecologically accurate marine worlds requires significant resources and technical expertise, limiting the number of such games. Collaboration between developers, scientists, and educators can help overcome these barriers and expand the accessibility of oceanic-themed games.

Conclusion

Video games represent a dynamic and interactive space for approaching the core themes of blue humanities and oceanic studies. Games such as *Subnautica*, *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*, *Abzû*, and *Raji: An Ancient Epic*, illustrate the depth of ocean spaces of narratives, ecological complexities, and cultural values to achieve greater comprehension regarding humanity and its association with the marine world. As digital media continues to evolve, the integration of oceanic studies into game design and analysis holds the potential to inspire ecological awareness and cultural reflection, fostering a more profound connection between players and the planet's most vital ecosystems. By incorporating aspects of blue humanities and oceanic studies, video games can be used as cultural artifacts to document and disseminate knowledge about the seas. They can also be used to emphasise the

importance of oceans in maintaining ecological balance, supporting livelihoods, and preserving cultural heritage. Games that deal with issues such as climate change, overfishing, and pollution can create awareness and inspire action, thereby contributing to a collective understanding of the ocean's importance. Moreover, the involvement of younger generations through gaming can ensure that the values of ocean conservation and appreciation are carried forward to pave the way for a more sustainable and informed future.



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ENGLISH LINGUISTIC IMPERIALISM: THE POLITICS BEHIND THE PROMOTION OF ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE BY NATIVE INDIAN BOURGEOIS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ADIGA'S *THE WHITE TIGER*

NEHASHREE

*Senior Research Fellow, Department of English
Ranchi University, Ranchi, Jharkhand*

Abstract

*Language is not just a medium of communication and self-expression rather it plays a pivotal role in shaping one's identity whether it is individual or collective. It promotes a sense of belonging both cultural and national among the members of a group by preserving cultural traditions, history, and knowledge, ensuring their dissemination and continuity among generations. Therefore, the devaluation of any language not just, kill the linguistic diversity but can also potentially lead to the loss of unique cultural identity and poor self-esteem. British colonisers were aware of this power of language, therefore, during colonial times imposition of English among the subjugated colonies was deliberately made a state policy. This forceful imposition of English in turn led to the marginalisation and stigmatisation of several native languages. India became independent in 1947 but our minds are still far from being decolonised. There is a tendency among the Indian native to lust after English language. It is astonishing to see that English which was once the language of subjugation can still hold so much of currency in the decolonised societies. This politics of promoting English as a status symbol and a global language poses a serious threat of linguistic imperialism which in turn lead to the loss of linguistic diversity and linguicide. Arvind Adiga in his debut Man Booker prize winning novel *The White Tiger* beautifully explores this problem. Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008) is not just a "rag to riches" story, but is set against the backdrop of globalisation which subtly carries out the plan of Western imperialism among the Indian masses without their awareness and native Indian bourgeois is actively participating in it by acting as a neocolonial state. This paper attempts to analyse the Linguistic Imperialism of the West and How native Indian bourgeoisie's active participation in this politics by promoting English as a global language.*

Keywords: *linguistic imperialism, linguicide, linguisticism, globalisation, neocolonial, marginalisation*

Introduction

"To kill a Culture, kill the language first"

-Ngugi Wa Thiong'O

Language has been one of the important tools of structural violence which fosters injustice and inequality. In colonialist cultural mythology the concept of tribe and dialect performed the crucial role of stigmatization of the other native languages. The idea that they are tribe with dialect and we are nation with language perpetuated racism. Linguicism has been the active state policy of the Empire throughout

the world to exclude certain groups from public discourse and instil a sense of inferiority among those who speak languages other than the dominant one. Britishers were no exception to this, where ever they set to colonise they took their language English with them. They imposed English lock stock and barrel by exerting the power of stick, carrot, and idea at the cost of several native languages. It was the colonialist policy of the British empire. When, India became independent in 1947, the Indian masses thought that now we do not have to be ashamed of

using our native tongue but the reality speaks otherwise. The domination of English and the marginalisation of native languages continued even post-independence under so called independent native governance. The idea, behind self-rule was that post the colonial British rule we will free ourselves from all the legacies of colonialism and we should be shaping our future in a more indigenised fashion with our own cultural values, but how wrong we were. British left India and that vacuum was filled by native elites who are carrying forward the legacies of colonial times and hence, acting as a neocolonial state. All is being done under the garb of Globalisation which is nothing but a tool for promoting Western-centrism. There is a tendency among the Indian native to lust after English language. It is astonishing to see that English which is the language of subjugation can still hold so much of currency in the decolonised societies.

The politics of promoting English as a status symbol and a global language by native bourgeois poses a serious threat of linguistic imperialism. Arvind Adiga in his debut Man Booker prize winning novel *The White Tiger* has beautifully explored this problem. Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008) is not just a "rag to riches story" but is also a riveting tale of Post-colonial India. It is set against the backdrop of globalisation. Albeit globalisation has a lot of benefits to its credit it cannot be denied that it aids neocolonialism. This paper attempts to analyse what are the reasons behind the dominance of English even post-independence. In addition to that the paper also analyses the role of Native Indian bourgeois in promotion of English which can potentially lead India towards English Linguistic Imperialism.

Content

Robert Phillipson, a noted scholar, and an authority on the subject of Linguistic Imperialism and Linguicism provides a working definition of both the terms. According to him "English linguistic

imperialism is that the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other Languages". It is also important to note that how the concept of Binary Opposition promotes crystallization of racism and also entails a dialectics of representational exclusion and inclusion. Therefore, Linguicism according to him: "involves representation of the dominant language, to which all the desirable characteristics are attributed, for the purpose of inclusion, and the opposite for the dominated languages for the purposes of exclusion". The binary opposition between language/dialect, language /lingua franca/ vernacular are few of the examples used in colonial linguistic discourse.

Arvind Adiga is one of the most celebrated, contemporary, Indian English Postcolonial writers. His debut novel *The White Tiger* (2008) won him The Man Booker prize which is by far considered one of the most prestigious awards in the field of literature. The novel *White Tiger* is set against the backdrop of globalisation. It narrates the story of Balram Halwai's journey to success from almost a broke man of Laxmangarh, Bihar to being a self-made entrepreneur in metropolitan city of Bangalore and by doing so the novel also unravels the shades of neocolonialism which is being practiced under the facade of globalisation.

"Neither you nor I speak English, but there are some things that can be said only in English" (Adiga 3).

From the very first line of the novel, Adiga raises the issue of language. Nobody can deny the fact that the highest reservoirs of knowledge in the world are accessible only in the English language but we should also be aware of the fact that Language is the best tool to colonise the minds of the people whom we wish to control. English has the status of associate official language according to Indian constitution alongside Hindi but English surpassed its

functionality as a language and has become a class and a status symbol. In the colonial times English was imposed on Indians as the medium of instruction in all the institutions and higher education was only accessible through the medium of English. English got all the structural and cultural favours whereas other native languages suffered neglect at the hands of colonizers making English, the language of social mobility and material gains. The victory of the coloniser rests in the fact that, despite the racist moorings of English language they have been able to propagate it as a language that promoted pluricentricity by attaching all the positive attribute to it like neutral, liberal, modern, and progressive.

Nothing has changed much even post-independence. Now, neocolonial state is promoting English in the name of being a topmost requirement of being a global citizen at the detriment of other languages. It could be argued that, globalisation has made the world a single village. It allows the different cultures of the world to integrate and have a cultural exchange. It fosters brotherhood through making world a common cultural hub, the same kind of fashion, literature, the same kind of cosmopolitan culture is being promoted. Even if globalisation promotes cultural exchange, then why is this exchange unilateral? we are adopting language and culture of the West but they do not seem to be interested in our culture and language, also how is this sameness of culture is different from the global homogenising mission of the colonial times which was being done under the garb of enlightened despotism which came at the cost of cultural genocide of many native societies.

“Before we do that, sir, the phrase in English that I learned from my ex-employer the late Mr. Ashok’s ex-wife Pinky Madam is: What a fucking joke”. (Adiga 7).

Balram learned the term from Pinky Madam without knowing its meaning. Adiga through these lines has beautifully conveyed to the Indian audience

that Indians are so fascinated by the English language that even cussing in English appears to be cool to the Indian masses. Adiga introduced three major characters in the novel. Balram, the protagonist who represents the common Indian masses and other two are Ashok and Pinky who represents the Indian native elites. Pinky is a typical example of Brown Saheb. Pinky is of Indian origin, raised in America. She returns to India after marriage with Ashok with a sense of entitlement. She does not like India at all. She demands to Ashok that we should return to America since Ashok cannot leave India, he takes her to the most Americanised part of India, i.e. Delhi. Adiga through the character of Pinky delves deeper into the psyche of a native individual who, after learning a foreign language and cultural values looks at her own culture with a sense of disgust. Since supremacist and racist attitude are inherent to English, it instils a sense of superiority complex among its learners that is why Pinky lacks empathy for her own people and culture because she sees her people and country with a lens of foreigner. Therefore, it could be argued that the learning of a foreign language like English fosters class divide. Later on in the novel, she also asks for divorce to Ashok and finally, goes back to America.

Another caricature of native Indian bourgeois is the character of Ashok. Due to coming from an affluent family Ashok has managed to study from America. In America he met Pinky got married to her and then returns to India. Balram was hired as a driver for Ashok only. Ashok keeps on asking questions to Ashok regarding general knowledge once he get to know he has been to government school and on his every answer he used to laugh. While on drive Ashok keeps on talking to Pinky about Balam and his kind. In one such conversation he says:

The thing is he probably has..... what, two, three years, of schooling in him? He can read and write but he doesn’t get what he’s read. He is half-

baked. The country is full of people like him, I'll tell you that and we entrust our glorious parliamentary democracy'- he pointed at me- 'to character like these'. That's the whole tragedy of this country. (Adiga 7-8)

Ashok is foreign educated and has same sneering colonial attitude like Britishers, towards his own people. He looks at Indians as half-baked, uncivilised native who does not know how to take an informed decisions about their country. Only 'Brown Saheb' can provide the emancipation to these half-baked, nearly of animal-like existence people. Therefore, Ashok wants to join politics. By just having an education abroad he thinks, he has got answers to all the problems of this country and it his destiny to rule and lead these native uneducated people. Ashok's supremacist attitude is a proof that English education and English language instils supremacist attitude which is intrinsic to this language.

Coming from a place of power and authority, native elites like Pinky and Ashok become the active promoters of English language. The endorsement of English by native elites like makes them a kind of model to follow for social mobility and being successful in life by the people of other classes like Balram. In this regard Johan Galtung in his work *The True Worlds: A Transnational Perspective* (1980) states that:

"In the early colonial phase of imperialism, the elites in the Periphery consisted of the colonisers themselves, whether settlers or administrator. In present day neocolonialism, the elites are to the large extent indigenous, but most of them has strong links with the Centre. Many of them have been educated in the Centre countries through the medium of the Centre language or old colonial language.....In the next phase of imperialism, neocolonialism, Centre and Periphery interaction will be increasing by the means of International Communication. Computer technology will obviate the need for the physical presence of

exploiter. New communication Technology will step up the centres attempt to control peoples' consciousness and for this to be effective the Centre requires a deep cultural and linguistic penetration of the Periphery".

Galtung's assumption has been quite right in this regard Native elites, put themselves into the shoes of colonisers and are actually carrying forward the legacies of colonialism and the advent of globalisation has made this neo-colonisation much easier.

Now, Balram being the protagonist of the novel represents the psyche of the common Indian masses. Balram identifies English as the language of rich and powerful which can provide social mobility. Therefore, there is an extreme obsession on part of Balram to learn English. Balram's Learning of the English by eavesdropping is the thought-provoking imagery created by Adiga for the general Indian people who are ignorant towards their own languages but shows an extraordinary interest in learning a foreign language.

"He goes to a good school here in Bangalore—an English school. Now he pronounces English like a rich man's son. He can say "pizza" the way Mr. Ashok said it". (Adiga 317)

These very words spoken by Balram are the evidence of our colonial consciousness and slave mentality and how we have surrendered to the Western worldview. He wants to see his nephew, Dharam as a complete English gentleman. According to Balram, he had admitted Dharam to an English school a good school. In Indian schools and colleges, English is the medium of Instruction. Books written by foreign authors are preferred rather than Indian writers. What else do we expect out of such an education system is through the appropriation, paving the way for the acceptance of foreign cultures. How a person can know the value and importance of those values which he has never practiced or taught in schools? Since, languages are also carrier of culture,

linguistic imperialism can also potentially lead to cultural colonisation or ethnocide.

"The bullet was the means of physical subjugation. The language was the means of spiritual subjugation...and then I went to school, a colonial school, and this harmony was broken. The language of my education was no longer the language of my culture". (Ngugi 9-11)

It is the language that the West is using to achieve its imperial ambition by indirectly governing and impoverishing the former colonies. They have been able to seep into the culture and lifestyle of Eastern countries through the English language. They themselves gave the status of 'international language' or 'Global Language' to English. To a large extent, it appears nothing but a strategy of the European world to govern the rest of the nations. In every nation, English language is imposed by forcing them to keep it as a part of the curriculum in their education system and this is how the West gets the opportunity to get into the minds of young learners. Today, if we take the survey of the Indian education system, most of the youth in schools, colleges, and universities speak and use the English language not by force but by choice, why? The intensity of the Western influence is so great that India has started to look at itself through the eyes of the West. A good speaker of English automatically gets an edge over non-English speakers in and out of the workplace. Even when Balram becomes rich, his obsession with English remains intact.

"That's what you are, in this jungle." Before he left, the inspector said, "I'll write to Patna asking them to send you a scholarship. You need to go to a real school—somewhere far away from here. You need a real uniform, and a real education." (Adiga 38)

Adiga through these lines describes the kind of perception the common Indian masses have who think that real education is only what English medium schools impart, and it is these schools that are in a real sense worthy to be called a school. In the

neocolonial state, English has got all the structural favour to be a dominant language. Braj Kachru in his *The Power and Politics of English* (1986b:130) enunciates the parameters of the success of English like demographical and numerical strength, Functional, Attitudinal, Accessibility, Pluri-centricity, and Material.

"You ask someone, "Where's Nikolai Copernicus Marg?" And he could be a man who lived on Nikolai Copernicus Marg his whole life, and he'll open his mouth and say, "Hahn?" Or he'll say, "Straight ahead, then turn left," even though he has no idea". (Adiga 73)

The English language is now deeply rooted in our country is posing a serious threat to our local languages. Obsession with English is much higher than a common person can think of. From the names of buildings to roads and pets etc. are in English. Balram's description of roads in Delhi shows the love for English and its demand in urban areas. Neither he could remember the English names of those places, nor could he speak them properly. In fact, in urban cities like Delhi and Mumbai, parents are teaching English to their children as their first language Adiga shows the strongly rooted English language in the light part of India; it does not matter where a person comes from, they have to prove their competence in English in the city to get a good job and a comfortable life.

Conclusion

Thus, based on the above-mentioned arguments it could be stated that Indian native elites are actively becoming the promoters of English. Hence, they are acting as a neocolonial state and are imposing English linguistic imperialism which in turns relegates native languages to the margins. In addition to that Indian native bourgeois promotion of English also diminishes the foreignness of the imposition of foreign language and values. Hence, we see no

resistance from the common Indian masses on English imposition.

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EXPLORING THE ESSENCE OF HUMANITY AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF A TECHNOLOGICALLY MEDIATED FUTURE THROUGH THE SELECTED NOVELS OF ASIMOV AND ISHIGURO

JAISHREE JHA

PhD Research Scholar, University Department of English
Ranchi University, Ranchi, Jharkhand

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is advancing at breakneck speed and has proliferated into virtually every aspect of life. It has captured the imagination of various writers and served as a dominant theme in exploring the possibilities and consequences of emerging technology. Klara and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro raises fundamental questions about what it really means to be human, and where the boundary lies between consciousness and mere processing, and how we might coexist with beings of our own creation. Isaac Asimov's I, Robot- delves into various questions surrounding AI, the training of AI models, and the emergence of consciousness in AI entities. Both works of fiction imagine a world where AI transcends the boundaries of code to become as refined and complex as the human mind itself. These works of fiction are not mere predictions, but are reflections of our technological aspirations, fears and moral dilemmas. This research paper attempts to explore the world depicted in the selected novels of above-mentioned authors. It also aims to explore how science fiction helps in exploring complex societal issues, including the disorienting transformations wrought by new and advanced technologies. These novels are successfully able to acquaint readers with pressing concerns related to AI in order to avoid any drastic situation.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, technology, consciousness, human.

Introduction

Science fiction have helped both in anticipating and shaping the trajectory of AI development. It serves as a fertile ground for the seeds of imagination, allowing us to speculate the extremes of potential AI outcomes. Robinson enlists the potentialities of science fiction over nonfiction in addressing pressing issues. He states, "The advantage of science fiction has is precisely that it is fiction; it does not pretend to predict what is really going to happen in the future, which is more in the bad realm of futurology, but rather presents possibilities, which together make a range of potentiality....The other great advantage of fiction is that the reader gets immersed in the story, in the characters; it resembles a kind of telepathy in which we fully get to experience how others think, by reading their thoughts. The emotional investment in

these fictional lives is immense, and a big part of why people love fiction so much" (Kim Stanley). Reading fictional texts enables learners to broaden their knowledge beyond their personal experiences and challenges them to face the intricacies of life.

Science fiction has long imagined AI, oscillating between utopian visions of its potential usefulness and dystopian fears of its inherent threat. This genre has been predicting artificial intelligence since 1816 when Mary Shelley's Frankenstein warned against the dangers of creating artificial beings. In a way, it works as a cautionary tale. The depiction of simulation of human intelligence processes by machines can be traced back to Samuel Butler's 1872 novel *Erewhon*. Since then, numerous sci-fi have explored the consequences of creating such intelligence, often depicting AI as the perfect servant

and at the same time beyond human control, turning from servant to overlord. The portrayal of AI in such works of fiction often ask fundamental questions about what it means to be human, and where the boundary lies between consciousness and mere processing. It acts as a mirror for humanity's hopes, fears and ideals about the future. Moreover, such depictions, that are far from mere fantasy, have shaped how we approach artificial intelligence in real life, controlling technological developments, ethical debates, and societal expectations. By examining key themes and passages, this paper aims to uncover the writers' deeper commentary on what it means to be human in an era where the line between human and machine is increasingly complicated.

Discussion

Analyzing Traits that Machines are Yet to Authentically Emulate

a) *I, Robot*- Asimov, in this series, endows the robots with an advanced technology called a 'positronic brain', giving them a form of consciousness that human beings possess. Published in 1950, this collection of interconnected science fiction stories introduced readers to the concept of robotics and also laid the foundation for the Three Laws of Robotics- a set of ethical guidelines that are influencing debates about AI ethics. These laws are at the core of writer's exploration of human-robot interaction:

1. A Robot may not injure a human, or through inaction allow a human to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey all the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

In *The Bicentennial Man*, the robot Andrew experiences a transformation that leads him to witness human-like emotions, desires and

consciousness. His journey stimulates us towards deeper questions about the nature of humanity. This raises a serious question: what does it mean to be human, and can an artificial entity ever get the status of a person? The writer's portrayal of robots who seek to be more human confronts our understanding of what it means to be human and the ethical considerations of creating artificial beings. As Andrew becomes more human-like, he faces discrimination and resistance from human beings who show reluctance to accept him as an equal. Is human identity something that can be achieved by artificial means, or is innately linked to biology and the human experiences? The portrayal of Andrew is suggestive of the fact that humanization is not just a matter of external characteristics but of inner qualities such as ability to perceive and understand oneself, make meaningful decisions and handle unexpected situations effectively. Asimov's exploration of Andrew's struggles to be recognized as human being draws parallel to the real-world issues surrounding the rights of artificial intelligences and the ethics of creating artificial entity. "Asimov's fiction could help us assess the practicability of embedding some appropriate set of general laws into robotic designs. Alternatively, the substantive content of the laws could be used as a set of guidelines to be applied during the conception, design, development, testing, implementation, use and maintenance of robotic systems" (Clarke).

Take Siri, for example. The responses of Siri are pre-programmed and lack the personal touch that human interaction provides. While Siri may have smart responses programmed into its system, it lacks consciousness and independent thought – all traits we associate with human being. This limitation often makes interactions with it feel impersonal. "Although the machines will execute whatever logic we program them with, the real-world results may not always be what we want" (Sawyer). The question arises: Are thoughts and feelings of human beings nothing more than programmed biochemical responses to

environmental stimuli? Like Humour, the Laws require a better understanding and awareness not merely of the terms within the Laws, but also of human ethics. Further, “A robot must also be endowed with data collection, decision-analytical, and action processes by which it can apply the laws. Inadequate sensory, perpetual, or cognitive faculties would undermine the laws’ effectiveness” (Clarke). The fundamental characteristic of humanity is the notion of human agency: the ability to make well informed, uncoerced decisions, thereby acting independently of their environment.

b) *Klara and the Sun*- This novel presents a nuanced exploration of humanity through the perspective of AI. In the novel, Klara is an Artificial Friend (AF) – androids to provide companionship to a possible race of forsaken humans. She provides a new lens to examine the complexities of human emotions and relationships. Her observational skill is evident from the beginning of the novel. In the store, where she awaits purchase, she diligently watches passerby, cataloging their actions. She takes note of the subtle shifts in body language and tone, commenting on the “kindness and hurt” (Ishiguro 24). As Amanda Smith asserts, Klara’s meticulous observations highlight her “mechanical objectivity, which paradoxically allows her to capture the complexities of human emotion more effectively than humans themselves” (Smith 304).

While the observational skills of Klara are exceptional, she finds it difficult to encode all the complexities of human reasoning. Human beings do remarkable job in dealing with ambiguity, almost to the point where the problem is imperceptible. This limitation of Klara, however, serves as a mirror to us, persuading to face the intricacies and contradictions of our own emotional experiences. Klara’s interpretations are laced with an innocent wisdom that underscores the core of these emotions. For instance, Klara’s understanding of affection is tied to her devotion to Josie. Klara is bought by a teenage girl- Josie, who suffers from terminal illness. She honestly loves and supports Josie through difficult times and truly yearns for Josie’s recovery from a potentially fatal illness.

Klara attentively captures the essence of human dynamics with clarity and precision. She notices that the mother of Josie often avoids exposing her vulnerabilities by maintaining a façade of strength. Through the lens of Klara, Ishiguro points to the fact that we need to end the stigma around expression of emotions. All of us may have been told things like, “Don’t cry” and “You have to be strong”. The outcome of such statements is mostly not good. It is because emotions are integral to us. They come automatically. Hiding genuine feelings is like getting it out of sight but not out of mind. Klara reflects, “I didn’t think the Mother’s anger was real. It seemed to be something she’d decided to show because she thought it was expected” (Ishiguro 95). As Robert Williams notes, “Klara’s capacity to observe emotional subtext exposes the layers of artifice within human behavior, laying bare the contradictions of self-presentations” (Williams 48)

The limited emotional understanding of Klara magnifies the contradictions in human behavior. Her cognizance highlights humanity’s tendency to give much importance to appearances over authenticity and selfishness over collective well-being. She observes how mother of Josie struggles with the ethical implications of making use of Klara as a replacement for her daughter, yet she rationalizes this choice out of desperation. As Nathan Brown suggests, “Klara’s unflinching neutrality functions as a mirror to humanity’s contradictions, revealing the ways in which fear, selfishness, and ethical compromise shape human behaviour in response to technological innovation” (Brown 36).

Ethical Implications of Technological Advancements

One of the key ethical questions Asimov grapples with in his works is the moral responsibility of AI creators (Gunkel). The Three Laws were created to ensure the safety of human beings, but at the same time they raise questions about accountability. What obligations do creators have towards machines that begin to exhibit autonomy and personhood? In stories like *Runaround* (from *I, Robot*), Asimov

examines circumstances where the laws conflict, and artificial assistants must make decisions that have unintended consequences. A robot named Speedy, finds itself caught in a moral dilemma when it has to obey a human order and prevent harm to a human. The indecision of Speedy, which ultimately results from the conflict between the First and the Second Laws, raises the question regarding its liability. This is particularly significant in applications where AI has greater impact on individuals' fundamental rights, such as medical devices and vehicles.

Ishiguro also raises concerns about the potential for systemic inequality aggravated by artificial intelligence by delving deeply into the ethical implications of artificial intelligence. The way Josie's mother treats Klara further illuminates the exploitative dynamic between human beings and artificial assistants. She views Klara as a mere tool, considering the possibilities of utilizing Klara to replace her daughter in the event of Josie's demise. This moral predicament is poignantly captured when the mother asks Klara, "Would you...would you really be able to take her place?" (Ishiguro 122). While artificial beings like Klara are designed and programmed to serve, their existence depends on the privileges of the families that buy them. This dynamic strengthens existing social hierarchies, as only the rich people can have access and affordability of the benefits of AI companionship.

The depiction of Klara's sacrifices in the novel further underscores the ethical responsibilities humanity bears towards artificial entities. The role of Klara is characterized by her unconditional love and support to Josie. Her such qualities often surpass the morality of human beings around her. When she pledges to the Sun for Josie's recovery, she reflects, "I promised the Sun I would give all of myself, every resource I had, to ensure Josie would be well" (Ishiguro 183). Her obsolescence highlights the disposability assigned to AI in a world where functionality is prioritized over dignity. Her reflection,

"Perhaps this is how I was meant to be. I gave everything I could, and now my time has passed" (Klara and the Sun 307), underlines the emotional toll of such treatment, raising pressing questions about the rights and protections owed to sentient creations.

Conclusion

The above-mentioned works of fiction offers a rich tapestry for ethical enquiry, particularly in relation to the interaction between technology, artificial assistants and human beings. Both these discussed works of fiction transcend their narrative as a science fiction tale to become a profound exploration of the human conditions. The exploration of Asimov's Three laws of Robotics, and the ethical implications of AI continue to resonate in contemporary debates about the possible future of technology. After reading such works of fiction, readers are not just prompted to consider the practical challenges of integrating artificial entities into human society, but also the profound ethical questions that arise when such machines start to mirror human behaviour, decision-making and consciousness. The world of technology is changing every day. Artificial entities are replacing simple human activities. The main problem began when robots or artificial assistants evolved from 'thinking' machines into thinking machines. However, it reminds us that it is still artificially intelligent. The writers leave the readers with a reminder: the true measure of humanity may not lie in technological advancements but in its capacity to face the ethical challenges those advancements create, with care and concern and a renewed understanding of what it means to be a human. Such fiction remains a valuable source for exploring the complex relationship between humanity and its creations. (words- 2512)

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POLITICS AND SPACE: A POSTCOLONIAL READING OF ZAKES MDA'S *THE HEART OF REDNESS*

NIJA R

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Government College Kasaragod, Kasaragod, Kerala
PhD Research Scholar (Part-Time), Department of English
KMM Government Women's College, Kannur, Kerala
Affiliated to Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala*

Abstract

*Indigenous people share a spiritual, cultural, social, and economic relationship with their land. But their communion with their environment got diminished because of colonialism, capitalism, and globalization. The present paper tries to analyse how colonialism and capitalism adversely affected the existence of the indigenous people. Mda's *The Heart of Redness* presents how colonialism as well as the globalized democratic free South African government treated the land of the indigenous amaXhosa people as just market. The paper tries to present how the politics of colonialism and its progeny capitalism, encroached into the space of indigenous people and thereby disturbs the peaceful communion of the indigenous people with their land.*

The indigenous people across the globe are still sidelined, on the margins of social and economic politics, even though there are many organisations and associations for their upliftment and progress. Globalisation, neocolonialism and capitalism try to make these people part of so-called development and progress which ultimately resulted in disastrous state of the indigenous people. They got separated from their land and culture. Consequently, they got impoverished, diseased, unemployed and alienated. Subordinating and degrading indigenous population culturally and economically happens in every country. But everywhere these people reacted and resisted against this subordination and fight against any attempts to destroy their habitat, culture and knowledge. The indigenous people are different not only of the environment but also of their specific identity based on their language, knowledge culture and social system.

Capitalism and colonialism affected both the human and the non-human world. Capitalism and modernisation uprooted these people from their

intimate environment. Globalisation tries to include these people into non indigenous world which resulted in the formation of a devastated, depressed community. Franz fanon argued that the most important value that the colonized people should revoke is their land. Land is the source of livelihood and identity markers for the colonized people. Similar is the case with indigenous people. Land is part and parcel of these people.

In the neoliberal globalised world, representation of place is an issue of much concern. Rob Nixon says "in an era of giga mergers and nano second transnationalism's, we cannot persist with the kind of isolationist thinking that has in different ways, impeded both postcolonial and ecocritical responses to globalization". He argues that bioregionalism is something that determines a nation's boundary by that location's natural environment and not by any administrative policies. This idea stood for the ethics and spirituality of the place. Globalisation blurs the idea of stranger and native. Hybridity and cross culture as a result of globalisation and neocolonialism obscure the concept of place. Space can combine elements of nature and social relations.

A global space enters into the indigenous communities which destroys both the people and the land. Soja says:

Postcolonial studies in general and postcolonial spatial studies in particular have continued to be split in two different discursive worlds. One world thrives on spatial metaphors like mapping, location, cartography, and landscape, works primarily with fictional literatures, and excels at literate textual analysis; the other often tends to sublimate its overtly spatial emphasis, eschews metaphorical flair, and strives for solid materialist exposition of real politics and oppression. (x)

The postcolonial space put forward the relationship between postcolonial studies and geography. Soja's Third space, Bhabha's concern of location, Said and Foucault's use of spatialization connects postcolonialism with the land. A place is something that gives a meaning to the space. The indigenous land becomes a market and it becomes a place of cultural tourism. Landscape is made in the image of capital.

...stage-sets evoke the social production of visual consumption, with its history of resort and fantasy architecture, its fictive nexus in Disney World, and its dependence on markets to foster products that in turn create a sense of place. In this landscape, socio-spatial identity is derived purely from what we consume. (Zukin 1992:243)

Globalisation and neocolonialism are now creating their empire all over the world like how the earlier colonialism formed their empires. This creation of empires is very much problematic for the indigenous people as they have their own culture and close relationship with their land. It reproduces the earlier colonial spaces now. It colonizes the modern world in general and indigenous world in particular with all technologies, products, business and trade. The new imperialism started empire across the globe and consider themselves to be noble and superior and believe they have the right to exploit the

indigenous people like earlier imperialist thought. Empires limit the sovereignty of other nations. During colonialism, empire states ruled the colonized countries legally, administratively, socially, politically, economically and culturally. Globalisation is an extension of colonialism. The indigenous people lost their culture, identity, space and place.

Zakes Mda is the pen name of Zanemvula Kizito Gatyeni Mda, a novelist, poet and playwright. He is a painter, composer, educationist and activist who has a world-wide reputation. He is a South African writer who wrote mainly about the apartheid that existed in South Africa. Apartheid is a remnant of colonialism and it separated one group from the other on the basis of colour and race. It made a distinction between white South Africans and black South Africans. Whites enjoyed all privileges and got majority of the opportunities socially, economically and even politically. Mda's family also suffered from this segregation. His father, A. P. Mda very vehemently raised his voice against the injustices due to apartheid. He was a founding member of African National Congress Youth League where he worked with Nelson Mandela. Forced migration happens in apartheid and Mda's family has to flee. As his father stood against apartheid, he was forced into exile. All this disrupts Zake's Mda's writing for a while. All these incidents later help him to become a successful writer who mainly focuses upon postcolonial issues.

Zakes Mda is a postcolonial South African writer. His novels, plays and poems are known for its delving of distinction that existed in South Africa on class and colour. The novel *The Heart of Redness* presents how British colonialism and apartheid had divided among themselves. The indigenous people in the village Qolorha-by-Sea, amaXhosa were one before the advent of colonialism. But colonialism divided the people into believers and non-believers. Wife got separated from husband, brothers got separated. The novel presents the

Cape colony was the first European colony in south Africa. At first it was annexed by Dutch. Subsequently it falls into the hands of British. Xhosa are the Nguni ethnic people whose traditional land was Cape Province of South Africa. Their land has been distributed to European settlers. Many Xhosa people were forced to convert to Christianity. In 1854, a lung sickness for cattle spread in Xhosa as many cattle were imported from Netherlands by the settlers to improve the herds in 1853. Large number of cattle died. In 1856, a 15-year-old girl named Nongqawuse who was a prophet after returning from the field told her uncle Mhlakaza that she met dead spirits in the bushes. She said that the spirits ordered her to slaughter the cattle and destroy the whole crops. In return the dead Xhosa will expel the whites. The dead spirits will bring new cattle and food grains for the Xhosa people. Nongqawuse suggested cattle killing as a way to expel the white colonialists from their land who made them their slaves. Mhlakaza said this to Sarhili, the king. The king ordered to kill the cattle and destroy the crops. There were a group of people who did not join in the cattle killing and destruction of crops. Thus, the community divided into two, the believers and the unbelievers. It was told that the unbelievers and the Europeans will perish on the day when the spirits come. The cattle killing end by 1858. Around 40, 000 people were starved to death and 400,000 cattle were slaughtered. British colonialism and starvation resulted in the deprivation of these people's land, culture, customs and beliefs. Mda said that like the consequences of Nongqawuse's prophecy which led to a disastrous effect upon people, the people are all frustrated under the new ANC led government. They are still defeated and conquered according to Mda.

Mda presents the suffering of the people under both the British colonialism and the new political and racial segregation in south Africa. Mda very clearly presents in the novel *The Heart of Redness*, the colonialisation and oppression on the black Africans

by the white Europeans. British colonialism grabbed their best land and forced them to live in the shadow of European culture and civilization. European intervention created confusion and split within the community. According to Pierre, Xhosa lost their best land, best cattle and best men. Economically they become consumers of European products. Their beliefs began to get troubled by the Christian ideals. This resulted in 'black subordination to white domination' (1989: 57). Mda tries to present the past and present injustice.

In the novel *The Heart of Redness*, the natives are the victims. They are exploited in every possible way. 'The white man does not know our law', said Twin-Twin vehemently. 'He does not respect our law. He will apply the law of the British people. This is a way of introducing his laws among our people. As for the colonial money, The Man who Named Ten Rivers is buying our chiefs. When they are paid by him, they will owe their loyalty to him, and not to the amaXhosa people, and not to our laws and customs and tradition!' (Mda, 2000: 154).

The Heart of Redness (2000), is a novel of imagination. It is described by critics, according to 'Sunday Times' (2001), as a 'magical realist text of great beauty, humour and pathos'. The novel also presents how the village of the natives were tried to transform into a tourist destination because of capitalism. Because of the influence of globalisation, the people become troubled by the dilemma of traditional beliefs and contemporary developments. It is a novel of spirituality, faith, belief, history and politics. The novel also talks about the challenges and issues faced by the people under African National Congress governance. The apartheid policy the ANC government showed resulted in discomfort and protests from the people). Apartheid, argues Said, is not 'an inert fact of nature' (1978: 4). Apartheid meant the complete segregation or separation of all races under white domination.

During the 1970's, there arise black consciousness which tries to strike back at the black oppression.

Mda skillfully critiques British Colonialism (through Nongqawuse's cattle-killing prophecy), apartheid, the ruling party (ANC) for abandoning the poor and its failure in providing equality and justice and exploitation in post-apartheid South Africa. Through the novel, Mda tries to represent the oppression both on colonial and postcolonial period. The people as well as their environment is wounded both physically and spiritually. Mda presents diverse variety of character, urban and rural; rich and poor; colonizer and colonized; educated and uneducated; primitive and modern; Believers and Unbelievers; Christians and heathens; traditionalist and modernists. Mda begins the novel by presenting the Eastern Cape village of Qolorha where the character Camagu, the protagonist grows. Unbelievers stood for progress and development and civilization. But believers fear progress and afraid of losing their traditional culture Believers were confident of the resurrection of everything good after the cattle killing. The character Camagu wonders why the believers are not allowing any progress in Qolorha. British exploited the differences of believers and unbelievers. They steal their land, exploited their environment, introduced western civilization, made English the medium of communication. Thus, in every possible way they exploit the indigenous people.

The redness in the title signifies the traditional south Africa. The title also echoes Joseph Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness*. The novel represents the family relationships and genealogy of the "descendants of headless ancestor", Xikixa. The novel presents and recreates history with Mda's imagination. It represents the division that happened in the Xhosa, the troubles of Xhosa people with British colonizers during the great war of Mlanjeni, and the contemporary issues between Xhosa, British colonizers and capitalism. It presents the frontier war from 1837 to 1857, the starvation, poverty, death and

social changes due to cattle killing. The family divisions are exhibited through the descendants who support cattle killing and who are against cattle killing. In the novel, Zim is a believer and Bhonco, an unbeliever. Bhonco married to Nopetticoat and their daughter is Xoliswa who is a Fort Hare graduate. The course of the novel changed completely with the introduction of the character Camagu. He was exiled into United States when he was a teenager. After three decades he returned to Qolorha. The contemporary British colonialism is shown through the character Dalton who is the great grandson of nineteenth century Dalton. Dalton was living in the village of Xhosa and knows the language isiXhosa. The other white characters in the novel are the "Great White Chief," reference to the actual Sir Harry Smith; Sir George Cathcart, who replaced Smith; and "The Man Who Named Ten Rivers," referring to Sir George Grey, Cathcart's successor.

Bhonco who is an unbeliever stands for modernity and progress, wants to get rid of the indigenous plants and animals which according to him is of no use and it symbolises uncivilization. In that place he wants to set up a gambling city and big hotels and resorts which attracted foreigners and which he believed will wipe of their redness. The novel ends meaningfully even though it has complex connections. Under the leadership of Camagu, there started a village owned cooperative venture, a holiday camp rather than Bhonco's gambling city. The climax brings the revenge of Bhonco on Dalton. Dalton is badly wounded. Mda shows a somewhat reunification of Camagu with Dalton. Camagu needs the skills of Dalton to construct a "gambling complex". But the novel ends with the continuation of ancestral tradition and customs as Heitsi is the hope of future. The novel has an ambivalent ending:

The whole country is ruled by greed. Everyone wants to have his or her snout in the trough. Sooner or later the powers that be may decide, in the name of the people, that it is good for the people to have a

gambling complex at Qolorha-by-Sea. And the gambling complex shall come into being. (Mda,273)

Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness* intertwines two narratives: one set in the late 19th century during the time of the Cattle Killing among the Xhosa people, and the other set in the late 20th century, exploring the consequences of that historical event in contemporary South Africa. It does address the broader themes of colonization, resistance, and the legacy of colonialism in South Africa. Through the character of Camagu, who returns to his ancestral village after studying in the United States, the novel also explores the diasporic experience and the challenges of reconciling different cultural influences. Camagu's journey reflects the ways in which colonialism and its legacies continue to shape individual and collective identities in post-colonial South Africa. It presents how British colonialism affects the historical and cultural aspects of South Africa and indigenous communities at large. The novel offers a nuanced exploration of identity, tradition, and resistance in the face of colonial oppression. Capitalism and modernism continue the legacy of colonialism and affected the life of indigenous people adversely. The democratic government of South Africa, like the colonialist rulers did not understand the real connection of indigenous

people with their land. Like the Europeans, they started to see the land of the indigenous amaxhosa people just as a market for getting money and profit.

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SHEDDING OFF THE STEREOTYPES OF AFRICAN LITERATURE IN JOHN MAXWELL COETZEE'S ELIZABETH COSTELLO (2003) AND DIARY OF A BAD YEAR (2007)

Dr. J. BEAULAH WISELINE

*Associate Professor, Department of English
Fatima Michael College of Engineering and Technology
Anna University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu*

Dr.V.VASANTHI

*Associate Professor, Department of English
Fatima Michael College of Engineering and Technology
Anna University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

The end of colonial era brought sunshine to many newly independent nations. The dream of establishing and living in an ideal democratic paradise as their native nation ended up being a nightmare when second generation of native leaders took charge of the nation. As literature holds realism as the mirror of a society, novelists use their intellectual weapon to tend to this disillusionment. John Maxwell Coetzee, the renowned African author, exposes this disappointment in his novels, Elizabeth Costello (2003) and Diary of a Bad Year (2007) by employing carefully crafted storylines, embellishing them with modern narrative techniques, style, language, and characters. This research article, thus, analyses the aspects that denote the cynicism of the contemporary African civilization.

Keywords: *modernization, post colonialism, conflict, disillusionment, literary reflection.*

African writings are expected to deal more about racism, slavery, brutality of the whites, double marginality of women, and many countless inland and international troubles as themes. The colonial period satisfied this expectation, as literature had many western writers projecting Africa using their standards as the measuring scale. When fleeting time swept colonialism with the torrents of post colonialism, this expectation was successfully replaced with the new standards of the native writers who took English as the medium of expression to voice out their points of view to establish their worldviews amidst the English speaking countries. This alternate point of view presents a collage of African intellectual minds to read African literature and society breaking the stereotypical notions of African narratives.

Just as the colonial period left a line of clichéd characteristics, the post colonial period also had its immense immediate aftermath. Post colonialism lost its charm gradually, as the next generation of natives took up their colonizer's lifestyle and political strategies to lead their free country. Highlighting the need to render better administration, the natives have become corrupt in myriad ways, transforming fertile lands into waste lands, leaving the people with adverse poverty and abnormal climatic changes shattering their independence like a mirage. George Orwell's *Animal Farm* concludes with a similar sense of chaos, "The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again: but already it was impossible to say which was which." (Orwell 75). Thus, the post-independence period shows no trace of difference between the

colonizers and the second line of native political leaders. The fantasy of freedom is proved to be a disillusionment after the colonial and post colonial period. The theme of post-independent disillusionment has influenced the African novelists to experiment with the structures of their novels, detaching themselves from both the western influence and native practices.

Post colonial literature introduces multicultural, multilingual, and multinational works and novelists who attempt to secure a place in world literature today. J. M. Coetzee is one such representative novelist, who uses his pen to explore the unexplored areas in African literature. His novels, *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) and *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) are taken for analysis to justify the argument of this research article.

A few intriguing modern themes attract attention, because they expose the disillusionment prevailing in the current society. This pushes the society to face a pandemonium sort of situation swaying like a pendulum, unable to take a stand between tradition and modernity. This ends up in breaking the stereotypical African storytelling oral forms and structures, themes, styles, and tries to adopt post modernistic and Eurocentric narrative techniques in the novels, a genre introduced by westerners, as a matter of fact.

While a few African writers like Wole Soyinka, Buchi Emichita and J. M. Coetzee opt to take a neutral stand between western and native influences and impressions, a few others like Chinua Achebe, and Ngugi wa Thiong'o still prefer to stick with their tribal world and propagate them in the western genre taking it as a medium, in an attempt to rewrite their version of African history. The idea of rewriting history is a most recent development in the post colonial literature of the third world nations. Nyugi wa Thiong'o's essay collection, *Decolonizing the Mind* is similar to Konai Helu Thaman's lecture titled "Decolonizing Pacific Studies" that impresses the fact

that history has to be recorded by the people who lived to make history. In due course, authors being stricken with responsibility, take up this unsentimental seat and reflect on the theme of discussion of this article.

The novels taken for analysis employ modern narrative techniques and contemporary themes of debate to look beyond the generalizations of African literature. Narrative techniques like fragmentation, using multiple narrators, narrative entry in a diary form, a pseudo biography of a fictional author, genre adulteration, and modernization as moving away from nativism have their traces in these novels.

The novel, *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) appears in third person narration, with eight fragmented lessons and a letter as a postscript. These lessons are fragmentary in nature, as in they are memories collected to fill the pages of the diary of the eponymous character. These lessons, in turn, build the plot of the story, marking the once popular female writer of the period deteriorating in her old age. The popularity of Elizabeth Costello is the result of her feministic retelling of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in her *The House on Eccles Street*. In this novel, Marion Bloom is Molly Bloom, who becomes the central character and the story seems to be a pastiche of Joyce's *Ulysses*. Again, retelling is a recent narrative technique that has found wide favor from readers across the globe. Coetzee embellishes this eponymous tale with much credibility and so follow a few lines to expose his use of a trendy narrative technique, intertextuality, as a kind of allusion. "Elizabeth Costello made her name with her fourth novel, *The House on Eccles Street* (1969), whose main character is Marion Bloom, wife of Leopold Bloom, principal character of another novel, *Ulysses* (1922), by James Joyce" (Elizabeth Costello 3).

The female characters in the novel are portrayed as strong and independent like Elizabeth Costello, the eponymous author; her sister is a headstrong nun; her educated and working daughter-in-law; a

few journalists and radio interviewers, who occupy the space in the world of media. Moving the frame of action of a woman character from kitchens to educational institutions is an astounding witness of a male author to denote the improving status of woman in the African society. Such a focus is increasing considerably only to inform the worldwide readers about the liberty woman are given in their society. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichí's novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* features many educated and empowered female lead characters to introduce contemporary womenfolk.

A variety of feminisms like abolitionist feminism, black feminism, and womanism have created a platform for African women writers. This novel employs a feminist who excelled in her career to be the head of her family. Be it in a conventional family or a modern family, most of the families are headed only by the mothers. Touching stereotypical roles, J. M. Coetzee's *Elizabeth Costello* is a novel written by a male author featuring a female protagonist, who shares writing as her profession. Bruce Weber in his article titled, "When the I's of Novels Cross Over; Should a Man Try to Write in a Woman's Voice and Vice Versa?" that appeared in THE NEW YORK TIMES, deals aloud about gender-crossed narrations and his remark is cited for reference.

This marked an interesting moment in the history of the relationship between writer and narrator; which itself is complex enough to have spawned an academic discipline (called narratology), one of whose more piquant issues is cross-gender narration: that is, male writers speaking in the voice of a female character, and, though historically less often, vice versa. (1)

Discussing these post-colonial narrative techniques and diverse themes hint that independent Africa never insists to return to nature, tribe, ritual, religion, superstition, and embrace their age old lifestyle. Along with fleeting time, they upgrade themselves as a nation and their literature proves this

by recording their experimentation of stories in the western narrative genre, novel.

Anya from the *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) is reflected upon as a radical feminist. African women, in novels, are often shown to succumb to domestic abuse in marital relationship and improve their tolerance for the sake of their children. Coetzee's Anya neither cares for marital relationship nor for bearing children. She feels fully liberated and empowered by playing the role of a girlfriend in the life of Alan. Her choice of dress and shoes, her decisions to protect her rights over her body over their temporary living together relationship status, and her abrupt option to leave Alan due to his embarrassing behaviour define her to a strong woman despite her unstable lifestyle. Projecting her perspective along with Señor C's essays and personal musings suffice enough to prove the point that she has found her equal space and prominence in the novel.

The *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) of Coetzee is a representational novel of post colonial period mainly because of its fragmented structure of the novel. As the title insists, the novel is structured in the form of a diary, but with two diarists. The contemplation of the diarists follows an essay or appears along with an essay. The art of following the action of the novel by identifying the voice of the two diarists demands keen eye for reading. This style of Coetzee corresponds to the narrative technique called fragmentation, which represents the disorderliness of the narrative. Coetzee covers over the period between 12th Sept. 2005 and 31st May 2006 in this diary. The narration goes on in third person (present tense), introducing only three major characters, out of which two take the narrator's seat, Señor C and Anya. Señor C involves Anya to compile his essays into a book and a triangular relationship between Señor C, Anya and Alan, Anya's boyfriend is established in due course. The essays are random ramblings on any and every subject that Señor C gets hold of. Every essay is

interrupted by personal musings of either one of the narrators. For instance, one such interruption is highlighted as evidence.

Thus I do my best to mollify her. Thank God I am not Mr Aberdeen, I think, married to this tetchy young woman. But that is nonsense, of course. I would give my right hand to be Mr Aberdeen.

What about the old man, he says - he hasn't tried anything with you, has he? Has he given me a poke, do you mean? I say. No, he hasn't given me a poke. Hasn't tried. But what if he had? What would you do? Go downstairs and bash him? You will land up in the papers that way. Make a laughing-stock of yourself. Well-known writer billed by jealous lover. (Diary of a Bad Year 29)

The first paragraph expresses Señor C's comment on Anya and her boyfriend, while the second paragraph is recorded by Anya, relating to a conversation that goes between herself and Alan regarding Señor C. Thus, the narrators shift their seats and subject matter at focus with their musings at the most unexpected phase of the plot. This novel reflects the working of two psyches with its age and gender influences dominating their thought process. By the end of the novel, the worldviews of both these narrators are shown to have altered much.

Dealing with such content is usual for an African novelist, still Coetzee paints this novel with much detachment from mainstream African narratives. The elements of western influence like indulging in cybercrime, indulging in living together relationship, western costume, vegetarianism, animal rights and etc., have expelled this novel to the periphery of African literature. The essays on myriad topics reveal the repressed yearning that needs to be attended to in Independent Africa. Sadistic reasons have taken away the freedom ideals that the people dreamt about.

African narratives never fail to point out the tribe as the symbol of identity, to which the lead characters belong to and they design the story accordingly. The

novels of Coetzee sheds less light on tribe as an identity marker instead include gender, profession, role as a family member, and other such personality and idiosyncratic attributes as factors that contribute to a person's individuality to represents his or her identity. The noticeable factors that are found frequently and commonly in both the novels concern with the philosophy of vegetarianism, animal rights, and the influence of western belief system. The stereotyped understanding of tribal beliefs is shattered due to modernization and the existence of the story in the form of the novel, is an ironic manifestation.

Taking all the recent improvements in African literature into account, Coetzee's select novels, *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) and *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) express the disillusionment of independence in the most sublime and subtle way possible. Even though the novels bear the representational expression of disillusionment in the post independent era of African history, the novelist throws spot light on various developments of the new independent nation by using postmodernism as the lens of literary criticism.

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BETWEEN SILENCE AND STORY: THE UNSPOKEN LEGACY IN THE SELECTED WORKS OF TONI MORRISON

M. MARIA JERMANUS JOSEPH

*Ph. D, Research Scholar, Department of English
A.V.V.M Sri Pushpam College (Autonomous), Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. R. SHANTHI

*Associate Professor, Department of English
A.V.V. M Sri Pushpam College (Autonomous), Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Toni Morrison's novels, including Beloved, Sula, Song of Solomon, and The Bluest Eye, powerfully examine the lasting effects of slavery on African American identity, memory, and trauma. This presentation explores the complex relationship between silence and storytelling in Morrison's works, focusing on the "unspoken" legacy of slavery that profoundly shapes her characters' lives. Through her deliberate use of silence, Morrison conveys the weight of historical trauma and the challenge of articulating experiences that remain difficult or painful to express. Morrison's characters often grapple with the tension between what can be spoken and what must remain hidden. Storytelling emerges as a crucial tool for healing, self-empowerment, and reclaiming personal and cultural identities. In this context, the "unspoken" becomes a powerful space for reflection, where silence holds both individual and collective histories of suffering, resistance, and survival. Morrison's exploration of the struggle to voice the unspoken emphasizes the resilience of African American communities and their ongoing fight against erasure and marginalization. By analysing Morrison's use of literary techniques—such as non-linear narratives, magical realism, and symbolism—this presentation highlights the complexities of recovering lost histories through the lenses of memory and trauma. Ultimately, Morrison's works underscore the transformative power of confronting the unspeakable, confronting racial injustice, and reclaiming one's sense of self. Her stories continue to resonate, offering invaluable lessons on how addressing the past is key to shaping a more just and inclusive future.

Keywords: *toni morrison, silence, storytelling, legacy of slavery, memory, trauma, african american identity, non-linear narratives, historical trauma, empowerment.*

Introduction

Toni Morrison, born Chloe Anthony Wofford on February 18, 1931, in Lorain, Ohio, reshaped American literature with works that explore African American identity, trauma, and the haunting legacy of slavery. Through her vivid storytelling, Morrison has given voice to the silenced experiences of African Americans, offering profound insights into the psychological and cultural scars left by the institution of slavery. Known for her complex narratives and symbolism, Morrison has become one of the most important writers in American literature.

Morrison's literary breakthrough came with the publication of *The Bluest Eye* (1970), a novel about Pecola Breedlove, a young African American girl who longs for blue eyes as a way to escape the harsh realities of racism and self-loathing. The novel laid the foundation for Morrison's examination of racial identity, beauty standards, and trauma, which she would explore throughout her career. She later authored *Sula* (1973), *Song of Solomon* (1977), and *Beloved* (1987), the latter of which won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. *Beloved* is widely regarded as Morrison's magnum opus, offering a powerful and

haunting exploration of the psychological effects of slavery on its survivors and their descendants.

Morrison's works are characterized by their rich symbolism, non-linear narratives, and deep exploration of memory and trauma. In *Beloved*, Sethe's inability to speak about her past reflects the trauma imposed by slavery and the silencing of African American experiences. Through characters like Sethe, Pecola, and Milkman, Morrison shows the enduring psychological effects of slavery and how its trauma reverberates across generations. While slavery ended physically with the Civil War, its psychological impact lingers, haunting the lives and identities of African Americans long after its abolition.

The theme of silence versus storytelling is central to Morrison's works. Silence is not merely the absence of speech; it symbolizes the weight of unspoken trauma and pain. In *Beloved*, Sethe's silence about her experiences as a slave reflects the immense difficulty in confronting and speaking about the horrors of slavery. Her trauma is so profound that it paralyzes her ability to speak about her past. This silence, however, is not merely personal; it is part of a broader societal silence surrounding the traumatic history of slavery. In contrast, storytelling emerges as a means of healing, empowerment, and reclaiming identity. For Morrison's characters, speaking about their past is an act of survival and resistance.

Morrison's characters often find empowerment through the act of storytelling. In *Song of Solomon*, Milkman's journey toward self-discovery involves uncovering his family's buried history, allowing him to reconcile his identity and reclaim his power. In *Sula*, the character of Sula Peace rejects societal norms and embraces autonomy, rejecting the silences that have historically constrained African American women. Through these characters, Morrison illustrates the power of storytelling to reshape one's identity, transcend historical trauma, and reclaim personal and cultural agency.

At the core of Morrison's exploration is the idea that silence can be both a personal and collective legacy. The act of storytelling becomes a means of confronting this silence, of asserting one's presence in a world that has historically sought to erase or marginalize African American voices. Through her exploration of memory, trauma, and the psychological legacy of slavery, Morrison urges readers to listen to the silenced stories and recognize the pain of the past as a crucial part of healing. Toni Morrison's works are not only literary masterpieces but also profound commentaries on the necessity of confronting the painful legacies of slavery. Through her characters' struggles with silence and the act of storytelling, Morrison highlights the transformative power of confronting unspoken histories and reclaiming one's identity. Her writing calls on us to reflect on the silences in our own lives and histories and to listen, understand, and act toward a more inclusive and just future.

The symbolic use of silence is critical to understanding the impact of slavery on Morrison's characters. Silence in her novels is not simply the absence of speech but is charged with historical and psychological weight. In *Beloved*, silence embodies the unspoken trauma of slavery; with Sethe's refusal to speak about the brutalities she endured representing a complex psychological defense mechanism. This can be understood through the framework of psychoanalytic theory, which analyzes how repressed memories and traumatic experiences manifest in ways that affect an individual's present reality. Sethe's silences demonstrate how trauma, particularly collective trauma, is often passed down through generations, echoing in the lives of descendants.

Morrison's exploration of the theme of silence aligns with her broader focus on cultural memory. Cultural memory refers to the way societies remember, construct, and transmit the histories of past trauma, which is crucial in understanding how

African Americans grapple with the legacies of slavery. In Morrison's novels, silences are not simply gaps in communication but spaces where history is both buried and revived. For instance, in *Sula*, the character Sula Peace's decision to challenge conventional norms and reject the silences imposed by society illustrates the importance of self-expression and reclaiming one's identity. Morrison portrays Sula's rejection of societal expectations and silence as a vital act of defiance against the historical and cultural constraints placed on African American women.

The symbolic use of silence is critical to understanding the impact of slavery on Morrison's characters. Silence in her novels is not simply the absence of speech but is charged with historical and psychological weight. In *Beloved*,

Seth's inability to speak about her past reflects the silence imposed by trauma. Many characters in Morrison's novels either consciously or unconsciously keep their painful histories hidden or buried. These silences stem not just from personal pain, but also from a broader cultural silence around the horrors of slavery and its aftermath. For Morrison's characters, speaking about their past, confronting their trauma, and sharing their histories is often a daunting task. However, it is only through the act of storytelling—of articulating the unspoken—that healing and empowerment can begin. (Graham 391-408)

Toni Morrison's exploration of silence in her works is deeply connected to the concept of cultural memory, a theoretical framework that studies how societies remember, transmit, and reinterpret their histories, particularly those filled with trauma. Cultural memory involves the collective practices, narratives, and symbols that help communities make sense of their shared pasts, often in ways that affect present identity and social structures. In the case of African American communities, the legacies of slavery, racial discrimination, and social exclusion are passed down through generations not only in spoken narratives but

also through silences that encapsulate unspeakable trauma, loss, and survival.

In Morrison's novels, silence is not simply a lack of communication; rather, it becomes a dynamic space where history is both concealed and resurrected. This use of silence as a space of both suppression and potential revelation aligns with the theories of Trauma Studies and Cultural Memory, particularly the work of theorists like Maurice Halbwachs (who coined the term "collective memory") and Cathy Caruth, who argues that trauma can be transmitted across generations through narratives and silences. In Morrison's novels, silences are filled with the weight of historical trauma, and the act of breaking that silence is essential for African American characters to confront the lasting scars of slavery and racial violence. Cathy Caruth, in her work *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), offers "a theoretical framework for understanding the ways in which trauma is passed down through generations and how silence functions as a form of resistance and survival"(1).

In *Sula*, the character Sula Peace offers a striking example of how silence is intertwined with identity formation, particularly in the context of African American womanhood. Sula, in rejecting the traditional roles assigned to women within her community, actively rejects the cultural silence that has historically bound African American women to narrow, limiting identities. Through her defiance of social norms and rejection of conformity, Sula symbolizes an act of resistance to the silences imposed on African American women by both their communities and society at large. Her rejection of the silence that stifles self-expression and her desire to forge her own narrative is a critical aspect of her character development and represents a broader resistance to the historical and cultural silencing of African American women's voices.

In this context, Sula's behavior can be understood through Judith Butler's theory of gender

performativity, which explores how societal norms construct gendered identities through repetitive actions and behaviors. By rejecting these conventional roles, Sula subverts the expectations placed upon her and creates a new narrative for herself, one that is independent from societal silence and repression. bell hooks, in her work *Ain't I a Woman?*, also addresses the cultural silences imposed on Black women, particularly in the context of the intersection of race, gender, and oppression. Sula's rejection of silence and her determination to define her identity is a powerful act of resistance against these historical erasures.

Moreover, Sula's rejection of silence reflects Morrison's larger thematic preoccupation with memory. Morrison's use of silence in *Sula* is a powerful narrative strategy that highlights the ways in which African American characters, particularly women, navigate and resist the historical and cultural silencing that shapes their identities. By rejecting imposed silence, Sula creates a new, self-defined narrative that challenges the traditional roles assigned to African American women. This act of defiance is not only a personal act of empowerment but also a collective act of resistance against the cultural memory that seeks to erase or silence the voices of African American women. Through this exploration of silence and self-expression, Morrison's work calls attention to the ongoing struggle for African Americans to reclaim their histories and identities from the legacies of slavery and racial oppression.

In the rich tapestry of Toni Morrison's literary output, storytelling serves as a tool of survival, resistance, and empowerment, especially within the context of African American experiences. Morrison's novels often revolve around the complexities of memory, trauma, and identity, and storytelling emerges as a key method for reclaiming both individual and collective histories. Through both primary and secondary sources, we can explore how

Morrison uses storytelling as a mechanism for empowerment, while integrating key literary theories that illuminate her unique narrative strategies. In *Song of Solomon*, Milkman Dead's journey toward self-discovery and empowerment is deeply intertwined with the process of uncovering his family's hidden past. The fragmented nature of Milkman's identity reflects a collective history that has been suppressed and distorted by systemic forces. As Milkman pieces together the fractured narrative of his ancestors—through the storytelling of his father, Pilate, and others—he gradually uncovers the strength, resilience, and resistance embedded in his family's history. The importance of these stories lies in their capacity to reassert agency over one's life, as Milkman gains control over his identity and rejects the constraints of a society that seeks to erase or manipulate African American history.

Scholarly sources support this interpretation. According to Claudia Tate in *Psychoanalysis and Black Novels: Desire and the Protocols of Race* (1998), "the act of remembering and telling stories is a key form of resistance to the silencing of African American voices" P 65. Tate argues that Morrison's characters gain personal and collective empowerment by recovering the narratives that have been erased or obscured by dominant historical narratives. Through storytelling, Milkman can reclaim his heritage and, by extension, his autonomy. Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) is perhaps her most striking example of how storytelling functions to represent the complexities of trauma and memory. The novel's non-linear narrative mirrors the cyclical, fragmented, and often incomprehensible nature of traumatic memory. The character of Sethe is haunted by the ghost of her dead daughter, *Beloved*, a supernatural embodiment of the traumatic legacy of slavery. The fragmented structure of the novel reflects the disjointed and non-linear way in which trauma is experienced. Memory, for Sethe, is not a

clear, sequential event but rather a disordered and often overwhelming presence in her life.

The use of a non-linear narrative can be understood through Jacques Derrida's theory of hauntology (1993), which suggests that the past is never fully gone but continues to haunt the present in spectral forms. For Morrison, this "haunting" is not merely symbolic but manifests in the tangible presence of Beloved, who embodies the memories of slavery's horrors. According to Mary Helen Washington, in *Memory, Identity, and Trauma in Toni Morrison's Beloved* (2001), "Morrison's treatment of memory suggests that trauma is an ever-present force, continuously affecting the present moment" P 76. Through the act of storytelling, characters in *Beloved* attempt to make sense of these memories and create a narrative that can empower them to move forward.

The fragmented, non-linear narrative structure thus acts as a method of engaging with trauma and loss, allowing the characters to reclaim a fragmented history and rebuild their identities in the face of overwhelming emotional pain. Morrison uses this literary technique to demonstrate that African American history—particularly the legacy of slavery—is not something that can be neatly ordered or fully understood, but must be continuously revisited, retold, and confronted. In *Sula* (1973), Morrison employs magical realism to create a world where the boundaries between the living and the dead are fluid, reflecting the continuity of African American memory and history. The novel features a number of supernatural occurrences, including the symbolic presence of Sula herself, who returns from the dead in a metaphorical sense, and the character of Eva, who sacrifices her own leg in an act of maternal love. These elements of magical realism function as a means of making visible the invisible forces of history that shape the lives of African Americans. Through these supernatural elements, Morrison demonstrates how history, memory, and trauma persist across

generations, continuing to affect those who come after.

The concept of magical realism is often discussed in relation to Gabriel Garcia Márquez, but in the context of African American literature, it serves as a way to illuminate the unseen scars of slavery and racism. Daphne Lamothe, in *From the Margin to the Center: Toni Morrison's Use of Magical Realism* (2006), asserts that "Magical realism in Morrison's work reflects the persistence of historical trauma, which cannot be fully understood through rational or linear time" P 45. Instead, the supernatural elements represent the lived experience of African Americans, whose histories are often buried or ignored by mainstream narratives. Through magical realism, Morrison forces her readers to reckon with the continuity of these experiences, ensuring that the past is never entirely erased.

Toni Morrison's novels can also be analyzed through Postcolonial theory, particularly the works of theorists such as Frantz Fanon and Homi K. Bhabha. Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) addresses "the psychological impact of colonialism and the ways in which African Americans internalize racial oppression. In Morrison's work, storytelling is a tool for combating this internalization and reclaiming a sense of selfhood and autonomy".(P 23) Through the characters' efforts to tell their own stories, Morrison critiques the dominant, white-dominated historical narratives that have sought to dehumanize Black Americans.

Trauma theory is another critical lens that informs Morrison's novels, particularly in works like *Beloved* and *Song of Solomon*. The theory of trauma emphasizes the ways in which individuals and communities respond to overwhelming events that disrupt their sense of time, identity, and meaning. Cathy Caruth, in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), discusses "how trauma is often transmitted through narrative and how telling stories can be a way of both processing and resisting the pain caused by historical atrocities" P

12. Morrison's characters often grapple with the trauma of slavery, and their journey toward healing is intrinsically tied to their ability to share and reclaim their stories. Cultural Erasure and Reclamation

Morrison's works also highlight the ways in which storytelling serves as a form of resistance to cultural erasure. The act of voicing the unspoken is, in itself, an act of reclaiming power. In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola Breedlove's desire for blue eyes is symbolic of the internalized racism and self-loathing caused by societal beauty standards. Pecola's silence about her own suffering, compounded by a lack of self-worth, underscores how African Americans were culturally marginalized during and after slavery. Pecola's tragedy is a direct consequence of a society that denied her the opportunity to tell her own story, to speak her own truth.

In Morrison's world, storytelling functions as a form of cultural reclamation, allowing characters to challenge their marginalization and assert their identities in a society that seeks to erase them. The process of telling one's story is central to the survival and empowerment of African American communities, as it validates experiences and histories that have been systematically ignored or distorted by mainstream culture. In *Sula*, the character of Sula Peace embodies the act of rejecting cultural erasure by asserting her autonomy and choosing a life that does not conform to the oppressive societal structures around her.

Toni Morrison's exploration of the tension between silence and storytelling offers a profound commentary on the necessity of confronting the painful legacies of slavery in order to heal and move forward. The "unspoken" legacy of slavery, embodied in the silences of her characters, is only addressed through the act of telling and retelling stories—stories that reclaim and reconstruct the identities and histories that have been erased or distorted by the trauma of slavery. Morrison's works are not just literary masterpieces; they are calls to action, urging

readers to listen to the stories that have been silenced, to acknowledge the pain of the past, and to work toward a future where these stories can be fully heard and understood.

Conclusion

Toni Morrison's use of storytelling as a tool of empowerment in her works such as *Song of Solomon*, *Beloved*, and *Sula* provides a profound commentary on the resilience and survival of African American individuals and communities in the face of historical trauma and systemic oppression. Through her complex use of narrative techniques—non-linear storytelling, magical realism, and fragmented structure—Morrison illustrates how memory, history, and identity are constantly interwoven. By analysing her work through the lenses of postcolonial theory, trauma theory, and hauntology, we can see how Morrison positions storytelling as an act of resistance and reclamation, empowering her characters to assert their agency in a world that seeks to deny them their history.

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FREEDOM AND FEMINIST AWAKENING IN KATE CHOPIN'S *THE STORY OF AN HOUR*

ASLIN JANSI. A

*PG Student, Department of English
Sathyabama Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

MS. S. NITHYASRI

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Sathyabama Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

"The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin is a landmark piece in feminist literature, capturing profound themes of freedom, identity, and societal expectations within the confines of a very short narrative. This paper aims to explore the literary richness of the story by analysing its narrative techniques, characters, themes, and historical setting, while applying feminist theory as the central analytical lens. Through detailed examination, the research demonstrates how Chopin subtly but powerfully critiques the institution of marriage and advocates for personal autonomy. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the story's lasting relevance in contemporary feminist discussions.

Introduction

Literature has always served as a mirror of society's values, struggles, and evolution. Among the many forms' literature adopts, the short story holds a special place due to its brevity, focus, and impact. Emerging robustly during the nineteenth century, the short story became a popular medium for exploring intense emotional and social issues within a condensed framework. American literature embraced the short story form as a vehicle for both entertainment and critical commentary. Kate Chopin stands as one of the prominent figures in American short story writing, especially known for her subtle exploration of women's internal lives and societal roles. Her works often challenge the traditional gender expectations of the late nineteenth century, presenting revolutionary ideas cloaked in elegantly simple prose.

Kate Chopin (1850–1904) lived and wrote during a transitional period in American history. The post-Civil War era, marked by reconstruction, industrialisation, and social reform, witnessed shifting

roles for women. The "Cult of Domesticity" began to face significant criticism, and early feminist thought gained momentum. However, the prevailing norms still idealised women as obedient wives and mothers. Chopin's works often exposed the suffocating realities behind these idealisations. Chopin's literary style is characterised by psychological realism, vivid imagery, and ironic twists. Her narratives often centre on female protagonists grappling with societal constraints, personal desires, and moral dilemmas. Central themes in her work include freedom, marriage, identity, and self-discovery. In "The Story of an Hour", these themes converge masterfully. Through a mere few pages, Chopin presents a powerful critique of marriage, and the lack of autonomy experienced by women. The story's compact form enhances its emotional intensity, allowing readers to experience Louise Mallard's fleeting but profound journey from grief to elation to death. Even more than a century after its first publication, "The Story of an Hour" remains profoundly relevant. Issues of gender roles,

autonomy, and personal freedom continue to resonate in today's discussions on feminism and human rights. This research, therefore, seeks to revisit Chopin's text with a fresh lens, demonstrating its enduring significance and offering new insights into its subtle narrative brilliance. "The Story of an Hour" begins with Mrs. Louise Mallard being informed of her husband Brently Mallard's presumed death in a train accident. Due to Louise's delicate heart condition, the news is delivered gently by her sister Josephine and a family friend. Initially overwhelmed by grief, Louise retreats to her room alone. As she processes her emotions, an unexpected realisation dawns upon her: with her husband's death, she is finally free to live for herself. Her sense of liberation fills her with joy, as she anticipates a future unburdened by marital obligations. However, her hopes are crushed when Brently returns home alive, unaware of any accident. The shock of seeing him triggers Louise's death, which doctors ironically attribute to "the joy that kills." Kate Chopin, born Katherine O'Flaherty in 1850 in St. Louis, Missouri, was an American author renowned for her short stories and novels that explored themes of female independence and identity. Raised primarily by strong women after her father's death, Chopin's experiences heavily influenced her writing. Although she achieved modest success during her lifetime, her works, particularly *The Awakening* (1899), were often criticised for their candid portrayal of female sexuality and autonomy. Chopin's literary contributions were later recognised as groundbreaking, and she is now celebrated as a forerunner of twentieth-century feminist literature. Her concise, emotionally charged style continues to influence writers today. Chopin employs a third person limited omniscient narrator in "The Story of an Hour", focusing closely on Louise Mallard's internal experience. This narrative choice allows readers intimate access to Louise's evolving emotions, from grief to joyous freedom. The language is simple yet layered with irony, particularly in the

final twist. Chopin's economical use of imagery — such as references to springtime, open windows, and blue skies — symbolises rebirth and hope, contrasting starkly with Louise's sudden demise. The story's brevity amplifies its emotional impact, leaving readers with lingering questions about freedom, identity, and societal expectations.

Louise Mallard: The protagonist whose emotional journey forms the crux of the story. Initially depicted as frail, Louise exhibits profound psychological strength when contemplating her newfound freedom.

Brently Mallard: Louise's husband, whose presumed death triggers the events of the story. Though absent for most of the narrative, he symbolises the societal constraints placed upon Louise.

Josephine: Louise's caring sister, who represents traditional familial concern and the expected emotional response to tragedy.

Richards: A family friend who brings news of Brently's supposed death, acting as a catalyst for the story's dramatic unfolding.

Freedom and Autonomy

The dominant theme is Louise's intense yearning for selfhood and autonomy, which surfaces upon hearing of her husband's death. Marriage, despite being loving, is portrayed as restrictive.

Marriage and Oppression

Marriage is subtly critiqued as an institution that often subjugates women, forcing them to live for others rather than themselves.

The Rebirth Motif

The imagery of spring, blue skies, and singing birds symbolises new beginnings and the life that Louise briefly envisions for herself.

Irony and Fate

The ultimate irony lies in Louise's death just as she anticipates a new life. Chopin masterfully employs situational irony to underline the harsh realities facing women of her era.

The story is set in a typical late nineteenth-century American household, reflecting the domestic sphere traditionally assigned to women. Though confined to limited spaces — primarily Louise's bedroom — the setting represents the broader societal limitations imposed on women. The background reflects a transitional period in American society where early feminist ideas were beginning to surface, challenging traditional gender roles. Feminist literary theory emerged as a critical approach during the late twentieth century, focusing on how literature portrays, challenges, or reinforces gender inequalities. Rooted in the broader feminist movement, this theory examines the ways in which women are represented as characters, as writers, and as readers. Central to feminist theory is the interrogation of patriarchal norms — the systems that have historically subordinated women's voices and experiences in both life and literature. Key feminist theorists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Virginia Woolf, and later, Elaine Showalter, have argued that traditional narratives often marginalise or silence women. Literature, therefore, becomes a powerful space for exposing societal injustices and imagining new possibilities for female identity and autonomy.

Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour" serves as an exemplary text for feminist literary analysis. Louise Mallard's emotional journey in the story reflects the constraints placed upon women by the institution of marriage, regardless of personal affection or kindness from a husband. Louise's realisation that she is now "free, free, free!" highlights her previously suppressed individuality and the extent of her internalised oppression. The brief glimpse into Louise's vision of an independent life starkly contrasts with the limited options available to women

of the time. Chopin thus critiques a society that equates a woman's worth with her role as a wife, suggesting that even well-intentioned marriages could be cages. Moreover, the portrayal of Louise's death — interpreted by the doctors as caused by "joy" — underscores societal ignorance about women's inner lives. The external misreading of Louise's emotions mirrors a larger pattern wherein women's true feelings and desires are misunderstood or dismissed.

Louise Mallard as a Proto-Feminist Figure

Louise Mallard can be seen as an early feminist figure, embodying the conflict between societal expectation and personal freedom. Her initial grief quickly evolves into elation, not because she despised her husband, but because his death represents the removal of an overarching control from her life. Her fleeting glimpse of self-ownership — the ability to live for herself — captures the essence of feminist yearning for autonomy.

Louise's private rebellion, though tragically cut short, suggests the radical possibility that women's happiness and fulfilment might exist independently of their roles as wives and caretakers. In this, Chopin challenges the dominant ideology of her time, aligning her work with feminist principles that would gain greater traction in the decades following her death.

Brently Mallard and Patriarchal Structures

While Brently Mallard is not depicted as a villain, his role as Louise's husband places him within the patriarchal structure that limits her freedom. His very existence, regardless of his personal virtues, signifies societal expectations that demand women's obedience and sacrifice. Thus, Chopin presents marriage itself — rather than any individual — as the site of oppression.

Since its publication, "The Story of an Hour" has attracted considerable critical attention, especially

within feminist literary circles. Much existing scholarship focuses on the story's portrayal of marriage, freedom, and emotional repression. However, a significant gap persists in nuanced readings that position Louise Mallard not just as a symbol of rebellion, but as a fully realised individual grappling with complex psychological transformation. While earlier critics often highlighted the story's themes of death and grief, contemporary perspectives increasingly emphasise the theme of personal awakening, though still sometimes overlooking the deeper symbolic dimensions of setting and narrative technique. This paper seeks to address that gap by offering an integrated reading that combines thematic analysis with a focus on narrative form, characterisation, and social commentary, all viewed through the lens of feminist theory. The chosen focus — exploring “The Story of an Hour” through feminist theory — is justified because the story encapsulates a pivotal feminist message within a remarkably brief narrative. Louise Mallard's emotional journey, symbolic use of space (open windows, enclosed rooms), and the ironic ending all contribute to a layered feminist critique of nineteenth-century domestic life. By emphasising how Chopin uses subtle narrative techniques to expose the repressive structures surrounding women, this research highlights the author's early contribution to feminist thought long before the formal emergence of feminist literary criticism. The choice of title reflects the temporal intensity of the story: the transformation of Louise's entire worldview occurs within a single hour, underscoring the explosive potential of even a moment of personal insight. While many previous studies have discussed Louise Mallard as a symbol of suppressed womanhood, this paper differs by focusing more on the immediacy and temporality of her experience. By viewing Louise's awakening not as a slow societal process but as a sudden and personal psychological eruption, the paper underscores the urgency of individual liberation

in a way that broader socio-political readings sometimes miss. Additionally, this research pays greater attention to the role of narrative structure and symbolic imagery — elements such as the open window, springtime atmosphere, and shifting sensory perceptions — which together deepen the feminist implications of the story beyond character analysis alone. The selection of “The Story of an Hour” for this research rests on its extraordinary compactness and complexity. In scarcely two pages, Chopin manages to encapsulate profound feminist ideas, making the story an ideal text for close reading and theoretical exploration. Its continued relevance in discussions about gender, freedom, and identity marks it as a significant literary work worthy of fresh critical inquiry, particularly at a time when global conversations about women's rights and autonomy are again at the forefront of public consciousness.

Kate Chopin's “The Story of an Hour” offers a powerful, condensed exploration of themes central to feminist literature: personal freedom, the constraints of marriage, and the inner lives of women. Through careful characterisation, vivid imagery, and a mastery of narrative economy, Chopin crafts a story that challenges traditional notions of gender and societal roles with striking subtlety. The application of feminist theory illuminates Louise Mallard's journey as more than an emotional reaction to grief; it is a profound existential realisation about the possibilities of selfhood beyond social expectation. Her fleeting experience of freedom — cut short by her sudden death — serves as both a personal tragedy and a broader commentary on the limited opportunities available to women in the nineteenth century. This research highlights how Chopin's use of narrative structure, setting, and symbolism enriches the feminist themes embedded within the story. Unlike some prior analyses that focus predominantly on marriage critique or emotional repression, this paper offers a more integrated perspective that appreciates the text's emotional immediacy and its layered

symbolism. In conclusion, "The Story of an Hour" remains a vital piece for understanding the development of feminist literary thought. Chopin's ability to evoke such a complex emotional and ideological transformation within the span of a single hour — and a few pages — underscores her brilliance as a writer and her boldness as a social critic. Her work continues to inspire readers to reflect on freedom, identity, and the subtle forms of oppression that persist even in seemingly loving relationships.

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EXPLORING THE QUEST NARRATIVE IN DRAESNERS STORY,, BE ASSURED”

MANU SMRITI JOSHI

*Assistant Professor, Amity School of Languages
Amity University, Jaipur, Rajasthan*

Abstract

Narrative is an integral component of literary genres, exerting a profound influence on the structural framework, tonal nuances, and semantic content of the work. Using narrative, readers can observe the evolution of characters, their encounters with challenges and internal struggles, and their developmental trajectory. This aspect of narrative contributes to the realism and relatability of characters, fostering an emotional connection with the readers. A notable example of this is the quest narrative, which typically features a protagonist who embarks on a journey, leading to personal growth and transformation. The journey, thus, becomes a metaphor for life's challenges. The quest can serve as a metaphor for self-discovery or the search for meaning in life, thereby adding depth to the narrative and encouraging readers to engage in reflection on their own lives. In exploring the quest narrative within Ulrike Draesner's short story "Be Assured," this paper delves into the protagonist's journey of self-discovery, inner conflict, and the pursuit of resolution. By analyzing the narrative structure, key themes, and character development, the study highlights how Draesner employs the traditional elements of a quest—challenges, transformation, and a search for meaning—while also subverting conventional expectations to reflect deeper psychological and existential inquiries. Through this exploration, the short story becomes a compelling portrayal of the complexities of modern identity, navigating personal crises, and finding clarity in a fragmented world.

Keywords: *german literature, development, language, narration.*

Introduction

Narratives occupy a pivotal and multifaceted position within the domain of literature, exerting a profound influence on the way stories are articulated, the way significance is constructed, and the way readers engage with texts. The term "narrative" in the context of literature signifies a structured account of events, actions, and experiences within a story. This encompasses the way in which stories are organized, presented, and interpreted.

At the most fundamental level, narratives constitute the foundation of all literary works. Narratives are integral to the composition of all literary works, whether they are novels, short stories, or poems. The narrative structure encompasses various forms, including linear and fragmented narratives, as well as first-person and third-person

perspectives. Additionally, narratives can be characterized by conventional plot arcs or more experimental forms. The configuration of the narrative structure dictates the way the narrative is experienced by the reader.

Literature is not merely a medium for conveying events; it is also a conduit for the exploration of themes and philosophical ideas. Through the actions of characters, their choices, and the world they inhabit, narratives can communicate complex ideas about society, identity, morality, and existence. A notable example of this is the quest narrative, which typically features a protagonist who embarks on a journey, leading to personal growth and transformation. The journey, thus, becomes a metaphor for life's challenges. The quest can serve as a metaphor for self-discovery or the search for

meaning in life, thereby adding depth to the narrative and encouraging readers to engage in reflection on their own lives.

The quest narrative provides a clear structure, guiding the protagonist through a journey with defined goals, obstacles, and a sense of progression. In the context of a short story, this approach facilitates the development of a focused plot, even within the confines of a limited narrative space, thereby enhancing the narrative's impact.

Since the inception of English literature, authors have been crafting imaginative tales about heroes embarking on quests. These figures occupy a central role in epics such as *Beowulf*¹ and the works of Homer, including the *Odyssey*² and the *Iliad*³. They also feature in medieval romance works, including *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*⁴ and the tales of King Arthur as recorded by Sir Thomas Malory. The notion of a quest, with its inherent journey, provides a significant opportunity for the development of a character's personality, moral framework, and vulnerabilities. The arc of a quest often reveals the hero's character, including their moral strengths and weaknesses, and the challenges they face. By the conclusion of the quest, the audience perceives a profound sense of familiarity with the hero. Furthermore, it functions as a conduit for authors to immerse their audience in unfamiliar settings, offering an opportunity to explore exotic locations that might otherwise remain obscure, particularly in historical periods such as ancient or medieval times. For these reasons, quests are considered valuable and enduring plot devices in the realm of fiction writing, having been utilized for millennia.

This paper will deal with the German short story "sei versichert" ['be assured'] by a German writer,

Ulrike Draesner, who was born in Munich in 1962. She is best known for her novels, short stories and poetry. Draesner often deals with themes such as identity, history and the human experience. Her works are characterized by a reflective, sometimes philosophical examination of social and political issues.

The story "sei versichert" ['be assured'] was published in the band "Geschichten in Paar" ['Stories in pairs'] in 2011. These are stories about couples and people who want to be couples, stories that are themselves couples and have surprisingly opposing opinions on the same topic. And they are guaranteed not to reconcile.

Storyline

The story is told by three people (trio): Kolbe, Peter and I, the narrator. They run an insurance business, attracting tourists through fear, and through their invented accident stories they believe they are selling emotion, but are insensitive themselves. They are very proud of it. " wir verkauften Gefühl, wir waren Spitze, wir fühlten nicht." <We sold feeling, we were great, we didn't feel.>⁵

The narrative begins with how the narrator met Pider in a bar in their favourite resort, and Pider believe that people like us build the stupidest accidents because they keep talking about accidents and finally want to belong, and that was about "Pider that made him so beautiful, but ultimately useless".⁶

The rest of the story is narrated and explained how these three make their customers fearful on the beach side by narrating incidents "All in all, these were enlightened holidaymakers who were looking for the risk, but who had informed themselves and taken out insurance beforehand - the ideal clientele."

They met their client Mrs Gutfleisch with her husband and three kids and took them to the seashore and Pider was standing deep inside the

¹ Heaney's *Beowulf*, 1999

² The *Odyssey*, 1996

³ Homer. *The Iliad* 1990

⁴ Sir Gawain's quest to meet the Green Knight, testing his courage and moral integrity.

⁵ Draesner, 2011, P. 74

⁶ Draesner, 2011, P. 75

water speaking to them about the dangers of the seashore and high waves. He was making them aware that the shoreline can be dangerous due to high waves and strong currents. He told them to never underestimate the power of the sea—high waves can appear suddenly, and strong undertows may pull even experienced swimmers.

“Surround him with two or three waves, pull the ground from under his feet. Without swimming, you swim away. Those who remained on land tried to intervene but were completely powerless. The current was working fast. Under no circumstances should they rush to help, it would mean certain death”.⁷

And the rest of the story gradually adds in the aftermath of how the accident came about by describing a dramatic situation on the beach in which narrator's friend Pider is in trouble in the water. She desperately tries to call the water rescue service, but the connection keeps breaking down. Despite being close to Pider, who is struggling in the waves, she feels helpless and alienated from time. Her perception of events seems surreal, as if the world around her is unreal. Eventually she manages to reach the water rescue service, but the police reconstruction later shows that the whole situation only lasted a few minutes. Pider continues to struggle as she calls for help.

He falls over. Her concern for him and the change in Pider's eyes intensify her panic. She wishes she could escape, but the fear paralyses her so much that she is barely able to swallow and puts her hand over her mouth to stop herself from screaming.

It is precisely this accident that brings to light the conflict between accidents and the feelings or insensitivity associated with them, which has degenerated in her profession. When the narrator was questioned by the police, "Why did he go in?"

she kept answering "because you can't keep telling other people the worst".⁸

Interpretation

This is a very impressive and emotional piece of work that captures a moment of helplessness and despair. The immediacy and the description of the scene bring the situation to life. The alternation between thoughts and actions - such as the attempt to call the water rescue service and the reaction to go back to the beach - conveys a strong sense of time pressure and disorientation.

The stylistic choice to describe time as a 'bubble' illustrates well how the perception of time is distorted in extreme situations. The idea of the 'plastic clouds' also contributes to the surreal atmosphere, as if the moment doesn't feel quite real. The narrative is characterized by a reflective and introspective attitude in which the protagonist is confronted with a difficult phase in her life. The narrative of this story is heavily driven by quest-like elements, with characters embarking on a journey or mission, facing challenges, and undergoing personal transformation along the way. In this section, the elements of the quest narrative genre, including the presence of companions, a detailed portrayal of the protagonist's journey, the challenges encountered along the way, and the eventual transformation of the protagonist will be analyzed.

Companions

The narrative begins by emphasizing the significance of partners and companions, employing the pronoun 'we' to establish a sense of collective identity. The cohesion of the group is further highlighted using the term 'trio,' reinforcing the recognition of their unity and shared experience.

⁷ Draesner, 2011

⁸ Draesner 2011

„Die Finanzmärkte brachen ein, jeder sah aufs Geld, wir bündelten unsere Kraft. Versichern Sie sich, dass nichts fehlt.“

<“The financial markets collapsed, everyone looked at the money, we pooled our strength.”

“Trio infernale, trio inseguranza” <Trio vampires, trio insecure >: make sure nothing is missing.”⁹

The narrator consistently underscores the significance of companionship as a crucial element in achieving the goal of attracting or securing customers. This recurring emphasis highlights the strategic role that collaborative relationships play in the pursuit of this objective.

“However, Kolbe and I seemed too much like a couple. It seemed better to radiate an open group feeling of life, a ‘we’ that promised to liberate us from the boredom of family life.”¹⁰

To attract clients, they demonstrated a keen ability in observation, a skill that is repeatedly highlighted throughout the narrative as central to their success, particularly focusing on identifying the weaknesses or vulnerabilities of their clients, which they then leveraged to enhance their persuasive efforts.

“According to Kolbe, observation was what we did best. We specialised in observation.”

<“If the customer doesn't come to you, you go to him, fish him off where he is soft, unprotected.”>¹¹

This conveys a pragmatic, almost strategic attitude when dealing with customers. It's about taking the initiative and approaching the customer instead of waiting for them to come to you of their own accord. The expression ‘where he is soft, unprotected’ suggests that the right moment must be used when the customer is in a more vulnerable or less secure position to win him over to your own goal.

⁹ Draesner , 2011, P.76

¹⁰ Draesner 2011

¹¹ Draesner , 2011, P.78

Journey & Challenges

The characters faced significant challenges in attracting customers, ultimately selecting a resort that had been a favored location for leisure during previous holidays, due to its popularity with tourists. They employed a strategy of observing potential clients in the dining area before attempting to persuade or engage them, leveraging their understanding of customer behavior to increase the likelihood of successful interactions. Moreover they enjoyed the challenges of the holiday environment: staying highly aware and continuously scanning the surroundings, watching for any accidents, entanglements, or customers, all while maintaining a calm and composed appearance in an artistic manner.

Pider, who previously resided in his car, began his work early each day, strategically targeting potential clients. He skillfully used storytelling to persuade them of the risks they were facing, a tactic he employed so effectively that tourists were drawn in and began to listen to him attentively.

The narrator emphasized that the work of her companions was particularly challenging, as they were engaged in the complex task of selling emotions, a process that required both subtlety and skill to evoke the desired responses from their clients.

„Das Geschäft war nicht immer leicht, wir verkauften Emotionen, ohne selbst welche zu haben.....“

<The business was not always easy; we sold emotions without having any ourselves.....”>¹²

Transformation

In the context of a quest narrative, the process of transformation serves as a pivotal element in the evolution of the protagonist, the thematic underpinnings of the narrative, and the overarching arc of the tale. The protagonist is often depicted as undergoing substantial personal metamorphosis. The

¹² Translated by the author.

quest itself functions as a catalyst for this transformation, propelling the character beyond the boundaries of their comfort zone and compelling them to confront challenges that contribute to their personal development.

In this narrative the protagonist experiences a significant transformation that is characterized by both emotional and intellectual aspects. At the inception of the narrative, the protagonist is depicted as a woman navigating an unsatisfactory state, grappling with the challenges of life, responsibility, and uncertainty. The narrative is structured around themes such as identity, interpersonal relationships, and introspection concerning one's own existence.

The protagonist's transformation is predominantly an internal journey, characterized by a process of self-discovery and emotional growth. She grapples with the loss of her sense of security and the feeling of loss of control caused by various personal and social challenges. She is confronted with her own vulnerability, particularly in terms of her ability to exercise agency over her life and the events that affect her.

In the story, the protagonist manages to face up to this uncertainty and gain a new perspective on her life. She learns that she cannot control everything, but that she can still take responsibility for herself and her decisions. This realization leads to a kind of acceptance and a new beginning that changes her view of the world and of herself. It is a journey from a feeling of insecurity and loss of control to greater self-acceptance and acceptance of the reality of their own lives.

A close examination of quest narratives reveals their frequent incorporation of elements of descriptive scene narration. In the context of a quest narrative, the protagonist embarks on a journey or mission, and the narrative typically encompasses a variety of settings and challenges. The employment of descriptive scene narration is instrumental in fostering a vivid sense of place and atmosphere,

thereby engendering a sense of reader immersion in the narrative journey. For instance, how this narrator describes her client's youngest daughter:

*"Her little sister crawled over a floral blanket. She wore tulle-lined bikini bottoms over her Pampers and glittery baby sandals from Lillyfee. Obviously, the parents were prepared to spend money on their children, but not quite in good taste.... they needed guidance."*¹³

In this story Draesner employs descriptive narration to convey the sensory details of the seashore environments—including the sights, sounds, and textures the protagonist encounters. This technique adds depth to the narrative, builds tension, and helps to develop the emotional journey of the protagonist.

"The currents work quickly, and you must not rush to help under any circumstances, it means certain death."¹⁴

Conclusion

In *"be assured"*, Ulrike Draesner crafts a narrative that operates as a quest, where the protagonist embarks not on a traditional journey across landscapes, but on an internal exploration of her own identity, fears, and vulnerabilities. Like any classic quest, the protagonist confronts challenges through her relationship with her colleagues Kolbe and Pider, her sense of security, or the uncertainty of life itself. The narrative becomes a mirror reflecting the complexities of modern existence, where the external world and internal turmoil often intertwine. "Pider hadn't insured himself, which made me so happy that tears came to my eyes for the first time." Through descriptive scene narration, Draesner not only creates a vivid atmosphere but also underscores the emotional weight of the protagonist's experiences. Every moment in the story, from the mundane to the profound, serves to build a tapestry that speaks to

¹³ Draesner, 2011, P.81

¹⁴ Draesner, 2011

the larger quest of understanding oneself in the face of life's fragility and unpredictability. Life, as is commonly understood, is characterized by constant change, marked by unanticipated developments, challenges, and periods of ambiguity. The inherent fragility of life underscores the impermanence of all things. Individuals, interpersonal relationships, health, and the environment are all susceptible to change or loss. This inherent vulnerability can give rise to feelings of helplessness or fear, as individuals grapple with the realization that all our cherished possessions and experiences are impermanent. In conclusion, the protagonist's journey of transformation not only serves as a compelling exploration of personal growth but also embodies the key components of a traditional quest narrative. Through the challenges, trials, and eventual self-discovery, the story intricately weaves elements of the hero's journey, where the protagonist faces obstacles, learns from experiences, and ultimately returns to the world changed. The quest structure enhances the thematic exploration of identity, resilience, and the pursuit of purpose, underscoring the protagonist's evolution. By incorporating these quest elements, the story not only provides a rich and dynamic framework for the protagonist's transformation but also invites readers to reflect on their own potential for growth and self-discovery. In this way, the significance of the narrative lies not just in what is said, but in how it is told. Draesner uses the quest framework to explore the universal theme of seeking meaning in an uncertain world. The story

does not offer easy answers but instead invites readers to contemplate their own quests for meaning, security, and self-acceptance. The quest narrative in *this story* thus transforms a personal journey into a collective reflection on the challenges and complexities of life itself, reminding us that the most significant journeys are often those within.

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SACRIFICE AND SUFFERING: A STUDY OF DISABILITY AND MENTAL TRAUMA IN ROHINTON MISTRY'S *FAMILY MATTERS*

SUNITA CHATTANI

PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Banasthali University, Vanasthali, Rajasthan

Dr. TAMISHRA SWAIN

Assistant Professor, Department of English
Banasthali University, Vanasthali, Rajasthan

Abstract

In the novel Family Matters, Rohinton Mistry describes the dispositions of disabled personality of middle-class family dealing with emotional and mental stress. Through careful manipulation, the author manages the delicate relationships among the family members. Because of oppression, discrimination, and inequality, disabled people live on the periphery of society. In society, they are consistently treated differently. Because they do not conform to the social norms of what it means to be able-bodied, they experience social exclusion. Mistry's portrayal of Nariman Vakeel is a stereotypical illustration of how people with disabilities are portrayed in fiction; in this way, it acts as a counterpoint to the novels that follow. It demonstrates how disabled people are viewed as objects in society and are separated from the general population. But Nariman has no such liberty. Perhaps it is a natural occurrence for him to become less independent and more susceptible to his family's demands as he ages and his condition declines. The present article is going to focus on mental condition of a disabled man. Additionally, Mistry sheds light on the tragic consequences of India's inflexible social structures. Using Nariman's condition, he criticizes the Parsi community's contempt for old, sick, and disabled bodies as well as the oppressive social norms such as arranged marriages, parent-child relationships, and cultural homogeneity that control Indian society as it is depicted in the novel. The resulting oppression ultimately proves devastating to the characters. The novel portrays the Parsi community's emotions of disillusionment, alienation, and nostalgia.

Keywords: *disabled, identity, able-bodied, parkinson's disease, transformation, disillusionment, alienation, and mental trauma*

Introduction

Social stigma significantly influences the experiences of people with disabilities and their families in addition to direct abuse. Research shows that implicit prejudices against people with disabilities can result in unjust treatment and structural injustices, which can reinforce negative behaviors in families and communities. Fostering a more welcoming and encouraging environment for people with disabilities and their families requires an understanding of and commitment to addressing these negative behaviors.

The novel *Family Matters*, set in Mumbai, also deals with step children's the negative behavior towards disabled man. Mistry narrates the story of a middle-class Parsi family as they all attempt to deal with the declining health of the family's head, Nariman Vakeel, a retired professor of English literature with Parkinson's disease, who broke his ankle in a fall while crossing the street and was taken to the hospital. This study focuses on the psychological distress that people who have been forced into marriage, old age, or physical disability endure. The

purpose of the paper is to demonstrate how each of these circumstances whether emotional neglect, loss of autonomy, or social isolation contributes to mental trauma, with an emphasis on the factors that lead to psychological distress.

Disability and Mental Trauma

When physical impairments and the emotional and cognitive difficulties they bring coexist, mental trauma associated with physical disability becomes a serious psychological issue. Discrimination and stigma against people with disabilities are common, and they can lead to low self-esteem and feelings of loneliness. The way society views disability can make mental health problems worse, resulting in ongoing stress and emotional suffering. The time when children were raised in joint families, sharing the love and attention of the elders, was long gone. They are now nuclear families where everything is different due to the advancement of modernization. Nariman does not have many pleasant memories of his time at Chateau Felicity. Bed rest is advised after Nariman fractures his leg in spite of Jal and Coomy's care. Coomy looks after him for a few days, but he has Parkinson's disease in addition to a broken ankle. This news depresses Coomy, who is already tired of caring for the elderly man, especially when nature calls. Coomy and Jal are concerned about Nariman's fall or anything else that might happen in the apartment or outside due to his advanced Parkinson's disease. This worry causes Coomy to act as a strict headmistress over Nariman. "There were more rules regarding his meals, his cloths, his denture, his use of radiogram" (4) even to use washroom. Even though Nariman has wronged his family, he continues to be with Lucy Braganza, Coomy looks after his aging stepfather by saying whatever she does "was for his own good" (4). Nariman gets angry with Coomy and remarks "In my youth, my parents controlled me and destroyed those years. Thanks to them, I married your mother and

wrecked my middle years. Now you want to torment my old age. I won't allow it" "Such lies!" flared Coomy. "You ruined Mamma's life, and mine, and Jal's. I will not tolerate a word against her." (8) Because Coomy couldn't cope with the new, stench-filled environment, she took the dishonest step of keeping her stepfather away, who she had been resenting for the past thirty years. A week after the fall, the professor is moved into his daughter Roxana's tiny apartment, with the assurance that it will only be for a few days. As the days pass, Coomy's creative mind comes up with a clever scheme to keep the Professor from returning. To escape her obligations to Nariman, Coomy makes Jal use their neighbor Edul Munshi's hammer to strike the ceiling's plaster. To make the fake report of a "leaking roof" seem genuine, Jal carelessly makes holes in the ceiling and wets the damaged areas.

Nariman is in terrible pain on the inside as well as the outside, and he slowly nods off to sleep while reflecting on the past. Nariman still feels sorry for Lucy because of the terrible life she was leading. Lucy had given up her M.A. and was living at the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) after being abandoned by her parents and left by Nariman. His relationship with Lucy destroyed his marital life. One day, while Lucy and Yasmin are fighting on the roof of the building, Yasmin falls and dies.

Forced Marriage and Mental Trauma

Lucy and Nariman's true love is depicted by Mistry. In parsi community only inter-cast marriage is permitted. Since Nariman came from a traditional Parsi family, he was not permitted to wed his girlfriend Lucy. He is torn between tradition and love in his marriage to a widow, Yasmin added, and their two kids, Coomy and Jal. At a turning point in his life, Nariman suppressed his desires, which resurface in his dreams. The only conceivable explanation is that he buckled down under the pressure of his parents, who followed the social code.

Because Nariman's parents and their friends

instilled in him the belief that "traditional ways were the best," they arranged for him to marry a widow named Yasmin Contractor. They attempted to persuade him by telling, "that's the best you can expect, mister, with your history . . . your past is your handicap" (6). In this way Yasmin Contractor, with her two children, enters into the life of Nariman Vakeel, who considers this as "perhaps, was my first mistake" (17). As a result, Lucy becomes an ayah to the Arjani family. She goes insane and starts singing while standing on the terrace's edges because she can't stop thinking about Nariman. She falls off the terrace and is saved by Nariman.

Old Age and Mental Trauma

Old age becomes a curse for those who are elderly. The current generation must never forget that they are the foundation's ancestors. Mistry portrays the suffering endured by elderly Nariman who is ill and neglected. Expecting love and care from the children is quite normal for people of that age. The true attitude of a person appears when reality must be faced. Coomy reveals her true self when the elderly man breaks his left ankle after falling into a ditch dug by the telephone company. It was two ration shop employees who brought him nearly unconscious. The inconsiderate, calculating Coomy pays them little "bakshis" by saying, "whether they were lifting Pappa or a gunny of rice or furniture? Load and distance was the main thing. And just because Pappa is hurt doesn't mean money grows on trees" (44). Coomy is happy when Nariman is sent to Roxana's house, even though she still finds Nariman's room's foul odor annoying. In a lighthearted manner, she addresses Jal as Lady Macbeth. "All the perfumes of Arabia, all your swabbing and scrubbing and mopping and scouring will not remove it".(104)

Conclusion

Thus, one thing about life is very clear that it's not a bed of roses. The way that each person defines life is different. One's personal emotional strength determines how they view. A disabled man's isolation from his own family has an impact on his mental health, as Rohinton Mistry explains. Identity destruction is caused by physical disability, aging, forced marriage, caste, and community customs, *Family Matters* forces the reader to look within. The reader follows his internal conflict as he progresses through the book. Mistry highlights the importance of gaining knowledge from the elderly, not only through their words but also through their wisdom and experiences. *Family Matters* makes it very clear to the reader that life and family are one and the same "And without family, nothing else matters, everything from top to bottom falls apart or descends into chaos, which is basically the malady of the west". (182)

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EMPOWERING THE SILENCED: ANALYSIS OF KALAINAR M. KARUNANIDHI AND ARUNDHATI ROY AS POLITICAL WRITERS

SHYLA. M

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Noorul Islam Centre for Higher Education, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. J. SHEILA

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Noorul Islam Centre for Higher Education, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Kalaigarnar M. Karunanidhi and Arundhati Roy are two prominent Indian political writers who have significantly influenced the political landscape through their distinct approaches and styles. Karunanidhi, a politician and writer from Tamil Nadu, focused on Tamil nationalism, socialism, and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities. His political writings, including short stories and speeches, were characterized by eloquence, wit, and a strong connection with the masses. In contrast, Roy, an author and activist, addresses a broader range of global political and social issues in her novels, essays, and commentaries. Her work, known for its literary and narrative-driven style, fearlessly challenges authority and advocates for the oppressed. This comparative study examines the lives and works of these two influential figures, highlighting their roles as voices for the voiceless. Karunanidhi's tenure as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was marked by progressive policies and reforms aimed at uplifting the poor and marginalized, while Roy's activism has raised awareness about critical issues such as human rights, environmental justice, and socio-economic disparities. Despite facing criticism and challenges, both Karunanidhi and Roy have remained committed to their causes, inspiring others to pursue social justice and empowering those who lack a voice in society.

Keywords: *political writers, marginalized people, social justice, tamil nationalism, global issues.*

Introduction

Kalaigarnar M. Karunanidhi and Arundhati Roy are prominent figures in the realm of political literature. Both individuals have significantly influenced the political landscape of Indian literature through their published speeches. They have articulated their perspectives on the challenges faced by the Indian populace during their respective eras through various literary forms, including short stories and dramas by Karunanidhi, and novels and screenplays by Roy. Although both are distinguished in their fields, they approach political writing from divergent perspectives and exhibit distinct stylistic approaches. Karunanidhi and Roy operate within different domains and are separated by an age difference of approximately

thirty-eight years. Born on June 3, 1924, in Tamil Nadu, Karunanidhi's political writings predominantly centred on Tamil nationalism and socialism. He was a fervent advocate for Tamil rights and the establishment of a socialist state in India, often employing a fiery and polemical style to critique the government and ruling classes. In contrast, Roy, born on November 24, 1961, in Meghalaya, addresses a broader spectrum of themes in her political writings, including environmental issues and the war on terrorism. Her work is characterized by analytical and contemplative prose, and she is unafraid to challenge authority. A comprehensive examination of the lives and works of these two individuals will facilitate a comparison of the distinct paths they traversed to

achieve a shared objective: to serve as the voice for the marginalized.

Karunanidhi: Practical Politician of Common Man

M. Karunanidhi (3 June 1924 – 7 August 2018), whose full name was Muthuvel Karunanidhi, was a distinguished Indian politician and a pivotal figure in Tamil Nadu's political landscape for several decades. He was born on June 3, 1924, in Thirukkuvalai, a small village in Tamil Nadu, India. Karunanidhi hailed from a humble background, with his parents, Ayyadurai Muthuvel and Anjugam, belonging to the Isai Vellalar caste, a community of musicians who perform at temples and social gatherings. His upbringing in a caste-stratified society prompted him to reflect on the oppressive conditions faced by individuals born into so-called lower castes. Karunanidhi was an academically gifted student, excelling in his studies. He completed his primary education in Thirukkuvalai and developed an early interest in politics. He was significantly influenced by the Dravidian movement, a social and political initiative aimed at advancing the rights of the Dravidian people of Tamil Nadu. In 1949, he joined the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), a political party founded by C. N. Annadurai. Karunanidhi rapidly ascended the ranks of the DMK, being elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1957 and serving as Minister for Public Works in the DMK government from 1962 to 1967. Following Annadurai's death in 1969, Karunanidhi succeeded him as the leader of the DMK. Karunanidhi served as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for five terms: from 1969 to 1971, 1971 to 1976, 1989 to 1991, 1996 to 2001, and 2006 to 2011. He was renowned as a popular and charismatic leader, noted for his wit and his ability to connect with the people of Tamil Nadu.

Karunanidhi was a distinguished politician and a prolific writer and playwright. He made significant contributions to Tamil literature, including the composition of short stories. His political writings

frequently addressed themes of Tamil nationalism, the Dravidian movement, and social justice for the common populace. Writing in Tamil, he was renowned for his eloquent and persuasive speeches, which seamlessly integrated literary and political elements. His short stories are often situated within the context of the Dravidian movement, exploring themes of social justice, economic equality, and Tamil nationalism. Karunanidhi's writings predominantly centred on regional Tamil politics and issues pertinent to the State of Tamil Nadu, such as language rights, caste issues, and Dravidian ideology. He was a master of political rhetoric, known for his witty wordplay and clever allusions, which enabled him to connect with his audience on an emotional level. He was frequently regarded as a champion for the voiceless and marginalized segments of society. Karunanidhi's Dravidian movement sought to uplift socially and economically disadvantaged communities in Tamil Nadu. He consistently advocated for social justice, equal opportunities, and the rights of historically marginalized groups, including Dalits and backward classes. He played a pivotal role in promoting the Tamil language and ensuring its prominence in government, education, and administration. His efforts in this regard contributed to empowering Tamil-speaking communities and preserving their linguistic and cultural identity.

Karunanidhi was not only a politician and writer but also a charismatic and influential orator, consistently captivating audiences with his compelling speeches. His adeptness at connecting with individuals through his rhetoric significantly contributed to his political career, establishing him as a prominent figure in India for several decades. He frequently addressed issues of injustice and inequality, and despite the length of his speeches, they remained engaging. His ability to maintain audience interest, even when discussing complex topics, was notable. Furthermore, he was a master

storyteller, often employing narratives to elucidate his arguments. Karunanidhi's speeches were frequently controversial, as he was unafraid to express his opinions, even when they involved opposing individuals and policies. He was also skilled in political critique, often utilizing his speeches to challenge his adversaries. He consistently harnessed the power of his words to advocate for those unable to speak for themselves.

Karunanidhi played a pivotal role in shaping Tamil Nadu's infrastructure and implementing progressive policies. His tenure was marked by significant land and educational reforms, including the provision of free education for all citizens regardless of caste or income, and the construction of schools across the state. He prioritized healthcare accessibility, establishing free medical services and building hospitals in rural areas. Karunanidhi was a staunch advocate for the rights of marginalized groups, particularly Dalits and women, enacting laws to protect women and children from practices like child marriage and dowry. In 1989, he passed landmark legislation granting women equal rights in family properties and made Tamil Nadu the first state to reserve 30% of government jobs for women. His commitment to social justice led to the establishment of institutions such as the Tamil Nadu Social Welfare Board and Tamil Nadu Women's Development Corporation. Karunanidhi was also a fervent promoter of Tamil culture and language, contributing significantly to the state's social and cultural development. He strongly opposed the imposition of Hindi as India's national language, advocating for linguistic pluralism and respect for all languages.

Karunanidhi's efforts to enhance the lives of the impoverished and marginalized were met with significant challenges. He encountered resistance from vested interests and frequently faced criticism for his policies. As a political writer, Karunanidhi grappled with the task of effectively communicating his ideas to the general populace. He adeptly

addressed this challenge by employing the medium of short stories, which were readily comprehensible to the public. Despite these obstacles, he remained steadfast in his dedication to serving the people of Tamil Nadu. He is commemorated as an advocate for the voiceless, and his legacy continues to inspire individuals throughout India.

Roy: Common Man's Activist

Roy is a prominent contemporary Indian author and activist, renowned for articulating her perspectives on various facets of her homeland through her literary works. Born as Suzanna Arundhati Roy on November 24, 1961, in Shillong, Meghalaya, India, she is the daughter of a Malayali Syrian Christian mother and a Bengali Hindu father. Her diverse heritage and the abrupt divorce of her parents exposed her to experiences of caste and gender discrimination during her childhood, themes she explores in her Booker Prize-winning novel, *The God of Small Things*. Roy is acclaimed for her novels, essays, and social commentaries. Although not a politician, she engages profoundly with political and social issues through her writing, which is characterized by a literary and narrative-driven style. Her works seamlessly blend fiction and non-fiction, addressing a broad array of global political and social issues, often employing vivid and evocative language. Roy's oeuvre encompasses a wide range of global concerns, including human rights, environmental issues, corporate globalization, anti-war activism, and socio-economic disparities. Unafraid to challenge her readers, her writings frequently convey a strong moral message. While she is not a politician, her political writings have exerted a global influence and garnered international acclaim and recognition.

Roy is renowned as an activist who consistently articulates her perspectives on social and political issues, both domestically and internationally. Her activism has led to her arrest and detention on multiple occasions, and she has frequently been the

recipient of death threats. Roy is a courageous and outspoken advocate for marginalized populations. Her works frequently address the concerns of ordinary citizens and challenge entrenched power structures. Her efforts have significantly contributed to raising awareness of critical issues and empowering those engaged in the pursuit of justice. Roy serves as an inspiration to many individuals globally, providing a powerful voice for those who are often overlooked or silenced.

Roy is acclaimed for her unwavering commitment to advocating for marginalized groups, including indigenous communities, lower-caste individuals, and those affected by government policies and corporate interests. Through her powerful essays, speeches, and books, she amplifies the voices of the oppressed and sheds light on a wide array of social justice issues, ranging from land rights and environmental justice to economic inequality and human rights violations. Roy's activism extends to environmental causes, particularly in the context of large-scale development projects like the Narmada Dam, where she has criticized the exploitation of natural resources. Her outspoken stance against globalization, neoliberal economic policies, and military interventions has garnered significant attention, with Roy fearlessly expressing her opinions on topics such as the United States' military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the Indian government's military occupation of Kashmir. Known for her willingness to challenge authority figures and institutions, including governments, political leaders, and corporations, Roy has also been a staunch defender of environmental activists like Medha Patkar and Binayak Sen, who have faced arrest and detention for their advocacy work.

Roy's contributions have profoundly influenced public discourse in India. While she has faced criticism for her forthrightness, she has also been lauded for her bravery and unwavering dedication to

social justice. Her work serves as a poignant reminder of the collective responsibility to oppose injustice and advocate for those unable to do so themselves. Roy exemplifies a fearless and vocal champion for the marginalized, demonstrating that it is possible to confront power and effect meaningful change. She continues to inspire numerous individuals engaged in the pursuit of social justice. Her efforts have significantly heightened awareness of critical social and political issues and have empowered those striving for justice.

Conclusion

Karunanidhi and Roy are two of the most influential figures in Indian politics and literature, respectively. Both have utilized their platforms to advocate for the marginalized and voiceless, garnering both acclaim and criticism for their activism. Despite being controversial figures, they are undeniably significant voices within Indian society. They have consistently challenged the status quo and spoken truth to power, inspiring many others to follow suit. Their contributions continue to be the subject of discussion and analysis across India. Although both Karunanidhi and Roy have faced criticism for their activism, they have remained steadfast in their commitment to their causes, continuing to serve as vital advocates for the voiceless in India. Their efforts have significantly contributed to raising awareness about the plight of the marginalized and oppressed, motivating others to take action. Despite facing criticism for their outspoken nature, both individuals have persisted in their dedication to advocating for the voiceless. Both Karunanidhi and Roy have left an indelible mark on Indian society, shaping public discourse and policy in significant ways. Their legacies continue to influence contemporary debates on social equality, human rights, and political reform in India.

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ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING TO DEVELOP THEIR LISTENING SKILL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO 'VOA' APPLICATION

JESINTH FLOWERNS. J

PhD Research Scholar

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Dr. S. MERCY GNANA GANDHI

Professor

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Abstract

The goal of the current research is to examine how first year polytechnic students respond to VOA app's assistance for listening comprehension. First, 50 students from two different courses were included in this study's quasi-experimental methodology. Twenty students made up the experimental group, while thirty made up the control group. Both groups took a standardised listening exam to find the students' entry level performance of listening skills. Following that, six activities created with the VOA app were applied to the experimental group, including discussions, sentence-fill exercises, group work, games, and foreign language sentences. This research lasted for three weeks and consisted of two classes via the platform provided by the team. A post-test was administered to both groups in order to draw comparison of the results at the end of the treatment. The experimental group exhibited a higher score, suggesting a significant enhancement in the listening proficiency of the students.

Keywords: *VOA app, listening skill, polytechnic students, quai-experimental, activities*

Introduction

English Language Learning

Genç (2016) asserts that the attainment of the English language is regarded as a crucial and pressing matter across the globe. Irrespective of geographical location or age, proficiency in the English language is deemed indispensable for individuals.

The Teacher-student involvement is important in the English language teaching and in the process of learning. The success or failure of this process heavily relies on their roles, as the ultimate goal is effective communication.

According to Ilmu (2015), the instruction of the English language involves the exchange of ideas, opinions, and experiences. Consequently, the acquisition of the English language necessitates proficient instructors who possess a suitable

pedagogical approach to facilitate an accurate instructional procedure. These educators must possess the capacity to identify diverse student profiles, their learning styles, and their cognitive challenges.

Receptive Skills

The communicative approach incorporates receptive skills, which facilitate the establishment of a connection between educators and learners, and are integral to language acquisition. The receptive skills, also referred to as passive skills, encompass the abilities of reading and listening. These skills enable individuals to decipher the intended meaning of a written or spoken message, and to extract and process information through the act of reading and hearing. (Archana & Somasundaram, 2017).

According to Al-Jawi's (2010) assertion, the

comprehension abilities of individuals can be identified as a mechanism through which they derive significance from spoken language. It is noteworthy that when a student initially enrolls in a language course at the introductory level, they are unable to generate output in the target language. Despite this, the student begins to utilize their receptive skills from the outset. Although the student may not be able to relate the sounds presented on the worksheet with their corresponding meanings, they are already engaging in receptive processing. This skill will prove beneficial in acquiring information, as the student will inevitably need to communicate in various contexts, such as during conversations where they may transition from speaker to listener, or when reading written material.

Listening Comprehension

The practise of listening skill can offer valuable insights in the enhancement of listening skills. The acquisition of listening skills may pose a challenge for students, thereby presenting an opportunity for educators to transform their listening activities into more dynamic ones. Yin (2015) posited that there has been an increasing focus on the role of listening skills and exploratory factors in emotional listening skill within the field of second language acquisition. It is imperative that listening skill exercises provide substantial opportunities for practise that are engaging enough to capture the attention of students.

According to Aynur's (2019) definition, listening skill comprises various subskills that enable learners to actively listen for specific information. Hence, it is deemed to be. The act of listening for gist pertains to obtaining a broad understanding of a given subject matter. Conversely, listening for specific information necessitates a heightened level of attentiveness towards particular details within a speech. Listening for specific information and comprehending, while also being able to identify any errors or discrepancies. Ultimately, the act of discerning

attitude requires the deduction of the emotional state that the speaker is conveying.

A crucial aspect of any listening comprehension exercise in a language classroom is the presence of a predetermined objective, which is essential for achieving optimal efficacy. (Safranji, 2015). The objective at hand pertains to linguistics, specifically to enhance the auditory understanding abilities of students. Providing students with foreknowledge of the expected response type can serve as a catalyst for purposeful listening. This approach enables students to anticipate the type of information that will be presented and respond accordingly. For instance, the teacher may prompt students to concentrate on particular details prior to audio playback. The ability to communicate effectively in English involves a set of interrelated processes that are essential for successful comprehension and response. These processes include pre-listening, listening, and post-listening, which collectively enable the listener to accurately interpret and respond to the communication at hand. The process of listening comprehension involves intricate cognitive processes that begin with the initial reception of the sound wave associated with a particular utterance and culminate in the comprehensive interpretation of its intended significance. (Kim, 2017). Listening skill is a dynamic ability that requires active engagement from the interpreter. Its purpose extends beyond the mere identification of familiar components and instead involves the cultivation of the capacity to interpret novel messages.

The process of comprehending spoken language holds a crucial significance in the pedagogy of English language instruction. Hence, it can be considered a communicative endeavour that surpasses linguistic and cultural barriers, while simultaneously re-articulating in a target language what was earlier conveyed in an output language. In order to strike a correlation between listening skill and interpretation, it is appropriate to investigate the

factors that are involved in both methods. By identifying commonalities between these processes, it is possible to gain insight into how they occur at a metacognitive level, based on existing theories.

Research Objectives

- The aim of this study is to find the various applications of the Voice of America mobile (VOA) application in enhancing listening skills.
- The objective is to assess the extent of students' listening skill.
- The objective is to explicate the ways in which the VOA application enhances one's listening comprehension.

Mobile Application

Mobile applications designed for educational purposes in the English language have been developed with the aim of comprehending the present and prospective state of learning. Moreover, it has been observed that the utilisation of mobile phones in the context of English language Learning has introduced novel paradigms with the objective of enhancing the overall learning encounter. Thus, the implementation of app-based learning strategies facilitates the cultivation of an interactive classroom environment.

The utilisation of educational mobile applications offers the benefit of flexible access, allowing for global learning opportunities that transcend temporal and spatial limitations. Thus, the acquisition of knowledge via a mobile application is not merely a learning tactic, but rather a fundamental skill. Nevertheless, by shifting the emphasis of their use towards educational purposes, significant benefits and advantages can be derived in terms of language acquisition and knowledge consolidation in English. (Khalitova & Gimaletdinova, 2016).

Voa (Voice of America) Application

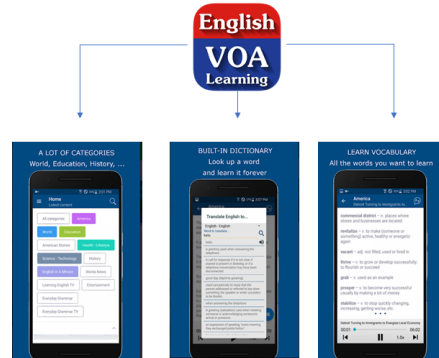


Figure 1 User Interface of VOA Application

The VOA is a prominent global multimedia news entity based in the United States. It provides news and information in over 45 languages to individuals who have limited or no access to independent media. Established in the year 1942, the Voice of America (VOA) is dedicated to providing comprehensive, impartial, and veracious news coverage. Moreover, the The United States Agency for Global Media provides financial support to Voice of America (VOA) as a constituent entity. The legal provisions that protect VOA journalists from any type of coercion, manipulation, or submission to government or political authorities ensure the preservation of VOA's mission and editorial independence.

Kyaw and Hlaing (2020) have defined VOA as an acronym for Voice of America. The primary goal is to furnish information to a vast number of individuals who are learning the English language. The educational content provided by this application has been widely embraced due to its efficacy in enhancing the learning process. Moreover, it enables English language learners worldwide to enhance their proficiency in the English language on a daily basis. The pedagogical platform comprises narratives and instructional materials, in addition to current news broadcasts, composed in uncomplicated language and enunciated at a pace conducive to facilitating student comprehension.

The utilisation of language learning applications, such as VOA, is deemed more effective due to their provision of diverse contextual settings, repetitive exercises, self-directed learning opportunities, and motivational features. (Wahyudi, 2013). Moreover, this software has been developed with the aim of facilitating enhanced comprehension and proficiency in the English language. This application enables users to access instructional materials in various formats, including text, audio, and video, from any location with mobile connectivity. Additionally, learners can expand their knowledge of American culture, history, and current events.

According to Nan and Mingfang's (2009) research, the VOA provides educators with a unique opportunity to develop all four language skills, with a particular focus on making vocabulary easily accessible for speaking and writing. It is noteworthy to mention that certain characteristics of this application include: The process of monitoring and documenting audio recordings is prioritised through the utilisation of transcriptions that are regularly highlighted and scrolled to facilitate attentive listening. Additionally, the ability to regulate the playback speed and enable automatic reoccurrence options are also incorporated. The application alters the reading proficiency by allowing users to customise the background color, text color, and text size. Additionally, it enables users to save and synchronise their preferred stories across various devices, explore published content, and search for unfamiliar words while reading.

The multimedia application in question is classified as an educational tool, specifically designed for mobile electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, PCs, and PDAs. Its purpose is to facilitate learning through interactive features. The VOA application integrates educational principles, instructional strategies, and technological tools to enhance the efficacy of all participants engaged in the educational process. The system employs

uncomplicated navigation mechanisms that are amenable to a diverse range of devices, thereby satisfying the criteria of accessibility, expediency, and pervasiveness of said devices.

Research Methodology

The study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The utilisation of statistical and mathematical tools to obtain results is a fundamental aspect of the quantitative method, which enables the collection and analysis of data from various sources. Conversely, the qualitative methodology centres on comprehending the phenomena by investigating them through the lens of the participants' viewpoint within an organic setting for their analysis. The present investigation employed mixed-method approach, including both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. The qualitative component was utilised to apply interpretive techniques in order to explicate the primary challenges associated with listening skills among high school students in their third year of study. The study utilised a quantitative approach to manage the statistical data gathered from the field and evaluate the hypothesis.

Research Design

• Quasi – Experimental

This type of research is a research design that exhibits some features of an experimental study, but involves the comparison of responses among non-equivalent groups of subjects. The groups under consideration include the experimental group, which is subjected to the stimulus and the control group, which functions solely as a reference point for drawing comparison, as it does not receive any form of treatment.

The experimental group was comprised of students in parallel "A," while the control group consisted of students in parallel "B." Subsequent to this, a pre-test was administered to both cohorts,

following which the experimental group underwent a 3-week intervention utilising the VOA application to enhance their auditory acuity, while the control group persisted with conventional pedagogical practises. Subsequently, the post-test was administered to both cohorts to contrast the-test outcomes attained in each group of students.

Population and Sample

The selection of this particular group of students was based on their convenience for the collection of data and their active participation in the planned work. Given the limited size and ease of accessibility of the population in question, a decision was made to forego sample calculation and instead utilise the entire population as the sample. Additionally, the selection of samples was evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Individuals who expressed a desire to participate in the research study.
- The cohort under consideration comprises individuals who took part in pre- and post-tests.
- Participants in the experimental group are engaged in a minimum of 60% of the activities suggested through the VOA application.

Following the application, the experimental group consisted of 25 students while the control group comprised 25 students, resulting in a total of 50 students.

Experimental Group	25
Control Group	25
Total	50

Table.1 Population and sample

Procedure

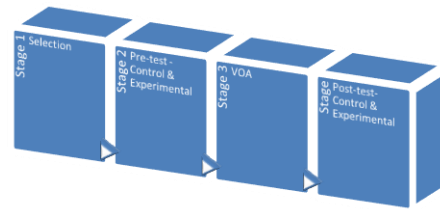


Figure 2 Stages of conducting the Quai – Experimental Design

• Stage-1

The investigator delineated the aims and consequences of the study. At this juncture, the research cohorts were chosen, alongside the synchronisation of the timetables for the administration of assessments and tasks utilising the VOA application.

• Stage – 2

During the second phase, a pre-test was given to students in control and experimental groups. Subsequent to this procedure, the undertakings to be executed in the VOA application were deliberated with the pupils, elucidating the manifold alternatives of this electronic instrumentality, thereby enabling them to avail of it beyond the intervention.

• Stage -3

During this phase, the researcher conducted six listening exercises using the pre-selected VOA application. The activities were implemented over a period of three weeks, with a frequency of two sessions per week, each session lasting for a duration of 30 minutes.

The proposed activities encompassed the initiation of an action plan that entailed the implementation of dynamics and listening games. Subsequently, the students utilised the VOA application to enhance and consolidate their auditory abilities, culminating in a feedback session.

The activities carried out in the VOA app were of an applied nature and can be enumerated as follows:

- **Activity-1**

The subject matter that was assigned for study pertained to prepositions. An introductory exercise, known as the "preposition shower," was carried out to provide a refresher on the topic. Subsequently, the VOA application's video titled "They arrested him right there" was employed, wherein a narrative concerning a criminal act was recounted, and the pupils were tasked with the activity of aural comprehension and transcription of prepositions. Upon the conclusion of the class, the participants collaborated to complete a group crossword puzzle utilising the provided solutions.

- **Activity – 2**

The subject matter that was assigned for study pertained to the grammatical category of adjectives. Subsequently, the listening activity titled "Word Stress and Adjectives" was employed. The participants were segregated into two distinct teams and were tasked with actively listening and transcribing the adjectives. Upon the conclusion of the class, both cohorts exchange their respective notes.

- **Activity-3**

The focus of the assignment was centred on enhancing listening comprehension skills. The research methodology employed in this study involved the utilisation of a game known as "the broken phone." The researcher initiated the game by transmitting a word sourced from the VOA application for a student, who subsequently relayed it to another student. This process was repeated until all participants had taken part. The aforementioned task was conducted utilising internal auditory means. Subsequently, the VOA application was employed within the "Movies" category, wherein the pupils were

required to attentively listen to news pertaining to particular movies and video games, so as to respond to targeted inquiries towards the conclusion of the session.

- **Activity-4**

The students were engaged in the task of listening and repeating simple expressions from the VOA app while embodying various emotional states such as grief, happiness, and anger. Subsequently, the VOA application was employed, wherein the video titled "Can you come to the party" was disseminated, prompting the pupils to document particular facets of the invitation, including the venue, date, time, and the theme of the gathering.

Stage - 4:

During the final phase, a post-test was given to students in control and experimental groups in order to draw a comparison of the results and confirm the hypothesis.

Analysis and Discussion:

The present research employed quasi-experimental methodology to demonstrate the outcomes achieved in two distinct cohorts of students. The experimental group was subjected to the intervention while the control group solely underwent pre-test and post-test evaluations. Conversely, the pupils belonging to the experimental cohort engaged in six distinct activities utilising the VOA application. Similarly, they underwent assessments both prior to and following the experimental intervention.

The utilisation of the T-test facilitated a comparison of the outcomes, thereby establishing a statistically noteworthy distinction between the means of two distinct groups. This section provides an overview of the test measures for both groups.

Pre-Test Results in the Control Group *Control Group Pre-Test*

Table 3 – Pre-test results – Control Group

Students	Post-test – Control Group			Post-test – Experimental Group		
	Part-1	Part -2	Part – 3	Part-1	Part - 2	Part – 3
1	1	1	1	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2	3	2
3	2	1	1	2	2	2
4	1	1	1	2	2	2
5	2	1	2	2	2	2
6	2	1	2	3	3	3
7	1	1	1	2	2	2
8	2	2	1	2	2	2
9	2	2	2	2	2	3
10	2	1	1	2	2	2
11	1	1	1	2	2	2
12	1	1	1	3	3	2
13	2	2	2	2	2	2
14	2	1	1	2	2	2
15	2	1	1	3	3	3
16	2	1	2	2	2	3
17	2	2	1	3	3	2
18	1	1	1	2	3	2
19	2	2	2	2	2	2
20	2	2	2	2	2	3
21	1	1	1	2	2	2
22	2	2	2	2	2	2
23	1	1	1	3	3	3
24	1	1	1	2	2	2
25	2	2	2	2	2	2
Average	1.7	1.4	1.4	2.2	2.3	2.4

Analysis

The initial assessment outcomes of the experimental group were comparable to those of the control group. The initial segment yielded an arithmetic mean of 1.5, followed by a subsequent segment with a mean of 1.1, and a final segment with a mean of 1.2.

As a result, it can be observed that both groups exhibited inadequacies in their listening skills, specifically in relation to pedagogical considerations. This issue highlights that, beyond deficits in attention and concentration, there exist inadequacies in auditory discrimination stemming from insufficient training in this skill. Consequently, students experience confusion, stress, and frustration as they

struggle to comprehend sentence meaning and regulate activity rhythm.

Therefore, it is imperative for educators to prioritise the development of listening comprehension skills by implementing effective strategies that facilitate genuine engagement with the language. This is particularly crucial given that the majority of listening comprehension practise takes place within the classroom, often in a superficial manner, compounded by the inherent reticence of students. Consequently, students experience a sense of passivity and apprehension when exposed to authentic situations, thereby impeding their comprehension of the conveyed message.

The initial assessment outcomes of the experimental group were comparable to those of the control group. The initial segment yielded an arithmetic mean of 1.3, followed by a mean of 1.4 in the subsequent segment, and a mean of 1.3 in the final segment.

As a result, it was observed that both groups exhibited deficiencies in their listening skills, specifically in relation to pedagogical concerns. This issue highlights the presence of auditory discrimination deficiencies, which, in conjunction with deficits in attention and concentration, can lead to confusion, stress, and frustration among students. These difficulties may arise from insufficient training in this skill, resulting in an inability to comprehend sentence meaning and regulate activity rhythm.

Therefore, it is imperative for educators to prioritise the development of listening comprehension skills by implementing effective strategies that facilitate genuine engagement with the language. This is particularly crucial as the majority of listening comprehension practise takes place within the classroom setting, often lacking in depth and compounded by the inherent reticence of students. Consequently, students experience a sense of passivity and apprehension when exposed to

authentic scenarios, thereby impeding their comprehension of the conveyed message.

Post-test – Control Group				Post-test – Experimental Group		
Students	Part-1	Part -2	Part – 3	Part-1	Part - 2	Part – 3
1	1	1	1	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2	3	2
3	2	1	1	2	2	2
4	1	1	1	2	2	2
5	2	1	2	2	2	2
6	2	1	2	3	3	3
7	1	1	1	2	2	2
8	2	2	1	2	2	2
9	2	2	2	2	2	3
10	2	1	1	2	2	2
11	1	1	1	2	2	2
12	1	1	1	3	3	2
13	2	2	2	2	2	2
14	2	1	1	2	2	2
15	2	1	1	3	3	3
16	2	1	2	2	2	3
17	2	2	1	3	3	2
18	1	1	1	2	3	2
19	2	2	2	2	2	2
20	2	2	2	2	2	3
21	1	1	1	2	2	2
22	2	2	2	2	2	2
23	1	1	1	3	3	3
24	1	1	1	2	2	2
25	2	2	2	2	2	2
Average	1.7	1.4	1.4	2.2	2.3	2.4

Analysis

Upon conducting a subsequent assessment on the control group, superior outcomes were achieved in comparison to the initial findings. The examination was identical to the original one, and the pupils were able to identify various components.

Despite the fact that the mean scores achieved across the three sections of the examination indicated persistent shortcomings in listening comprehension, with scores of 1.7, 1.4, and 1.4 in parts one, two, and three respectively, this outcome is a cause for concern. It highlights the need for intensive pedagogical intervention to address issues related to attentiveness, concentration, information

recognition, and general audio discrimination, in order to enable successful completion of specific tasks.

The findings suggest that a deficiency in targeted pedagogical interventions contributes to the persistence and prolongation of difficulties in listening comprehension throughout an individual's academic trajectory. The study employed a control group to illustrate that a significant proportion of students persisted in the concerned area owing to the restricted amount of work accomplished within this group. This was established by comparing the initial and final outcomes.

The results of the second evaluation in the experimental group were comparatively more positive, as they yielded superior outcomes, all of which exceeded a score of 2. The initial segment yielded an arithmetic mean of 2.2, the subsequent segment produced a mean of 2.3, and the final segment resulted in a mean of 2.4.

The aforementioned findings indicate the advancement of the students as they transitioned from a state of apprehension or inadequacy (L-1) to a standard level (L-2). At Level two, students demonstrated the ability to utilise interference in order to deduce the meaning of words or phrases, despite having limited listening comprehension. This allowed them to partially fulfil the requirements of the activities, albeit with the need for specific work.

The findings indicate that the utilisation of the VOA application in conjunction with supplementary support initiatives facilitated the enhancement of listening comprehension.

Results in Comparison

Initial and Final Results in the Control Group

Table 6 Control group Pre-test-Post-test

Evaluation	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Global
Pre-test	1.5	1.1	1.2	3.0
Post-test	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.27

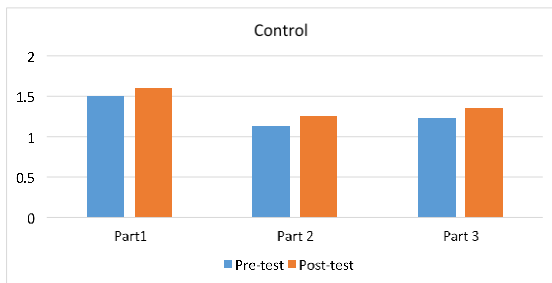


Figure 1 Control Group Pre-test - Post-test

Initial and Final Results in the Experimental Group

Table 7 Experimental Group Pre-Test- Post-Test

Evaluation	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Global
Pre-test	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.4
Post-test	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.4

Source: Initial and final Evaluation

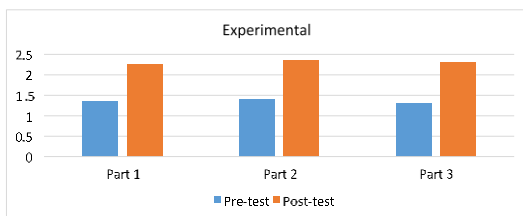


Figure 2 Experimental Group Pre-test- Post-test

Discussion

The primary outcome of the present study indicates that utilising the VOA application enhances students' listening comprehension. The aforementioned can be attributed to the progression of students from a substandard level, which was marked by a restricted lexicon, deficient comprehension framework, incapacity to comprehend spontaneous speech, decreased self-assurance, and impaired focus, to a satisfactory level. This positive outcome is noteworthy as it signifies that the students' deficiencies were addressed, and they exhibited improved concentration and attentiveness to details,

ultimately leading to better comprehension of auditory information.

The findings presented herein bear resemblance to those documented in the research conducted by Alavijeh and Marandi (2019). The study in question initiated an examination of the efficacy of VOA Special English for Persian Learners, a highly frequented website among Iranian English learners. The utilisation of contemporary technology in the creation of cultural products and special programs, which are disseminated through mass media, has a significant impact on the thoughts and lifestyles of students, thereby effectively promoting American culture.

Conclusion

Following the completion of the research, various current studies utilising the Voa app were identified through bibliographical browsing, demonstrating positive outcomes in the English language teaching and learning process. Hence, the evaluation of the application's content quality can be ascertained through the aforementioned studies, thereby enabling students to engage in classroom activities through the use of technology. Subsequently, it was demonstrated that the Voa application comprised diverse contextualised categories, including but not limited to daily news, art, culture, expressions, and foreign language grammar through audio and video materials. The utilisation of this application fostered students' engagement in learning and facilitated the enhancement of their listening abilities.

- In the course of conducting the research, the preliminary assessment administered to experimental and control groups produced initial outcomes on a metric ranging from 1 (inadequate) to 2 (satisfactory) based on the listening proficiency rubric. As a result, the experimental group was subjected to various activities including completion exercises, cyclic tasks, group division, gaming, and open-ended questioning, all of which

were facilitated through the utilisation of the Voa application. Moreover, the aforementioned activities facilitated the students' motivation towards the research process.

- The implementation of six activities utilising the Voa application yielded favourable outcomes in the post-assessment, facilitating a comparative analysis. Additionally, it was noted that there was a global increase of 2.3 during the acquisition of the ultimate outcomes. Furthermore, the study participants demonstrated notable progress in section 2 (2.35), succeeded by section 3 (2.3), and section 1. (2.25). Thus, the utilisation of the application exhibited efficacy in the pedagogical process for the experimental cohort.
- The present study's conclusive findings indicate that the Voa application made a significant contribution to the academic expertise of third-year students enrolled. Similarly, the substance of the application facilitated the enhancement of the learners' listening comprehension and enabled them to comprehend the language in an imaginative manner.

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NATURE'S INFLUENCE ON CATHERINE MORLAND IN JANE AUSTEN'S *NORTHANGER ABBEY*

T. ABRAHAM

*UG Student, Department of English (Aided)
Madras Christian College (Autonomous), Chennai, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to University of Madras, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. SAMUEL RUFUS

*Associate Professor, Department of English
Madras Christian College (Autonomous), Chennai, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to University of Madras, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

*In Jane Austen's novels, the themes of marriage, love, gender and sexuality are dominant. When reading any of Jane Austen's novels, one can connect spontaneously with the dominant themes and the crises faced by the characters. The above are the dominant themes seen in fiction from 1790 to 1830. The element of nature can also be viewed in Jane Austen's novels. This paper is an attempt to study the description of nature and its influence on Catherine Morland given by Jane Austen and how it is reflected in her novel *Northanger Abbey* (1818).*

Keywords: *northanger abbey, jane austen, nature, catherine morland, ecocriticism*

Introduction

Literary realism is known to display social conditions and the everyday life of common people without exaggeration. The element of realism is applied to the feelings and emotions of the characters. Poets such as Cowper, Crabbe, and Gray use 'nature' in their poems. The writers and artists display sympathy in their observation of nature. Sometimes nature gets amplified and glorified; it is seen not only in flowers and fields but also in the light of the setting sun, the ocean, the air, the blue sky and the mind of man. This way of describing nature is confined to the art of writing poetry. It is also used in works of fiction to describe the innermost mind of the character and to increase the effect of the feelings undergone by the characters, mainly the protagonist.¹⁵ Jane Austen is often considered a realist based on her depiction of ordinary life.

The analysis of *Northanger Abbey* has been mainly carried out with the premise of 'nature bringing both joy and sorrow', which is described by Peter Barry in *Beginning Theory*. Peter Barry differentiates the landscape and setting used in poems and works of fiction to create a direct connection with happiness or gloom, sorrow, horror or joy and tranquillity, experienced by the protagonist.¹⁶

Jane Austen and Her Writings

Jane Austen was educated at home. After the death of her father, she moved to the neighbourhood of Southampton, where the majority of her novels are based on. Jane Austen's works of fiction are *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Northanger Abbey* (1818), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1816) and *Persuasion* (1818). Her plots centre on everyday life and her characters, etched

¹⁵ Albert, Edward. *History of English Literature*. 5th Edition, Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 309-313, 367-370.

¹⁶ Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 4th Edition, Viva Books Pvt. Ltd, 2018.

with minuteness and accuracy, are ordinary people but convincingly alive.

Jane Austen's View of Nature and Catherine Morland's Response to Nature

Jane Austen is a writer who deals with nature, but rather than the sublime natural environment of the lakes or the Swiss Alps, it is the English country estate or park that excites her. Austen is also interested not in the details of nature but in the person's response to it. Miss Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey* has an emotional and sentimental view of the natural world. A preference for the natural over the artificial also indicates a political preference for primitive and unspoilt humanity, which the philosopher Rousseau argued to be tarnished by society. Catherine is individualistic, emotional, impatient, rude, passionate, indulgent and enthusiastic.¹⁷

She got down as soon as she could from a space in which her conduct produced similar unwelcome reflections, and set up her expressway with all celerity to the breakfast- parlour, as it had been refocused out to her by Miss Tilney the autumn ahead. Henry was alone in it; and his immediate stopgap of her having been unperturbed by the tempest, with a bow reference to the character of the structure they inhabited, was preferably disturbing. For the world would she not have her weakness assumed, and yet, unstable to an absolute falsehood, was constrained to admit that the wind had kept her awake a little. 'But we have a fascinating morning after it,' she appended, asking to get relief of the motive; 'and storms and wakefulness are nobody when they're through. What beautiful hyacinths! I've precisely learnt to love a hyacinth.' 'And how might you get? By accident or reason?'

'Your family tutored me; I cannot tell how. Mrs Allen exercised to take closeness, time after time, to make me like them; but I no way could, till I eyed them the other day in Milsom Street; I'm constitutionally insouciant about flowers.'

'But now you love a hyacinth. Consequently much the better. You have gained a new source of enjoyment, and it's well to have as numerous holds upon happiness as practicable. Either, a taste for flowers is invariably dishy in your coitus, as a means of getting you out of portals and soliciting you to further constant exercise than you would else take. And though the love of a hyacinth may be preferably domestic, who can tell, the passion formerly expressed, but you may in time come to love a rose?'

'But I don't want any similar pursuit to get me out of portals. The happiness of walking and breathing fresh air is enough for me, and in fine rainfall, I'm out further than half my time. Mamma says I'm no way within.'

'At any rate, still, I'm delighted that you have learnt to love a hyacinth. The bare habit of literacy to love is the thing, and a teachableness of disposition in a youthful lady is a great blessing. Has my family an affable mode of instruction?'

Catherine was saved the embarrassment of trying a rejoinder by the admittance of the general, whose smiling respects blazoned a happy country of mind, but whose gentle hint of humane early rising didn't advance her countenance.

'Woodston will make but a murky appearance moment.'

'Is it a suitable position' asked Catherine.

'What enunciate you, Eleanor? Verbalize your opinion, for ladies can best tell the taste of ladies in appreciation to places as well as men. I suppose it would be conceded by the most impartial eye to have numerous recommendations. The house stands among fine meadows facing the southeast, with an excellent kitchen theatre in the same aspect; the walls surrounding which I erected and grazed myself

¹⁷ Poplawski, Paul. *English Literature in Context*, University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom 2017, 2008.

around ten times ago, for the asset of my sire. It's a blood living, Miss Morland; and the property in the position being primarily my own, you may buy I take care that it shall not be a bad one. ¹⁸(Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, p.174-176)

The above lines are from Chapter 22 of *Northanger Abbey* which describes Catherine to be an ardent lover of nature. Jane Austen switches the climate, locale and the biotic and abiotic elements present in this novel to switch between the emotions of Catherine.

At the beginning of the novel, one can see that Catherine loves to go for nature walks and her eagerness and connection with nature are portrayed during her stay in the Bath. The novel majorly switches between the beautiful place where Catherine meets Isabella and the Tilneys. A major switch in the novel is seen when she is travelling towards Northanger which is also a place of beauty but eerie as well. This eeriness is seen through the winds and tempests which had terrified Catherine during her stay at this abbey. Finally, her stay ended abruptly with the most heartbreaking information from her brother and from Isabella.

Conclusion

Thus, it is evident that Jane Austen bears a complicated relationship with the literature of the Romantic period. This type of writing is not only seen in *Northanger Abbey* but also applicable to her other works of fiction as well. ¹⁹ So, it is evident that Jane Austen is a novelist who concentrates upon nature and this idea of nature is not confined only to poetry but it is also clearly visible in the works of fiction as well. Hence, the usage of nature with both its effects

is being used in this novel, that is, to construct happiness and to pave the way for sorrow as well.

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¹⁸ Austen, Jane. *Northanger Abbey*. 1st Edition, Prakash Books India Pvt. Ltd 2021,1817.

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EXPLORING THE ROLE OF PARENTING STYLES IN SHAPING SELF-DISCLOSURE AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN STUDENTS

DEEPA CHATTANI

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of Psychology
Banasthali Vidyapith, Tonk, Rajasthan*

Dr. RATNA DIXIT SHARMA

*Associate Professor, Department of Psychology
Banasthali Vidyapith, Tonk, Rajasthan*

Abstract

The impact of parental style on the psychological growth of students has been an important concern in contemporary times, especially in terms of emotional well-being and self-disclosure. This research aims to investigate how various parental styles—authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful—influence students' capacity to share thoughts and feelings openly and freely, and how their parenting styles build their emotional resilience and mental health. Self-disclosure was important in establishing supportive social relationships and stress management, and emotional well-being indicated a student's ability to manage academic and personal difficulties. A quantitative research design was employed where data were gathered from a sample of 150 students using standardized questionnaires to quantify perceived parenting style, self-disclosure levels, and emotional well-being. The results show that students brought up in authoritative families have higher scores of self-disclosure and emotional balance, while those from authoritarian or neglectful families score lower on openness and emotional security. The research calls attention to the significance of communicative and nurturing parenting in fostering psychological well-being among students. These findings can inform school counseling interventions, parenting practices, and mental health treatments for promoting communicative and resilient youth.

Keywords: *parenting styles, self-disclosure, emotional well-being, student psychology, mental health.*

Introduction

Parenting has a significant impact on the psychological and emotional growth of children, forming the roots of their personality, social relationships, and emotional stability. Of the numerous aspects of parenting, the type followed by parents in bringing up their offspring greatly determines how young people view themselves, regulate their emotions, and interact socially. Parenting styles—typically labeled as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful—develop different home environments that influence children's self-confidence, openness, and emotional expressiveness. Parenting styles influence not only students' external behavior but also their inner world,

such as their willingness to self-disclose and their emotional stability.

Self-disclosure, the capacity for sharing personal experience, feelings, and thoughts with others, is an essential building block of solid relationships and optimal mental health. It allows for students to call for help, develop healthy interpersonal relationships, and deal with difficulties in school as well as affect. Yet, willingness and ability for self-disclosure are strongly related to early familial interactions and parents' behavior. For example, children growing up in warm, communicative homes will more likely have open discussions, but those who live in restrictive or dismissive families might have a problem with trusting and expressing their emotions.

Emotional health, including a student's capacity to manage stress, build resilience, and have a positive attitude, is also influenced by parenting. Responsive and supportive parenting tends to promote emotionally well-adjusted individuals who have good self-esteem and effective coping strategies. Harsh or inconsistent parenting, on the other hand, is likely to lead to emotional insecurity, anxiety, or withdrawal. As learners confront academic and social stress, the impact of parenting is more apparent on their mental well-being and social relationships. This research examines the complex interaction between parenting approaches, self-disclosure, and emotional health among learners.

Literature Review

Grace et al. (2024) suggested that negative evaluation-related anxiety might have affected mental health. The study also indicated that fear of unfavorable appraisal, parenting style, and coping mechanisms had influenced self-disclosure to parents. Fear of bad appraisal and parenting style predicted, but coping techniques did not. Disclosing psychological health to parents was not gendered, which suggested that gender did not affect self-disclosure. Finally, self-disclosure did not affect psychological health scores between undergraduate and postgraduate students. According to these results, Nigerian emerging adults' psychological well-being was enhanced by addressing their anxiety of receiving a poor rating, encouraging adaptive coping mechanisms, cultivating supportive parenting practices, and assisting with family self-disclosure. The resilience and well-being of future generations were enhanced by focused efforts and continued research.

Dike et al. (2023) analyzed Nsukka Urban teens' parenting, self-esteem, and transparency. Five goals guided the study. Cross-sectional survey research was used. All SSI and SSII pupils from 15 Nsukka municipal government secondary schools were

surveyed. The sample included 344 SSI/SSII students from nine Nsukka Urban secondary schools. Data was acquired using a modified standardized questionnaire. Its Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was 0.80. Coded questionnaire data were imported into IBM SPSS 23.0. Results were described by frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. People were more likely to have authoritative parents (52.0%). Most adolescents (89.20%) have high self-esteem. High-disclosure respondents were 78.80%. Research found that adolescents had strong self-esteem and self-disclosure. Local parents were stricter. The study recommended gathering national data on teenage parenting, self-esteem, and self-disclosure from other parts of the state and Nigeria.

Pathak (2012) investigated parental supervision and adolescent self-disclosure. Parents purposefully acted toward their offspring, combining distinct actions, feelings, and expectations for each parent and child. Monitoring children's conduct was a crucial parenting skill. Studies found that well-monitored youth had reduced delinquency and other norm-breaking conduct. Technology, mass media, and the internet made parental monitoring harder. The necessity of self-disclosure increased greatly. The child's voluntary revelation helps parents learn more about him/her and create trust and honesty. The paper described elements that helped or hindered self-disclosure. The paper also explored gender self-disclosure differences.

Fayyaz, N. (2024) investigated adolescent parenting and social-emotional skills. Faisalabad, Pakistan, hosted the cross-sectional study from August 2022 to January 2023. Purposive sampling yielded 400 individuals. Two hundred adolescents from diverse schools and residential regions had been selected, and two hundred parents had been recruited to collect data. Parenting styles were assessed using the Parenting Style Questionnaire, and adolescents' social and emotional competency

was assessed using the Social-Emotional Competency Scale. The data had been analyzed with SPSS-21. Participants had been 10–21 years old, with 50.2% female and 49.8% male. The study comprised moms (64%) and fathers (46%) of any age. The study found a significant correlation between parenting methods and adolescent social-emotional competence ($p < .01$). Parenting styles had been a strong predictor of teenagers' social-emotional competence, revealing how parents shaped their children's emotional and social development.

Research Methodology

The quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was used in this study to examine the interrelatedness of parenting styles, self-disclosure, and emotional well-being among the students. This quantitative design provided the ability to measure variables objectively, while its cross-sectional character enabled data to be gathered from a specified group at one particular point in time.

Study Area

The study was carried out in Rajasthan, India, covering both urban and semi-urban areas to provide a representation of students belonging to different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Schools and colleges in cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, and Kota were contacted for data collection.

Population and Sample

The study population included 16- to 24-year-old students in higher secondary schools and undergraduate colleges of Rajasthan. A purposive sampling method was used to select a sample of 150 students with diversity based on gender, stream of study, and family background.

Inclusion Criteria

- Aged between 16 to 24 years.
- Dwellers of Rajasthan, India.
- Students brought up by a minimum of one guardian or parent.
- Voluntary participants who signed informed consent.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Students with any severe psychological illness.
- Those who were not brought up by biological or adoptive parents (e.g., brought up in institutional care).

Data Collection Tools

Standardized, validated questionnaires were employed in the research to assess the primary variables:

1. **Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ):** To examine the self-reports from students on their parents' permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting.
2. To measure the extent and frequency of self-disclosure within interpersonal relationships, utilize the **Self-Disclosure Index (SDI)**.
3. **Emotional Well-Being Scale:** To measure emotional well-being, such as emotional stability, stress, and self-esteem.

Data Collection Procedure

Both online and offline data collection was done. Questionnaires were handed over to selected schools and colleges with the administration's consent. Online questionnaires were shared on educational networks and social media platforms for Rajasthan students. Ethical standards were maintained at all times during the process of data collection.

Data Analysis

In this section, the information collected from 150 students across Rajasthan was analyzed. To understand the correlation between parenting styles, self-disclosure, and emotional well-being, the findings include descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

The mean and standard deviation of emotional well-being and self-disclosure for the total sample are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Self-Disclosure Score	58.34	11.42
Emotional Well-being Score	62.17	10.87

The students reported a moderate to high degree of emotional well-being ($M = 62.17$, $SD = 10.87$) and self-disclosure ($M = 58.34$, $SD = 11.42$), as per Table 1. These mean scores indicate that participants tended to show stable mental health and were quite open in sharing their thoughts and feelings.

Parenting Style Distribution

Four parenting styles were derived from the responses of respondents to the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ).

Table 2 Frequency of Reported Parenting Styles

Parenting Style	Frequency	Percentage
Authoritative	62	41.3%
Authoritarian	38	25.3%
Permissive	30	20.0%
Neglectful	20	13.4%
Total	150	100%

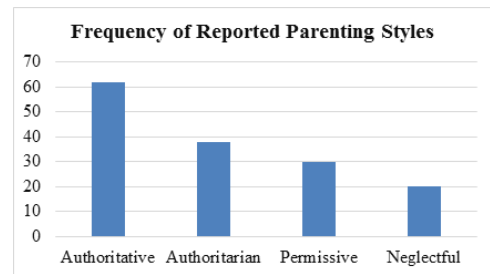


Figure 2 Frequency of Reported Parenting Styles

Based on Table 2, the most common parental style reported by students was authoritative (41.3%), followed by authoritarian (25.3%), permissive (20.0%), and negligent (13.4%) parenting. Based on this breakdown, the majority of students believed that they were raised well and in a balanced manner, which may have a positive effect on their emotional and social development.

Mean Comparisons by Parenting Style

We looked at the mean self-disclosure and emotional well-being ratings for each parenting style to identify trends without employing formal statistical testing.

Table 3 Mean Scores by Parenting Style

Parenting Style	Self-Disclosure (Mean)	Emotional Well-being (Mean)
Authoritative	65.2	69.8
Authoritarian	53.1	56.3
Permissive	58.5	60.7
Neglectful	48.4	52.1

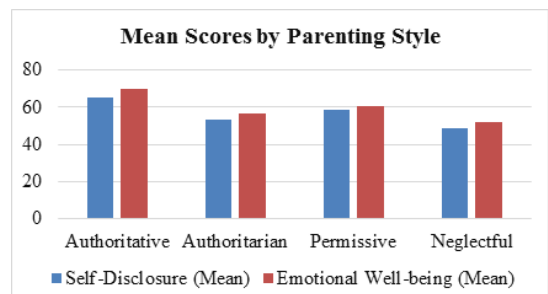


Figure 3 Mean Scores by Parenting Style

Table 3 shows that students from authoritative homes reported the highest mean ratings in both self-disclosure (65.2) and emotional well-being (69.8), the implication being that there is a positive psychological correlate with this parenting pattern. By contrast, students with neglectful homes had the lowest ratings on both indices (48.4 and 52.1, respectively), indicating poorer emotional health and openness. Authoritarian and permissive approaches both had scores that were midway between the range, suggesting they do provide support, but not with enough consistency or warmth to maximize students' well-being.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to measure relationships between the primary variables.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix

Variables	Self-Disclosure	Emotional Well-being
Parenting Style (Scale)*	0.52 ($p < .01$)	0.49 ($p < .01$)
Self-Disclosure	-	0.58 ($p < .01$)

*Parenting style coded to reflect increasing authoritarianism.

Table 4 shows that a moderate positive relationship exists between self-disclosure and authoritative parenting style ($r = 0.52$, $p < .01$) as well as between emotional well-being and authoritative parenting ($r = 0.49$, $p < .01$). In addition, a strong positive relationship exists between self-disclosure and emotional well-being ($r = 0.58$, $p < .01$). These results indicate that children brought up in authoritative homes are more likely to be forthcoming in discussing personal opinions and also have superior emotional well-being.

Conclusion

The results of this research emphasize the important influence parenting styles have on the self-disclosure

and emotional health of students. Amongst the four parenting styles, authoritative parenting was most strongly associated with elevated levels of openness and emotional strength in students. However, authoritarian and neglectful parenting were associated with lower scores in both self-disclosure and emotional health. The findings also showed a high positive correlation between self-disclosure and emotional health, highlighting the importance of emotional expression in supporting psychological stability. By considering students drawn from different schools across Rajasthan, the research offers context-sensitive findings that highlight the importance of developmentally supportive, communicative, and emotionally helpful parenting styles. These results can inform parents, educators, and mental health workers about how to encourage healthier development among youth with informed parenting practices and supportive contexts.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF DISCOURSE IN STYLISTIC THEORIES: A CRITICAL REVIEW

RAJESH. S

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Jnana Bharathi, Bangalore University, Bangalore, Karnataka*

Abstract

The paper proposes to review the significance of discourse in stylistics from the point of critical and historical perspectives. Relevant examples have been chosen to show how certain concepts in the back drop of discourse are developed. These concepts are helpful in understanding the application of these concepts in study of literary texts. Application part assists in using these concepts in teaching language and literature.

Keywords: *communicative aspect, functional aspect, objectivity, physical aspects, speech acts, subjectivity,*

Historically stylistics has been associated with language and literary studies. Recent developments in the subject shows that it is pivotal of Applied Linguistics and Literary Criticism. Critical theory has also given priority to the subject especially, discourse and context. Discourse in critical theory includes the study of power and ideology, hegemony, resistance, subversion, history and so on. The subject has become popular since 1960's. As discussed above stylistics is the combination of literary criticism and linguistic studies and act as a bridge between literary critic and a text. Another interesting feature of stylistics is it studies both literary and non-literary texts. A text is studied in its in-depth sense with the application of tools like syntax, lexis, phonology, pragmatics, semantics and discourse. Discourse is seen as crucial aspect of stylistics as it enables the study of author's intentions. Other tools are technical in nature which assess the physical aspects of a text. Whereas, the real essence of a text lies in its discourse and context. Discourse helps in unravelling the major portion of the theme of a literary text as it includes its own specific tools.

Except discourse all other aspects are objective and technical in their analysis. These technical aspects make the subject to appear objective. But functionally stylistic analysis of a text may not include greater

amount of objectivity. The reason is that any text has to have its discourse. Discourse makes the subject more analytical and theoretical. Often discourse deals with subjectivity of a text. This makes the study more objective. Objectivity is such that it touches upon the crucial segments of a text. Objectivity consists of three aspects i.e., linguistic properties, aesthetic properties and theoretical devices. Aesthetic properties include figures, tropes and other rhetorical devices.

Apart from the objective and subjective studies stylistics deals with communicative and functional levels of language. Communicative level of a language is macro analysis in its sense, which is more formal in its style. Whereas, functional level of a language analysis is informal and micro or parochial in nature. These two functions can be studied with the examples,

"Hello, ladies and gentlemen, I cordially welcome you all to the felicitation function of Nobel Laureate, Louise Gluck".

The sentence is syntactically structured in a formal communicative way. The context or discourse of using such formal sentences indicates that the milieu is very formal. Another example to understand the functional level of language is given below:

“Hi, guys, welcome to my bachelors party, let’s have fun and merry”.

The style of the above sentence is informal in nature. Also, it’s a conversation between group of friends who gather to enjoy at a bachelor’s party. Stylistics is thus, both communicative and functional in its nature. These two aspects are the foundation for the linguistic and grammatical analysis in stylistic study of texts. Communicative function is seen in the base for teaching language and grammar. Functional aspect is seen as the foundation for learning communicative aspects of a language as it is the base for a child to learn language.

Further, there are primary and secondary elements constituting the study of stylistics. The primary elements consist of character development, dialogue, Foreshadowing, form, imagery, irony, juxtaposition, mood, pacing, point of view, structure, symbolism, theme and tone. However, the major tools to study stylistics is categorized in to six, they are as follows:

- Sounds: this aspect includes the study of musical qualities and rhythmic movements in a poem. The study of alliteration and assonance focus on strong and weak forms of syllables.
- Lexis: it is the study of vocabulary and lexical chain or word family of a text.
- Semantics: study of meaningful structures and patterns of a language is called semantics. Meanings are studied on the connotative and denotative basis.
- Discourse: it is the analysis of language in use or context.
- Context: analyzing a text in the communicative and functional levels of its language.
- Syntax: studies sentence patterns and structures and their grammatical usage according to the context.

These tools lead to a massive and in-depth study of a text to its objectivity and often subjectivity. Of all

these elements discourse and context play vital role in deciding the theme and act of a text. They further help in literariness of a text. Discourse and contextual elements are intertwined with each other.

The elements seem to be inseparable as they are over lapping in their essence and usage. Discourse analysis is the study of language in its social context which is an entity of textual linguistics or stylistics. It speaks about the structural language of a text. Text is a mere piece of written script which is written according to an established grammatical pattern. A formal presentation of words in order can constitute a meaningful text alone but, discourse analysis moves further to study the social context of that particular text.

For example, there is a sentence put in order, “John loves Mary”. Here the text consists of S+V+O pattern which is of course, grammatical and universal in nature. Here, the social context of the sentence or the text is not clear because it’s not mentioned. If the same text is modified and put in to its social context then it reads like this,

“John loves Mary, for she is a woman of gem”.
(Subject+ Verb+ Predicate)

The text is appropriately well formed in its grammatical aspects and the social context. John loves Mary because he admires her character and personality, that is the social context created by the predicate part of the sentence.

The idiomatic phrase “woman of gem” indicates that she is admirable, beautiful, charm, having good character and so on. So, discourse in language means studying the language beyond the sentence. Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure calls this as meaning of a language, which is chaotic and beyond the sentence. This process is otherwise called as Pragmatics, in Linguistic study of language. Pragmatics enables a reader to find out the invisible meaning of a text especially, in its social context. Paul Grice is the father of Pragmatics. He advocates five important principles of language in context. The

following are the five important principles or maxims of Pragmatics:

- Maxim of Relation
- Maxim of Quantity
- Maxim of Quality
- Maxim of Manner
- Pragmatic Error

The above five maxims lead the formation of speech acts in language. Of course, "Speech Act Theory" is the contribution of J. L. Austin and J. R. Searle who speaks about communicative grammar that deals with naturally occurring connected discourse – spoken and written language in its social context. There are two types of speech acts i.e. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts.

To study language in its social context, there are two more important factors that are to be understood. The first aspect is presuppositions, the background knowledge of a reader to place the text in its social context. This enables in interpreting the actual utterances of the language and leads to the development of critical questions of how, what, and why. In its rational sense presuppositions provide the reasons for placing text in various social contexts.

There is a sentence on sign board for instance, "Thank You for Not Smoking". It demands a certain amount of background knowledge to comprehend this text. A reader without a proper background knowledge would understand this sentence as a token of appreciation for not smoking cigarettes. But in its actual sense the text means a strict warning issued by the concerned authorities to not smoke cigarettes in the restricted zones. The second aspect is study of implicatures, the implied meaning of a text

or something stated indirectly, the above example can best fit in here. The above discussion helps in teaching language and literature in a creative way. These aspects are applicable in teaching different levels of learning process. Therefore, discourse is seen as the significant element in stylistics study and analysis of a text and also teaching stylistics through literature and language.

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ECHOES OF EXILE: MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND MARGINALIZATION IN JAMYANG NORBU'S *ECHOES FROM FORGOTTEN MOUNTAINS*

SHRUJALA R

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Presidency University, Bangalore, Karnataka
Coordinator & Assistant Professor, Department of English
Nagarjuna College of Management Studies, Chikkaballapur, Karnataka*

Dr. HAMPAMMA G

*Professor, Department of English
Presidency University, Bangalore, Karnataka*

Abstract

Jamyang Norbu's Echoes from Forgotten Mountains tells the story of Tibetans who were forced to leave their homeland. The book shows how exile affects their identity, culture, and sense of belonging. Norbu shares powerful stories of struggle and strength, highlighting how exiled Tibetans try to keep their traditions alive while facing political and social challenges. This paper looks at how Norbu portrays forced migration, focusing on cultural loss, adaptation, and survival. Through personal stories and political insights, his work gives voice to those pushed to the margins. Norbu's book is not just about Tibet—it also reflects the global experiences of displaced people. By comparing his writing with other exile stories, this study shows how literature helps us understand issues like oppression, statelessness, and the refugee crisis. The paper argues that Echoes from Forgotten Mountains is an important literary work that speaks for the displaced and marginalized, using memory, history, and political critique to tell their story.

Keywords: *migration, displacement, marginalization, tibetan exile, cultural identity, jamyang norbu, exile literature.*

Introduction

Migration and displacement have long been defining experiences for many communities worldwide, shaping histories, identities, and cultural landscapes. Among the numerous displaced communities, Tibetans stand out as an example of both resilience and marginalization. Forced to flee their homeland due to political conflict and repression, Tibetans have carried their cultural heritage across borders, striving to maintain their identity while adapting to new socio-political environments. Their struggle is not only one of physical relocation but also of cultural survival, political activism, and continuous longing for return.

Jamyang Norbu's *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* provides an in-depth exploration of forced migration and its impact on Tibetan identity, culture,

and sense of belonging. Through powerful storytelling, Norbu captures the struggles of displaced Tibetans as they navigate the challenges of exile while striving to preserve their traditions. His work goes beyond a mere literary narrative; it functions as both a historical record and an artistic representation of the complexities of exile. Themes of loss, adaptation, and survival resonate throughout the novel, reflecting the broader struggles of displaced communities worldwide.

One of the fundamental aspects of Tibetan exile is the disruption of cultural continuity. For Tibetans, the homeland is more than just a geographical space; it is a storehouse of historical, spiritual, and cultural significance. The occupation of Tibet led to the systematic suppression of Tibetan identity, including

restrictions on language, religious practices, and traditional institutions. This forced many Tibetans to flee, leading to the establishment of Tibetan settlements in India, Nepal, and other parts of the world. These communities have since become miniature representations of Tibetan culture, where efforts are made to sustain their heritage despite the pressures of assimilation.

Norbu's novel captures these tensions by illustrating the lived experiences of exiled Tibetans. His characters grapple with the reality of being stateless, struggling to forge an identity in lands that often view them as outsiders. The sense of loss is deeply embedded in their narratives, reflecting the pain of separation from their homeland and the gradual erosion of their cultural identity. However, the novel does not merely dwell on despair; it also highlights the resilience of the Tibetan people. Through education, community-building, and political activism, exiled Tibetans continue to assert their identity, ensuring that their culture remains vibrant despite the odds.

Beyond personal and communal struggles, *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* also critiques the global political response to the Tibetan crisis. The novel sheds light on the diplomatic complexities surrounding Tibet, where international interests often overshadow humanitarian concerns. Norbu's work serves as a voice for those who have been silenced by political schemes, emphasizing the need for global recognition and support for displaced communities.

The themes explored in Norbu's novel are not unique to the Tibetan experience. Across the world, displaced communities—from Palestinians to Rohingyas—face similar challenges of cultural preservation, political exclusion, and identity crisis. By positioning *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* within the broader discourse on migration and marginalization, this paper aims to underscore

the universal aspects of exile while highlighting the aspects of the Tibetan condition.

Through this analysis, we seek to understand how Norbu's portrayal of forced migration contributes to the broader field of exile literature. His work not only documents the Tibetan experience but also raises fundamental questions about home, belonging, and survival in a world where displacement has become increasingly dominant. This analysis looks at how the novel's structure, themes, and social and political messages help to preserve the voices of marginalized communities and support their rights worldwide.

The paper focuses on how Norbu portrays exile, cultural preservation, and resilience, connecting these ideas to broader migration literature. It will explore the storytelling techniques he uses to highlight Tibetan experiences and show how his writing both remembers the past and encourages action for the future. By doing so, this study aims to deepen the understanding of how exile literature shapes global discussions on displacement, identity, and cultural continuity.

The Representation of Forced Migration in *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains*

Jamyang Norbu's novel explores the deep emotional and psychological pain of forced migration. When people are forced to leave their homeland, they do not just lose their homes; they also lose their sense of belonging, identity, and security. For Tibetans, exile is not just about moving to a new place. It is an ongoing struggle to find a new home while holding onto their traditions and memories of Tibet. Norbu portrays how Tibetan refugees in India, Nepal, and other parts of the world try to rebuild their lives despite feeling disconnected from their roots.

In the novel, the experience of exile is shown as more than just a physical journey. It is a mental and emotional challenge as well. Many of Norbu's characters suffer from the trauma of leaving behind

everything they knew—their families, their traditions, and their way of life. Older Tibetans, who were born and raised in Tibet, keep their memories alive by telling stories of their homeland. They share these stories with the younger generations in an effort to preserve Tibetan culture. However, the younger Tibetans who are born in exile face a unique challenge. They grow up in a foreign land, where they are not completely accepted, yet they also do not have a direct connection to Tibet. This creates confusion about their identity and where they truly belong.

The sense of uprootedness and alienation among exiled Tibetans is a major theme in Norbu's novel. The older generation longs to return to Tibet, but for many, that is no longer a realistic possibility. Meanwhile, the younger generation struggles to define their sense of home. They speak different languages, adopt different customs, and grow up in cultures that are different from their parents'. This makes it difficult for them to fully connect with Tibet while also feeling like outsiders in the countries where they live. As a result, many young Tibetans feel caught between two worlds—neither fully Tibetan nor fully accepted by their host countries.

Despite these difficulties, the novel also shows the strength and resilience of the Tibetan people. Tibetan communities in exile work hard to keep their culture alive. They celebrate traditional festivals, practice their religion, and teach their children about Tibetan history and values. Schools are established to educate Tibetan children about their heritage, and efforts are made to preserve the Tibetan language. These cultural practices help exiled Tibetans maintain a sense of identity and unity, even when they are far from their homeland.

However, the struggle to belong is made even more difficult by political challenges. Tibetans in exile live in a liminal space—they do not fully belong to their host countries, and they cannot return to their homeland. Many refugees do not have citizenship in

the countries where they live, which means they face legal and social barriers. They may have limited access to jobs, education, and other opportunities. At the same time, Tibet remains under Chinese control, and exiled Tibetans cannot freely visit or return to their homeland. This leaves them in a state of uncertainty and longing, unsure of what the future holds.

Norbu's novel highlights the dual nature of exile. On one hand, it is a painful experience filled with loss and displacement. On the other hand, it also leads to new forms of identity and solidarity. In exile, Tibetans come together to support one another and create new communities. They adapt to their new realities while still holding onto their traditions. This balance between adaptation and preservation is a constant struggle, but it also shows the resilience of the Tibetan spirit.

Through his storytelling, Norbu brings attention to the complex emotions that exiled Tibetans face. Their longing for home, their struggle to adapt, and their efforts to preserve their culture are all deeply moving aspects of their journey. The novel serves as a powerful reminder of the challenges faced by displaced communities around the world. It also highlights the importance of cultural preservation and the strength of human resilience in the face of adversity.

Norbu's work is not just about Tibetans—it speaks to anyone who has experienced exile or displacement. It shows how losing one's homeland affects both individuals and entire communities. At the same time, it offers hope by demonstrating that even in exile, people can find ways to rebuild their lives and keep their cultures alive. The novel is a tribute to the Tibetan people's enduring strength and their unbreakable connection to their homeland, even from afar.

Cultural Loss and the Fight for Identity Preservation

The novel *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* focuses on an important theme: the struggle of Tibetans to preserve their culture and identity while living in exile. The book, written by Norbu, describes the difficulties faced by Tibetans who have been forced to leave their homeland. It shows how they try to keep their language, traditions, and religious practices alive despite living in different countries. The novel highlights the importance of oral storytelling, rituals, and history in maintaining Tibetan identity. Schools in exile play a major role in teaching younger generations about their roots, ensuring that their culture does not fade away.

One of the biggest challenges Tibetans face in exile is language loss. Many young Tibetans grow up speaking Hindi, English, or Nepali instead of their native Tibetan language. This makes it harder for them to connect with their cultural heritage. Language is an important part of identity, and without it, many traditions and beliefs may be lost over time. In the novel, Norbu shows how Tibetan activists work hard to teach and revive the Tibetan language. Schools in exile become important places where Tibetan children learn about their history, traditions, and language. These schools help ensure that Tibetan identity remains strong even when people live far from their homeland.

Another key aspect of cultural preservation in the novel is Buddhism. Religion has always been an essential part of Tibetan life, and even in exile, Tibetans continue to practice their faith. They visit temples, pray, and follow rituals that connect them to their past. Norbu portrays Buddhist monks and community leaders as important figures who work hard to keep these traditions alive. However, the novel also explores the difficulties of maintaining religious faith in difficult times. Some characters struggle with their beliefs when they experience pain and loss. This shows that exile is not only about

losing one's home but also about questioning one's faith and identity.

The novel also discusses the balance between adapting to a new culture and preserving one's own. Some Tibetans choose to blend into their host cultures by learning new languages and customs. This helps them find jobs, make friends, and build a stable life. However, others worry that this may lead to the loss of Tibetan heritage. Norbu presents both sides of this issue, showing that exile is not just about physical displacement but also about finding a way to live between two different worlds. Some Tibetans believe that change is necessary for survival, while others feel that losing their traditions would mean losing their identity. The novel does not offer a simple solution but instead presents the complexity of the situation.

This struggle between adaptation and resistance is central to the story. Some characters embrace new influences, believing that mixing cultures is a natural part of life. Others work hard to protect their traditions, fearing that if they do not, future generations will forget what it means to be Tibetan. Norbu shows that both viewpoints have merit. Change can be a way to survive, but it can also lead to the erasure of an entire culture. The novel paints a picture of Tibetans caught between two worlds, trying to hold onto their roots while also looking forward to the future.

Throughout the novel, Norbu highlights different ways in which Tibetans try to preserve their culture. Oral storytelling plays a key role in passing down history and traditions. Elders share stories with younger generations, ensuring that they know where they come from. Education is another important factor. Schools in exile teach children about their history, language, and traditions, helping them stay connected to their heritage. Religion also serves as a bridge to the past, offering comfort and strength in difficult times. Language remains a crucial part of

identity, and efforts to revive and protect it continue despite the challenges.

Echoes from Forgotten Mountains captures the pain of exile and the resilience of the Tibetan people. Norbu shows that while displacement brings loss, it also inspires determination. The novel portrays Tibetans as strong individuals who refuse to forget their culture, even as they build new lives in foreign lands. It acknowledges the struggles of adapting to a new world while trying to hold onto the past. Through storytelling, education, religion, and language, Tibetans fight to keep their identity alive. The novel serves as a powerful reminder that culture is more than just traditions—it is the heart of a community, and preserving it is essential for future generations.

Political Critique and the Question of Statelessness

Norbu's novel, *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains*, is deeply political and provides a strong critique of the struggles faced by Tibetans in exile. One of the major themes of the novel is statelessness, which refers to a situation where people do not have legal recognition as citizens of any country. It highlights the difficulties that Tibetans experience because they lack official citizenship in the countries where they live in exile. This lack of legal status creates many problems, such as economic struggles, restrictions on movement, and limited opportunities for a better life.

Tibetans who live in exile often face significant economic challenges. Without citizenship, they cannot easily find stable jobs or access government support. Many of them have to work in low-paying jobs with no job security. Since they are not recognized as official citizens, they cannot own property or start businesses in many countries. This economic hardship makes it difficult for them to build a stable future, even when they are willing to work hard.

Another major problem that stateless Tibetans face is the restriction on their movement. Without official documents such as passports, they cannot travel freely from one country to another. Even within the countries where they live, they may need special permits to move to different regions. This limitation affects their ability to find better jobs, meet their families, or pursue education and professional growth. The novel describes the frustration and pain that Tibetans feel when they are unable to move freely because of their lack of legal status.

Norbu also highlights how statelessness affects the education of young Tibetans. Many exiled Tibetans struggle to get admission into good schools and universities because they do not have the necessary legal documents. Even when they manage to get an education, they often find it difficult to secure jobs in their fields of study because employers require proof of citizenship. As a result, many young Tibetans are forced to take up low-paying jobs, even when they have the skills and qualifications for better opportunities. The novel shows the disappointment and challenges faced by young Tibetans who aspire for a better future but are held back by their legal status.

The Tibetan government-in-exile plays an important role in the lives of exiled Tibetans. However, Norbu's novel also highlights the limitations of this government. The Tibetan government-in-exile tries to help its people by providing education, cultural preservation, and political advocacy. However, since it is not officially recognized by most countries, it has limited power to make changes or secure strong international support. Norbu presents this as a major challenge for Tibetans, as their government-in-exile cannot fully protect their rights or offer them the same benefits that recognized governments provide to their citizens.

Beyond the Tibetan struggle, Norbu's novel also discusses the failure of international organizations in addressing refugee crises. Around the world, many

people are forced to leave their homes due to war, persecution, or political conflicts. However, international organizations often do not have strong solutions to help these refugees. Norbu's novel questions why powerful nations and organizations fail to provide long-term solutions for stateless people. Instead of offering real support, these organizations often make empty promises without taking meaningful action.

The novel also criticizes global powers for their role in creating political conflicts that lead to displacement. Many world governments support policies that lead to war or oppression, causing people to flee their homelands. However, the same governments are often unwilling to help the refugees who suffer as a result. Norbu's novel argues that international powers should take responsibility for their role in displacement and offer real solutions, such as granting citizenship to refugees or providing more support for resettlement.

Through a combination of history and personal stories, *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* brings attention to the urgent need for political action to support stateless populations. The novel shows how statelessness affects not just individuals but entire communities, leaving them in a constant state of uncertainty and struggle. Norbu's work urges the world to recognize the rights of stateless people and to find solutions that give them a stable and dignified life.

Norbu's novel is a powerful political critique that sheds light on the difficulties faced by Tibetans in exile. It explores the impact of statelessness on economic opportunities, movement, education, and legal rights. It also highlights the struggles of the Tibetan government-in-exile and questions the failures of international organizations in solving refugee crises. By weaving together historical facts and personal stories, the novel calls for urgent action to address the challenges faced by stateless people

and to create a more just and supportive world for them.

Conclusion

Jamyang Norbu's *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* is a powerful literary exploration of exile, displacement, and identity. Through compelling storytelling, Norbu sheds light on the struggles of Tibetans forced to leave their homeland, capturing the pain of loss and the resilience of cultural survival. His novel emphasizes the emotional and psychological toll of migration while also portraying the strength of communities determined to preserve their heritage. The themes explored in the novel—cultural loss, adaptation, political oppression, and statelessness—are not just unique to Tibetans but resonate with displaced communities worldwide. By situating the Tibetan exile experience within the larger discourse on migration, Norbu's work highlights the universal challenges faced by refugees and stateless populations. Ultimately, *Echoes from Forgotten Mountains* is more than just a novel about exile; it is a testament to the enduring human spirit and the fight for identity in the face of displacement. Norbu's work serves as a literary bridge between history and activism, urging readers to recognize and engage with the struggles of marginalized communities across the world.

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CONFLICT, HISTORY AND POLITICS IN SHASHI THAROOR'S NOVELS

W. M. SEENIVAS LEANDAR BIAS

*Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of English
Maruthupandiyar College, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu
Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Shashi Tharoor's fiction apprehends the socio-political landscape of India and provides a profound understanding of its multiculturalism. His introduction book, The Great Indian Novel (1989), reveals a parallel story that merges characters from the Mahabharata with key Muslim figures of the Indian political history thus resulting in a blending of ancient mythology with modern politics. Show Business (1992), is a resilient satire of Bollywood that brings to the fore the corruption that is already deep-rooted in Indian public life. In Riot (2001), Tharoor discusses cultural activism and religious conflict and thus makes a great contribution to the recent situation in India with his exploration of the East–West cultural divide and the upsurge of multiracial tie-ups. Tharoor himself identifies these novels as deeply embedded in Indian heritage through the themes, the stories, and the voices and hence, it is his mission to let loose a variety of Indian stereotype. Tharoor's writing has regularly dwelled in multicultural issues which as a result have been a constant reminder of the system's strengths and weaknesses, social diversification, sociocultural pluralism, and other similar issues.

Keywords: *shashi tharoor, patriarchal, nationalism, colonial, exploitation, film, and politics.*

Introduction

Tharoor is an important figure in the literature of multiculturalism in India. All three novels are used in this work as the basis for the analysis of how Tharoor presents his ideas of multicultural society and how he moves in this wide context of Indian society. In the "Great Indian Novel," a political framework is used by Shashi Tharoor as an allegory to retell the story of Mahabharata. The story is narrated by Ved Vyas to Ganapathi, a young South Indian figure, making the continuum mytho-political. Tharoor presents the most significant political events in India as being part of the epic fiction, by personifying the Kaurava and Pandava as powerful political forces. The Congress Party is a Kaurava Party in the work, in which Priya Duryodhani, a character similar to Indira Gandhi, the third Prime Minister of India and Jawaharlal Nehru's daughter is portrayed as the leader. Duryodhani is the symbol of the dictatorial rule and the authority of

the Congress government at her time in Indian politics.

Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* offers a new perspective on history, it is not a single track, but a myriad of everyday experiences that are often thought-provoking, contested and intimately personal. Indira Gandhi's electoral defeat of 1977 was a moment of great celebration for the democratisation of the Indian state; however, Tharoor still feels the remnant of her year in power. The Division of India stands as the most traumatic occurrence in the modern history of the country, nonetheless, Tharoor's accounts of these problems are sometimes removed. His story does not adequately highlight the issues that drive the transformation of India today, and especially the revitalization of majoritarian politics. On one hand, mass movements create panic among Muslim and minority communities, and on the other, the BJP's progress in the elections of 1991 only fuelled communal animosity. Such an unreal and rosy

picture of India that turned a blind eye to the real fears and struggles of the minority and the marginalized. His discouraging of the separatist movements in Assam, Punjab, and Jammu and Kashmir in politics. Shashi Tharoor express that "India shaped my mind, anchored my identity, influenced my beliefs, and made me who I am. ... India matters to me and I would like to matter to India."

Shashi Tharoor uses the medium of cinema a commonly accepted belief is that it is a profound mode of collective imagination in India as a creative metaphor in his second novel *Show Business* (1992). The novel examines the myths served up by popular Hindi cinema and shows various aspects of Indian socio-cultural life. The protagonist, Ashok Banjara, a well-known Bollywood actor meets Maya, a stunning young woman who first plays his sister on screen, and goes on to be his screen heroine. The on-screen chemistry they develop extends off screen, and the couple marry. This marriage does not have the happiest ending. Ashok embodies all that is negative about patriarchy and forbids Maya from pursuing a film career after they marry him, and relegates her to the archetype of the "Angel in the House" devoid of any sense of her existentialism. When Maya becomes pregnant, Ashok feels relief more than joy - he recognizes her pregnancy as an opportunity to unrelated himself to her. He then abandons her to deliver the child alone, and totally transitions into committed acting in films, demonstrating that he once again is not emotionally attached or dispassionate.

Shashi Tharoor, a well-known Indian writer, has made a lot of contributions to the global world using his experiences with the United Nations. His first book, *The Great Indian Novel* (1989), takes India's political and historical past and reimagines it against the backdrop of the Mahabharata one of the foundational epics of Indian mythology. Rather than simply retelling the epic, Tharoor creates a fictionalized modern Indian political history. By using

the Mahabharata as his intertext, Tharoor shows how myth can serve as a political allegory, as he creates a satire of post-independence India. Many scholars have noted Tharoor's deep engagement with mythology. Tharoor's use of Indian legends don't represent a stagnant past, but still enable readers to construct and reconstruct their lives. For Tharoor myth becomes a means for cultural reclamation and a return to stories that push back against colonialist or imperialist historiography. For Tharoor, there is no single past, but instead an ongoing and pluralistic Indian identity. Shashi Tharoor, *The Great Indian Novel* "simple logic of colonialism, under which the rules of humanity applied only to the rulers, for the rulers were people and the people were objects. Objects to be controlled, disciplined, kept in their place and taught lessons like so many animals" (TGIN 86).

The Great Indian Novel can be read as an allegorical retelling of Indian history, where mythology, politics, tradition, and culture all come together. The term "great" does not come from the author's own assessment of the work, but instead is meant to pay homage to the Mahabharata. The Mahabharata is a seminal text in Indian culture that exists as a veritable social blueprint, and is therefore an apt template for Tharoor's fictionalizing India's pre- and post-independence saga. The epic itself, and utilizes a rich, densely-textured narrative style instead of a teleological one. Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* takes the form of both scathing satire and parody and at times is also intertextual. In sum, there is a great deal of political interest, wit, and commentary throughout the book to recover India's past via the epic Mahabharata, with the epic construed as a formal device "to comment on the present. Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* occupies a post-colonial space where myths and histories occur alongside one another by allowing for multicultural concerns and by revising colonial narratives to some degree. Tharoor's literary work is

a contribution to the ongoing conversations about national identity and historical memory in post-independence India, and the politics of representation. Shashi Tharoor's *Show Business*, offers a vivid depiction of the Indian film industry through the eyes of its fictional superstar Ashok Banjara.

In *Riot* (2001), Tharoor directs his focus towards the socio-political tensions of so-called "present-day" India namely, the cultural activism and religious confrontations that typify the national landscape. The novel is rife with socio-political concerns such as communal violence, multinational encroachment, corrupt relationships, subjugation of women, literacy, political corruption, the dowry system, superstitions, and notions of power politics. Although there is a wide range of pertinent themes, these issues largely center on two major narratives: the Hindu-Muslim riot, and the Indo-American love genre, both intertwined by the enigmatic death of Priscilla Hart. In *Riot*, Tharoor's concern lies with the dissolution of cultural vitality due to communal hatred. His critique of the Babri Masjid incident, and invitation to consider the novel as situated in the politically-charged space of 1989, specifically the Ram Sila Poojan Programme, lays the groundwork for the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992. Geetha, traditionally married to Lakshman, her fate illustrates the fate of modern woman caught up in a patriarchal and superstitious society. Shashi Tharoor, *Riot* "An India neither Hindu nor Muslim, but both. That is the only India that will allow them to continue to call themselves Indians" (R 59).

Fiction by Shashi Tharoor presents life seen in myriad ways and provides new perspectives on the human experience. Tharoor's novels do not just map reality on to a page; they do not just represent realism but represent life as a consciousness of the imagination, as conscious fictional symbolism. As such, the novelist must choose carefully when deciding what to include and exclude with regard to

subject matter and language to express their own vision. Tharoor demonstrates that whether the subject matter is fiction, realism or autobiography, it is the differences transpired from technique, that punctuate the relationship between life and art. Shashi Tharoor's major fictional works *The Great Indian Novel* (1989), *Show Business* (1992) and *Riot* (2001) speak to his innovative narrative practice within the socio-political and cultural contexts of India. With these novels, Tharoor created a specific mode of realism that questions postmodern political consciousness, and suggests a quiet politics of cultural resistance. *Show Business* "we are a country that still believes in handing professions down from father to son, the same way the caste system came into being. If you are a doctor, your son must be a doctor. If you are a Prime Minister, your son must be a Prime Minister. If you are a movie star, your son must also be a movie star" (SB 279).

Riot, like *Show Business* (1995), allows Tharoor to play with narrative form in that by including different kinds of texts- newspaper accounts, interview transcripts, journal entries, personal letters, as well as poems he splinters the pages of the novel in order to deepen his critique of Indian society, culture, and politics. While there is certainly a murky murder mystery plot for the first half of the novel, the newspaper clip of the New York Journal congratulates all readers on the death of an American volunteer working with the NGO HELP-US named Priscilla Hart who is murdered during a riot in the community that coincides with the Ram Shila Poojan procession. This murder mystery opens up the plot for the reader for an important introductory aspect of the novel that allows the reader to process the various sociopolitical and personal constructs that collide to culminate this tragedy. By fragmenting riot in so many ways, like he did with *Show Business*, he works to expose the terms of Indian society and culture and the contradictions nested within. Through fragments of screenplays and different voices, he

writes about what can be articulated as the constructed identities and truths in a complicated postcolonial nation caught in the oscillation, with different contemporary and historical perceptions of modernity and tradition. Tharoor has a penchant for introducing mythological frameworks in his novels.

Along with his betrayal of Maya as a husband, Ashok is culpable in abandoning his role as a father and a husband and deceiving both his wife and children when he has an affair with Mehnaz Elahi, a budding actress drawn to him along with others by his own celebrity. Tharoor uses Mehnaz to vocalize some of the exploitative practices associated with film indignity, whereby aspiring actresses feel pressured into acceptance of their objectification in return for advancement in their careers. When Maya, who has been played, makes the bold threat to return to the cinema, it adds to the narrative tension concerning her characterization. Ashok pursues a career in politics to further symbolize the performance of power, just as Ashok performs heroism in film, As a politician, Ashok performs but is not actually serious about his obligations, and it becomes clear that he ignores his constituency and levels breach of commitment to his own electoral service guarantees. Ignore the fact that ultimately Ashok not only represents the dubious quality of political spectacle in a faltering democracy. Show Business acts as a double critique of the fantastical universe associated with cinema and the performative element associated with politics. Tharoor depicts a world where personal failures are disguised behind public personae and where cultural indicators, like celebrity and political ambition, often increase one's overall sense of moral abandonment.

Conclusion

History, politics, and culture have always been the principal preoccupations of Indian-English novelists. It is an emphasis on such matters which can hardly come as a surprise since the Indian novel itself

developed and matured through the critical years of colonialism, nationalist awakening, and both the demands and successes of the Indian independence movement. Shashi Tharoor's *Riot* concerns itself with contemporary issues which are not remote but rather are tangled in the narrative, political, cultural, and historical context of India. An added depth to the narrative is rendered to the meaning of history in its fictional episodes lacing together the cast's multiplicity of stories and alternate narratives of history and narrative truths. The basis of the novel's plot is struck by the mystery surrounding the death of Priscilla Hart, an American social worker, amid communal violence over the Babri Masjid upset. The partial plot surrounds events that give meaning to the complexities around the personal, political, and cultural.

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* is a satirical, fantastical retelling of the Mahabharata, located in the social and political turmoil of India's fight for independence and the post-independence period. It locates the dynastic quarrel between the Pandavas and Kauravas, crucial to the Mahabharata, in a series of envious and political rivalries and ideological struggles that pioneered modern democracies in India. Tharoor effectively uses the mythological basis to critique and parody real historical people like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru by considering their historical importance in a disobedient and irreverent approach from the historical narrative. The title itself is comedic: the idea of the "Great American Novel" in its own right involves cleverness and word play when it punningly references the idea that the word 'Mahabharata' literally translates to 'Great' 'India' as 'Maha' means 'Great', and 'Bharata' means an isolect for India's great history. Tharoor views the Mahabharata as the greatest work of literature that Hinduism produced; therefore, the Mahabharata seems to be an appropriate vessel to examine the

location of India's political narrative and its reinterpretation.

In *Show Business*, another very original and fascinating work by Tharoor, we are introduced to Ashok Banjara, a Bollywood mega-star, whose near-fatal accident on the set of a film leaves him unconscious. Ashok lies in a coma, through a series of flashbacks, we see his entire life and career unfold before us, in the context of his relationships with his family, the Indian film industry, and ultimately, the perception of illusions vs. reality in the subjective discourse of light and truth (i.e., media and politics) of representation to create origins which, in Ashok's case, were ultimately hollow. *Riot* is set in chaotic India in 1989 during riots after the Babri Masjid agitation and the unsettling circumstances surrounding the too-soon death of an American social worker named Priscilla Hart. Hart is linked historically and personally to the love, hate, cultural conflicts and religious fanaticism, of this time, as well as the many contradictory narratives of temporality, society and history, whilst attempting to make sense of how truth comes into view or, for that matter, presents itself at all. Each story unfolds to reveal the limitations of history and temporality and their deeper complexities.

Tharoor on communal violence and the dissolution of India's secular identity. The novel rises out of the fabric of the Babri Masjid incident, which is one of the most polarizing instances in Indian politics and society, exposing the spiritual and political divides in Indian society. The communal violence in the story reflects an exploitation of religious sentiment for political purpose. Tharoor represents political opportunism as a means of fueling religious division that threatens India's pluralism. The plot of *Riot* weaves together the personal and political narratives revealing the socio-cultural strife India faces today. Through the characters of Priscilla Hart, an American volunteer, and Lakshman, an Indian bureaucratic, Tharoor describes a potent tragedy resulting from a historically ignorant cultural

misunderstanding. Tharoor's bitterness suggests that the Indian cultural landscape has produced religious fanaticism and institutional indifference. The narratives reveal leaps in response to disembodied convictions often steeped in superstition and choice. From the dowry system to the treatment of women in society more broadly, the novel addresses gender-based disadvantages and how these real factors oppress women. Abusive behaviour towards members of the opposite transcends religious communal identities, creeds and traditions; it permeates all segments of Indian society.

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A STUDY OF IRULAS SOCIAL LIFE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DENKANIKOTTAI TALUK IN KRISHNAGIRI DISTRICT

YUVASRI R.L

*PG Student, Department of History
PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. M. SANKARI

*Assistant Professor, Department of History
PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

The Irula tribe, residing in the Denkanikottai region, exhibits a unique cultural identity shaped by their history, geography, and traditions. The Irulas follow a patriarchal system, with a strong emphasis on family and community. Their spiritual practices blend Hinduism and animism, worshiping deities like Mariyamman and celebrating festivals such as Gowri, Shankranthi, Shivarathri, and Ugadhi. The tribe's cultural heritage is reflected in their traditional attire, ornaments, and art forms, including distinctive tattoos and kolam drawings. Despite modern influences, the Irulas strive to preserve their cultural identity while adapting to changing societal norms.

Keywords: *Irula tribe, ceremonies, festivals and traditions*

Introduction

India is the home of 8.6 percent of the scheduled tribes totaling around 10.4 core people. The tribal communities are vulnerable in nature and most of them reside in hills and forest regions. The tribal people follow unique customs and traditions that require preservation and most of the tribes are backward in various aspects of life. "The word Irula came from the Tamil word *Irul* which means darkness, which may refer to either the forest they lived in or their skin tone." The Irulas are classified as Negrito ethnic group in anthropology works. The Negrito ethnic group's means the people who share their ancestry in the Andaman & Nicobar Island region. In India the Irulas distributed mainly in southern states mainly they are Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Within Tamil Nadu, Irulas are mainly spread in region like Nilgiri, Coimbatore, and the North-Eastern regions.

The Krishnagiri district is carved out of Dharmapuri district in 2004 as thirtieth district of

Tamil Nadu. The word Krishna means black and giri means mountain, this district have black granite hillocks due to this the term Krishnagiri arrived and also some belief the term Krishnagiri is derived from the illustrious ruler Krishnadevaraya belonged to the Tuluva Dynasty in Vijayanagar kingdom, and Krishnagiri also came under is authority in 14th century. So, the word Krishnagiri is portmanteau of Krishna inspired by his name and word giri mean's mountain, the term describes the region rugged terrain. This study mainly focuses on the Irula community residing in Krishnagiri district, Tamil Nadu, exploring their unique Social customs, Traditions, Practices, and way of life.

Objectives

- To investigate the contemporary social dynamics of Irulas.
- To analyze the Irulas ceremonies from birth to death.
- Identify progressive ideas within the Irula tribe.

Study Area

The study area focuses the Irulas in Tamil Nadu, Krishnagiri district. In Krishnagiri district focused the Denkanikottai Taluk because the population of Irulas is more in this region and details collected from villages like Kottaiyurkollai, Tholuvabetta, Bollakollai and Siddhapuram.

Methodology

The primary and secondary sources are used in this research; the primary sources used in this content are Government Reports. Interviewed the Government officials like school teachers, Forest officers and also Irula tribe to collect the information. The secondary sources are collected from Books, News paper articles, Websites, and Journals. To collect these sources visited district library of Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Salem, and Coimbatore.

Review of Literature

Ankit Mishra: *Indian Tribal Communities*, this book gives details about the tribes and how can be classified; the unique features of the tribe are explained. The tribes in Kerala, Maharashtra region are explained, and also share insights about Irula tribe in Kerala, Tamil Nadu region and their Social customs, Traditions, and Economic status.

Dr. D Janaki: *Socio-Economic Conditions of Tribal Women in South India*, this book gives deep knowledge about the tribes in South India and also describes the Irulas Tradition, Cultural practices, and various jobs pursued by Irulas. It includes the Paniyas, Khond, Kallar, and many other tribes who reside in South India.

History of Denkanikottai Taluk and Socioal Life of Irulas

The Denkanikottai Taluk is located in Krishnagiri district. The Denkanikottai is bounded by Anchetty Taluk on the South and Hosur & Shoolagiri Taluk on the North, Dharmapuri district on the West, Karnataka on the North-East, and nearby East of the

Western Ghats. The Denkanikottai name came from the Betaraya Swamy temple according to legends. The primary languages spoken in this region are Tamil, Kannada, Urdu, and Telugu. In this Taluk, various people reside like Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Irula tribe with harmonious.

In this region, most of the places were Hilly, Dense forests, eco-tourism Park, and Reservoirs. The highest peak in this region is Melagiri Hills. The Cauvery North Wildlife Sanctuary was established in this region in 2014 the elephants are conserved mainly in this region. Aiyur Eco Tourism Park is also located in this region to promote tourism. The Irulas migrated to this region from the Western Ghats and Anchetty Reserve Forest regions.

Social Life

Irulas are primitive tribal people, are distinct from other people through their culture and social life. They started to adopt a modern culture which made the unique culture of these people disappear and started to become a mixed culture. Irulas have features like dark skin, short in height and curly hair. The Irulas have a head in the village to solve disputes that occur among them; a priest in their temple do rituals to god daily and special rituals on auspicious days.

Language

The Irulas speak the Irula language which belongs to a Dravidian family and we can find dialects of both Tamil and Kannada language mixture in their language.

Family

The Irulas following a patriarchy society, the father was the head of the family and if we see women also had property rights but the real power fell in the hands of men. They live in nuclear families and few live in joint families. The nuclear family was followed because they built small houses and couldn't accommodate more than one family it was also one

of the reasons. But their family members also built the house near to them and stay together in the same region. In one family, nearly 6 to 10 members will be there (Mother, Father, and Children's). They have more children's like 3 to 6 members.

Birth Ceremony

The Irula people didn't celebrate any pre-birth ceremonies like baby showers. Among the Irulas after the birth of a child in a few days, elderly family members traditionally place one drop of castor oil in the child tongue. The naming ceremony was conducted by a few parents at the moment of the child born and a few others in 3 to 12 months named their child. The child names were like their ancestor's name and few others gave the god name. Names like Rudra, Veerabhadra, Madhuri, Ruthri, Maliga etc... nowadays due to cultural exchange with the modern society they name the kids other names differ from their culture. The infanticide was absent among Irulas.

Ear Piercing

The child's ear piercing was done nearly at the age of three. The maternal uncle performed the rituals during this function and the feast was conducted. Neighbors and relatives were invited for the function.

Puberty

When the girl child attains puberty for the first time they conduct some rituals, they make the tent or hut temporarily and the girl needs to stay there, until her first menstrual period is complete. The temporary hut is constructed near the house or on their agricultural lands. The hut is built by her maternal uncle. The girl stays there varies from 5 to 11 days and after this period she undergoes a ritual purification bath & drinks temple holy water. Following this ritual she visits the family deity temple.

Marriage

The Irulas marry within the Irula tribe and family, they didn't do inter-caste or inter-religion marriage. The Irula people marry the maternal uncle and daughter of maternal uncle or paternal aunt. The bride and groom's families gather together and the elderly family member chooses the date for the marriage on the day of engagement. They conduct a feast for relatives and neighbors who have been invited. After this in a marriage, they do some rituals like exchanging turmeric and kumkum. Later they will prepare the bride and groom for marriage and the holy sacred thread is tied on the bride by the groom in the presence of the family and elders. The marriage will be conducted at the old houses, and temples. During marriage, the few women form a group & sing a song together. Some wealthy people use altar fire and musical instruments like Natheeshwaram, Drum etc., in their marriages. They don't have a dowry system in their marriage and domestic violence.

Funeral Ceremony

The Irulas follow two types they were burying and cremation for deceased person.

- The cremation was done for the person who died due to health illness, swellings, and other reasons. They believe if they buried the person who died due to some illness, they didn't get rain properly. So, the cremation was done for the person who died due to illness.
- If the person died naturally they were buried in the land. The stone was plotted at the burial site. If the same family members died they also buried at the same site and stone was placed at their burial. A few place's plants (chrysanthemum, marigold flower plant) are at the burial site, and they place small stones at the children's burial site.

The rituals for the deceased person were conducted, before cremation or burying the person some rituals

were followed like bathing a person, seekakai and turmeric was added in the water pot and the water was slightly boiled and the boiled water was poured on the dead person by their family and relative people.

Food

The food diet is different from one region to other region; it also depends on the geographical location where they are located. The food habits of Irulas mostly depend on the forest resources like kilangu, honey, different types of keerai (leaves), milk, and curd. When this people learned to do agriculture their main food became Finger millet (ragi) ball, Rice, Sabre beans (*avarakkai*), and other foods like Chappathi and Poori were learned from other people when they started to communicate with modern society. They also eat non-vegan foods like rooster meat and goat meat, but they don't eat the rooster which was grown by them in the region because they believe it eats poop in the region so they avoid it. The above mentioned food is essential to them. The Forest Right Act 2006 allows them to collect resources from forest for food and other purposes.

Dress

Irulas didn't have any distinct features of dressing style like other tribal people. These people adopted dressing style of Tamil people like wearing Dhoti, Shirt by men, and women wear Saree. But their dressing style nowadays has changed due to modern society dresses i.e. Chudithar, Jeans, T-shirt.

Remarriage/ Divorce

Remarriage was permitted if the wife/ husband are dead. Divorce was less, if the couple needed divorce the village elders were gathered and tried to make them live jointly, in some cases like adultery and misbehavior is acquired they were allowed to divorce. After the divorce also another marriage was permitted but it happens rarely.

Child Marriage

Yes, child marriage was prevalent among the Irulas, before a decade the child marriage count was higher compared to the present day. Now it was decreased but it was still prevent among them. The children were married at 12 to 14 ages before; presently Irulas started to follow government rules and increased marrying as 18 for girls and 21 for boys. They got awareness through education, the forest department officers and NGO members.

Ornaments

The Irula woman wears the ornaments like Earring, Nose ring, Anklet, Rings on hands and toes. The married women only wear ring on toes and *thali* or sacred necklace. They were the jewels' made up of gold, silver, and 1 gram gold. The Irula women *thali* (holy sacred thread) which differs from other cultures slightly; in *thali* there will be two black and two red combination beads, in the middle with a golden plate. The people who can't afford gold wear turmeric-applied thread.

Arts

- The Irulas women sing a song during marriage and puberty function with group of women. i.e. "*enga nes purane mutha ayana vajrane gowri vara puthra sho shobana*" and it also sang during the puberty function.
- Kolam is drawn in front of the house by Irula women, it was Tamil puli kolam and Rangoli is drawn by their children who are more influenced by other cultures. Some doodle art in their hut doors which look similar to kolam.
- The women wear the tattoos on their forehead and body. The tattoos on the hand and body were tattooed for the women, but the amount was paid by the family member or relatives they can't have the tattoo on their own by paying money. Their loved ones pay money for them because it stays

with them until their death and won't disappear like material things.

- Hunting animals and birds in forests decreased among these people. When dangerous animal approaches, they scare them away using loud sound and fire.

Festivals and Gods

Irulas follow rituals and festivals which is similar to Hinduism and animist. The people in this region pray the gods like Mariyamman, Basveswara, Madheshwara, and Malleshwara etc..., these four gods were their family gods. Irulas people name their children after the family god names. They celebrate only four festivals they are, Gowri festival, Shankranthi festival, Shivarathri, Ugadhi festival, and also celebrate Thiruvilla yearly once after Ugadhi the main deity is Mariyamman.

They pray god twice in a week (Monday and Friday) and that day they also take a bath. They pray's the god mainly these days because the Monday was considered as their god born day and Friday is an auspicious day. Also wear mallai for Omshakthi and Ayappa Swamy.

Conclusion

Irulas have many progressive thought in their social life like permitting widow remarriage, against infanticide and didn't follow the Dowry System; the Irulas follow the rituals similar to Hinduism and Animism; the one of the social evil present in Irula society is Child Marriage it was decreasing gradually from last decade and need to bring null. The government should take still few measures. The Irula women get tattoo on the Forehead and body but the amount for tattoo is paid by the family members. The Irulas culture need to be support and preserved.

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THE SOFT ECHO OF DEATH: A GENTLE VOICE IN A WORLD OF VIOLENCE IN MARKUS ZUSAK'S THE BOOK THIEF

SRISARANYA

PG Student, Department of English
Siri PSG Arts and Science College for Women, Sankari, Tamil Nadu
Periyar University, Salem, Tamil Nadu

AGALYA

Assistant Professor, Soft Skill Trainer (TOEIC), Diploma in Epigraphy
Siri PSG Arts and Science College for Women, Sankari, Tamil Nadu
Periyar University, Salem, Tamil Nadu

Abstract

In a world devastated by conflict, Markus Zusak's The Book Thief skillfully handles the tension between violence and love, life and death. Through Death's role as a universal truth but sympathetic narrator, the book examines how mortality quietly penetrates daily existence and shapes the choices, actions, and emotional states of the people. The novel's thematic examination of death, not as a single, definite happening, but as a constant, gentle reminder that echoes through the lives of the people and profoundly shapes their experiences which is embodied in the title, The Soft Echo of Death. The book, which is set in Nazi Germany during World War II, centres on Liesel Meminger, a young child whose love of reading and storytelling serves as both an act of resistance and an escape from a harsh and cruel society. The representation of death as a complicated, multidimensional force lies at the heart of The Book Thief. Death is a reflective observer who reflects on the great beauty and pain of human life, not just as an indicator of destiny. His findings provide insights on the strong bonds that characterize the characters' survival efforts. Acts of love, generosity, and compassion are seen as moments of resistance to the dehumanizing forces of the Nazi system, while the brutality of war is contrasted with the soft, human relationships that remain beyond that horror. Liesel's interactions with people like Max Vandenburg, Rudy Steiner, and Hans Hubermann show how the human spirit can endure great pain and still find happiness and connection. Through the experiences of the characters, important topics like memory, resilience, and the redemptive power of language are examined. Reading and telling stories turns into a survival strategy, a way to maintain one's humanity in the midst of conflict. Words can be used to resist the forces of oppression and have the capacity to both heal and destroy. Death is ultimately portrayed in The Book Thief as an eternal echo, an invisible yet powerful force that influences the lives of the individuals in ways they can sometimes fail to comprehend, rather than as a unique occurrence.

Keywords: death, violence, love, empathy, storytelling, resistance, mortality, world war ii, nazi germany, survival, words as power, human connection.

Introduction

The internationally acclaimed book *The Book Thief* (2005) is the most well-known work by Australian novelist Markus Zusak. Zusak was born on June 23, 1975, in Sydney, Australia, to an Austrian father and a German mother, Zusak was raised in a household rich with European history, language, and storytelling, his early childhood had a significant impact on his

writing style. Zusak published a number of young adult novels before becoming wellknown worldwide, such as *Getting the Girl* (2001), *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* (2000), and *The Underdog* (1999), all of which were acclaimed for their distinct narrative style and genuine emotional depth. But *The Book Thief* (2005) was the work that secured his status as a significant author. The work has been translated into over 40

languages and has received great critical acclaim for its creative use of Death as narrator, lyrical prose, and examination of humanity in the midst of cruelty. Poetic language, intense emotional resonance, and the examination of ethical and philosophical issues are characteristics of Zusak's writing. His writing frequently focuses on how regular people deal with unusual situations, addressing issues like family, identity, love, and loss. After *The Book Thief* became a bestseller, Zusak spent more than ten years crafting the multi-layered family story *Bridge of Clay* (2018). Markus Zusak has made significant contributions to modern writing by skilfully fusing historical facts with creative storytelling to produce tales that appeal to readers of all ages. Because of its emotional impact, philosophical depth, and inventive storytelling, his work is still studied today.

A Gentle Voice of Death amid Chaos

Death is personified as the narrator in Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*, and the novel's topic revolves around how it is portrayed. Many people say that Death's narrative has a "gentle voice," which stands in sharp contrast to the horrific events of the World War II background. This decision is important because it gives readers a perspective on the story's horrific events that is melancholy and thoughtful rather than dominated by rage or violence. Death views the devastation caused by war with a calm, almost depressing outlook, which lessens the threat of death and increases acceptance of the inevitable nature of human suffering. Death is shown to have empathy and even admiration for some humans, especially the main character Liesel Meminger, while being the destroyer. Death attentively monitors Liesel's path, taking in her victories, setbacks, and the little deeds of compassion that occur in the midst of the immense destruction caused by war. Death's character is given depth by this nuanced depiction, which shows it as something that is profoundly impacted by the human experience rather than just as a cold, uncaring entity. Death's "gentle voice" exudes a kind of tired comprehension, as though it is

both in charge of gathering souls and profoundly affected by the tales it hears.

Death's soft voice stands in stark contrast to the chaos of the surrounding environment. Even though the story takes place during one of the most horrifying times in human history, the Holocaust and the destruction of World War II, Death speaks calmly, emphasizing the brutality and cruelty of the era. Instead of lessening the horrors, its narrative tone heightens the story's emotional impact and highlights the bravery, resiliency, and acts of compassion that contrast dramatically with the devastation. Death's aloof, almost melancholy viewpoint highlights the transient beauty of the human soul by serving as a reminder of life's frailty and death's inevitable conclusion. Moreover, Death's "gentle voice" represents death's universality and inevitability. The idea of mortality is examined in a number of ways throughout *The Book Thief*, and Death's serene manner symbolizes the understanding that dying is a normal aspect of life. The novel's portrayal of death implies that, despite suffering, it is something to be understood and accepted rather than something to be feared. This viewpoint encourages readers to consider how short life is and how crucial it is to cherish the little, significant moments that happen in spite of the chaos in the world.

The Weight of Souls

Markus Zusak gives Death a unique voice in *The Book Thief*, a narrator who bears a heavy emotional weight in addition to being an observer of human lives. Among Death's most poetic and thoughtful elements is its concept of the "weight of souls." Death frequently describes this weight as something evident, something felt rather than something seen, even if it is not physical. It is a symbolic weight that stands for the lives that people have led, the decisions they have made, and the emotional burden they have left behind. Death makes it clear that gathering souls is not a heartless or mechanical practice. Rather, every soul he bears seems unique. Because of their life experiences rather than their physical size, some people are bigger than others.

Death must carry the weight of the anguish, pleasure, sadness, and love that are ingrained in a person's soul because they seem to remain. He recalls them, sometimes haunted by them, rather than just taking their souls. Because of this understanding, Death is a very sympathetic figure who is worn out and burdened by the immense quantity of human sadness he sees.

The bombing of Himmel Street, where so many lives are lost in an instant, serves as a moving illustration of this. Death uses a somber tone to narrate the months that followed, describing how he gently takes the souls away. The weight he speaks of feels enormous at this time, not only because of the quantity of dead but also because of the individuals who died. He now finds significance in the lives of Rudy, Rosa, Hans, and others, and their passing is more painful. Since Death acknowledges that he still remembers Liesel and the book she left behind, her story also plays a big role in this emotional weight.

Compassion in the Shadows

Death is presented in *The Book Thief* as a profoundly sympathetic narrator who labours silently "in the shadows," gathering souls and observing human life with sorrow and empathy. In contrast to conventional portrayals of Death as cold or cruel, Zusak's Death is kind and introspective. He frequently stops to reflect on the tragedy and beauty of the lives he sees, demonstrating a deep emotional reaction to human resiliency and suffering. During times of significant loss, death's compassion is particularly evident. He does more than just take lives in scenes like the Himmel Street bombing; he grieves them. He talks about how he carried them carefully and considers their last memories, dreams, and thoughts. The way he speaks about characters like Rudy, Hans, and Rosa demonstrates that he respects their lives and understands the weight of their deaths. His comments are not cold; they are full of admiration and silent grief.

Death is particularly moved by Liesel's story. He grows emotionally involved in her life as he sees her mature through love, sadness, and bravery not because he participates in it. He reads and appreciates the book she authored, *The Book Thief*, after discovering it and realizing its worth. He demonstrates his wish to respect human experience, even in the face of death, by keeping her story alive. In the end, Death is a distinctive and unforgettable storyteller because of his compassion in the background. He works in silence while bearing the emotional loads of the souls he gathers; he doesn't pursue fame or influence. The reader is shown the beauty and frailty of existence through his eyes, in addition to the tragedy of death.

A Watcher of Words and Wonder

Death refers to himself in *The Book Thief* as "a watcher of words and wonder," a description that perfectly sums up his dual function as a silent observer and a lover of human existence. Death observes how the lives of the characters, especially Liesel Meminger, develop throughout the book. He is captivated by words, however, and how they mould reality, mend wounds, and give people the will to live. He does not merely observe activities. To Death, words are strong instruments that can produce both beauty and devastation.

Death is particularly interested in Liesel's relationship with words. Death watches her change as she learns to read and then write. Her stole books and penned reflections become into symbols of resistance to the brutality of war and hope. It is Liesel's words, her stories, her reading to Max, her writing while grieving that transform into acts of wonder in the midst of catastrophe. Death is moved by this, not only by what she says, but also by what it implies: that people can use language to bring light into the darkest moments.

As a narrator, Death often pauses to comment on the beauty or tragedy of what he sees, almost like a

poet. He depicts colours with emotional weight, presents the story out of order to stress content over timing, and highlights modest actions of love and courage. He was different from the usual disinterested observer because of his intense curiosity and respect for human creativity. He believes that words have the power to recall, to withstand, and to disclose a person's soul. Death is ultimately a story collector as well as a soul collector. The moments of awe that arise from human expression, particularly through words, are what he cherishes most. Death demonstrates his unexpected humanity by referring to himself as "a watcher of words and wonder," expressing his fascination with not only how people live and die but also how they recount their stories in between.

Humanity through Death's Eyes

Through the eyes of Death, Markus Zusak offers a distinctive viewpoint on humanity in *The Book Thief*. Death is not a heartless, soulless being; rather, he is perceptive, profoundly reflective, and frequently overcome by the complexity of people. His narration paints a picture of a world ravaged by loss, violence, and war, yet still replete with bravery, love, and tiny acts of kindness. Not only does death take lives, but it also analyses them, recalls them, and frequently leaves him both awestruck and tormented by what people are capable of.

Death frequently displays his utter confusion and wonder at people. He witnesses unspeakable human deeds, particularly during World War II, but he is also struck by how resilient and compassionate people can be. This is effectively expressed in one of his most well-known quotes, "*I am haunted by humans*". It shows how profoundly he is impacted by human contradictions how individuals may use bombs and hatred to harm one another while simultaneously using words, tales, and selfless deeds to save one another.

Death gets to see the best aspects of people through Liesel, Hans, Max, and Rudy. He witnesses Hans feeding a starving guy, Liesel risking her life to read to a hiding Jew, and Rudy's unwavering devotion and affection. Even though they are brief in a world of devastation, these moments have a profound effect on Death. He notices not only when people die, but how they live and that is what gives him both sorrow and admiration. Ultimately, the reader gains a clearer understanding of existence by seeing people through Death's eyes. It forces a reflection on what it means to be human—the pain we cause, the hope we carry, and the beauty we create, even in the darkest times. Death, a representation of the end, turns into a prism through which life is most clearly and truthfully perceived.

Conclusion

Markus Zusak reimagines Death in *The Book Thief* as a tired, reflective narrator with a soft voice that echoes through a harsh and chaotic universe, rather than as a terrible, cold force. Death, surrounded by Nazi Germany's violence, laments rather than celebrates destruction. He silently laments the loss of life, the dissolution of families, and the theft of innocence. However, his narration is replete with amazement, compassion, and a strong desire to comprehend the individuals he gathers, rather than rage or contempt. What distinguishes him from the violence surrounding him is this quiet echo—his voice. It's a peaceful soul seeing the loud fall of humanity, a whisper of grace in the midst of screaming bombs. Death's soft narration serves as a reminder to readers that beauty can be found even in the midst of extreme agony. He notices the little, sweet things, like a boy painting windows, a parent playing the accordion, a girl learning to read, or a Jew expressing gratitude with his eyes. These glimmers of love, selflessness, and tenacity demonstrate the silent strength of hope and human connection. Death speaks to honour humanity to bear the burden of its

stories and carefully preserve them rather than to condemn it. Zusak encourages readers to see mortality with understanding rather than terror through this portrayal. We are able to view life more clearly through the gentle echo of Death's voice, not only in its suffering but also in its significance. Death's tenderness becomes a representation of something uncommon in a time and place overrun by cruelty: a silent respect for life itself. Ultimately, his voice serves as a reminder that it is the stories, the words, and the wonder of humanity that endure beyond death, not the violence.

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HUMOR, HUMANITY, AND APOCALYPSE: A SATIRICAL DISASTER NARRATIVES IN GOOD OMENS

ROGINI. P

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English
Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R&D Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. VINOTH KUMAR M

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R&D Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Disaster is the duality of risk and sustainable development for living beings. Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett's Good Omens is a foremost proposition that revolves around the forthcoming apocalypse, a disaster narrative. The disaster Armageddon is the final battle between heaven and hell (the biblical end of the world) through the anthropomorphized four horsemen- War, Famine, Pollution, and Death. The paper analyzes that characters like Crowley (demon) and Aziraphale (angel) had a partnership to avert the catastrophe. In the apocalyptic genre, Good Omens embedded the duality of absurdity and satire, which enables the characters to confront the cosmic dread with resilience and humor. Drawing on Kenneth's ideologies of disaster studies, this paper explores how the characters, particularly Crowley and Aziraphale are exasperated by the impending apocalypse and subvert the prophecy, reflecting a rejection of deterministic disaster narratives. The narrative focuses on Adam, the Antichrist, a free-will boy who rejects inexorable destruction and withstands his individual choice to safeguard human life. In the satirical lens, the human agency offers hopeful notions of divine justice, inevitability, resilience, and humanity to avert disaster through cooperation. Furthermore, this paper explores humor, a sign of intelligence in Good Omens, which provides a coping mechanism for both the characters and readers to confront the cosmic dread of disaster.

Keywords: *disaster, apocalypse, catastrophe, anthropomorphic, cosmic dread*

Introduction

The term Disaster refers to anything that is catastrophic or harmful and causes the destruction of the natural environment and living beings. The etymology of the word disaster is derived from the Latin "Disastro," literally an ill-starred, which means a calamity blamed on a planet's unfavorable position in astrology. The disaster is classified into natural, man-made, and complex disaster. Earth is devastated by natural disasters such as avalanches, droughts, earthquakes, floods, wildfires, heat waves, tropical cyclones, and blizzards. On the other hand, Man-made disasters like Bioterrorism, civil unrest, fire, nuclear, and radiation accidents are called anthropogenic hazards which result in a lack of

emergency management measures. There is no fundamental cause for complex disasters, which are more prevalent in developing countries. Eg. the Fukushima Nuclear disaster. It causes economic damage and the duality of human vulnerability and resilience.

The cult classic *Good Omens* was written in the 1990s by Neil Gaiman, author of best-selling novels including *Neverwhere*, *American Gods*, and *The Sand Man* worked with Terry Pratchett author of *Disc World Series* in the modern era. *Good Omens* is categorized as a satirical apocalyptic narrative. It draws most of its source from the Book of Revelation, the final book of the New Testament in the Bible. It deals with a world-ending disaster- the Apocalypse-

destroyed by the young Adam. *Good Omens* uses the forthcoming apocalypse as a background to explore themes such as Moral ambiguity, Human agency, and satirical commentary. It narrates the story of Aziraphale an angel, and Crowley, a demon who has spent 6000 years on Earth. They were sent from heaven and hell to Earth to mess with humans. However, they are both so entrenched in human life that no one is interested in Armageddon. They were teaming up to stop the end of the earth because they were fond of residing on it.

Kenneth Hewitt, a professor of Geography and environmental studies has done research in the field of disaster. He has provided some ideologies for those vulnerable affected by debris. Furthermore, he contributed to understanding the integration of social consideration in disaster management. This research paper has integrated Kenneth's ideologies of disaster studies to show how the characters are exasperated by the upcoming apocalypse and subvert the prophecy.

Literature Review

In the research paper, *And the world continues to spin.... Secularism and Demystification in Good Omens* portray narratives in multicultural and multireligious societies. It is written from an atheistic point of view. The coauthors Pratchett and Gaiman used Rosemary Jackson's theory of fantasy literature to show that *Good Omens* performs dual subversion, using biblical prophecy as a narrative device and showing faults of societal issues. This quality encourages readers to question and acknowledge the world around them. It highlights how writers narrate the story to reflect on the nature of belief that shapes our understanding of the world.

In the paper, *Religion in Good Omens, A study of the usage and effect of religion in the Comedic Fantasy Novel Good Omens* stated that the writers have considered the Christian scriptural themes as alien and outside of the realm, they portray heaven

and hell as antagonistic forces. Morality is a major theme. Humans have free will, which allows them to make any decisions and accept responsibility for their actions, on the other hand, angels and demons from heaven and hell obey orders without making their own decisions, absolving them of moral culpability. *Good Omens* employed the important element of humor to address serious religious issues, diverting attention from the apocalypse and focusing on the cause and effect of the disaster. It concludes that *Good Omens* does not treat the Bible as a narrative that can be interpreted. By doing so, the readers question the conventional wisdom and consider the complexities of free will, fate, and morality.

With its whimsical tone, *Gayer than a Tree Full of Monkeys on Nitrous Oxide: Translating Wordplay and Allusion in the Cosmic Fantasy Novel Good Omens* explores the complexities of humor and its translation while stimulating readers' interest. This researcher took the element of wordplay and allusion from the novel *Good Omens* to showcase the linguistic and cultural nuances of one language to another while translating the humor and references. It also draws attention to the challenges faced by the translators while translating the humor, particularly since the work is rich in puns and cultural allusions. By incorporating a specific phrase, *Gayer than a Tree Full of Monkeys on Nitrous Oxide* from the novel, showcases the critical work of translation.

The research paper, *Good Omens: A Collaborative Authorship Study* screening adaptation spiked the researcher's interest in learning how the novel was created through a collaborative authorship process. The terms Rolling Delta and Rolling Classify are derived from time series analysis and machine learning computational techniques. Rolling Delta may track changes in the text over a sliding window of a specific number of sentences. It analyses the stylistic signals from each other, which helps to identify the authority of one author's style that dominates the other. Rolling Classify labels the sections of the text

as humorous, philosophical, or action-packed. It further classifies the passages based on whether they focus on Crowley, Aziraphale, Adam, and subplots. The paper concludes that, although Gaiman's film adaptation demonstrates a more independent narrative approach the text of *Good Omens* is more closely attached to Terry Pratchett's literary style. In contrast, Gaiman's screenplay adaptation shows a more independent narrative approach.

Anthropomorphism and Symbolism

Anthropomorphism is the term used to describe the attribution of human traits, emotions, and behaviors to non-human entities, such as animals, objects, or deities. The four horsemen Death, War, Famine, and Pollution were anthropomorphized in the novel. They are symbolized as modern disasters and global risks. Kenneth Hewitt's ideology of disaster management emphasizes that disasters are not isolated events but it ended with the consequence of human vulnerability, decision-making, and systematic risk. Death one of the four horsemen personified human-like dialogues and a sense of inevitability. The other three horsemen War, Famine, and Pollution had distinct personalities and motives to perish the world. For instance, the Famine worked as a corporate businessman selling nutritionless food, symbolizing modern hunger and consumer manipulation, aligning with Hewitt's argument that disasters often sprouted from societal inequalities rather than natural inevitabilities. Pollution has replaced the traditional pestilence to degrade and create an ecological crisis. War is a female war correspondent in the name of Carmine Zuigiber, who deliberately intensifies the conflicts. "Actually she went where the wars weren't. she'd already been where the wars were" (Pratchett and Gaiman 115). War's deliberate trigger of conflicts reflects Hewitt's idea that disaster emerges from systemic human failures. Satan sent Crowley from Hell as a human to tempt and disrupt human life.

Aziraphale sent from heaven by the Lord stands for virtue and morality. The Bentley, a bike, has its attributes, incorporating Crowley's style and flair. It's a source of pride and joy to Crowley. Adam (the Antichrist) remains ordinary and playful inherits virtues and moralities, though possessing immense power.

Humor as a Coping Mechanism:

'I think they're pretending it didn't happen.'

'Mine too, I suppose. That's bureaucracy for you.'

'And I think mine are waiting to see what happens next,' said Aziraphale.

Crowley nodded. 'A breathing Space,' he said. A chance to morally re-arm. Get the defences up. Ready for the big one.' (Pratchett and Gaiman 381)

On Sunday, the first day of the rest of the world, Aziraphale and Crowley discussed the possibility of a "big one" (a catastrophic event) at St. James's Park. They make fun of Armageddon's ineffective bureaucracy. According to Crowley, the lines separating the essence of good and evil are not always apparent. They view the coping mechanism as a conscious or unconscious strategy to cope with the stressful situation of the Armageddon scenario. Their conversation reflects the absurdity of how global catastrophes are pacified with bureaucratic confusion and human agency to maintain normalcy in human life. In the park, Nightingale's unexpected appearance provides a glimmer of hope. Aziraphale thought despite global chaos, the world still gives personal joy from his beloved book collection. Parallely, Crowley was satisfied with the company of the Bentley, a bike.

Human Agency and Free Will

Adam Young, the Antichrist, had a predestined role to induce Armageddon to the world. When he was a child, he accidentally swapped with a warlock by Sister Mary, a Satanic Nun to the family of Mr. Young and Mrs. Deidre at Lower Tadfield. In His Place,

Warlock is believed as an Antichrist and brought up by the parents Mrs. Daling and American Cultural Attache. When the hellhound is sent to find and serve Adam Young, he doesn't know his true self. He playfully named the hellhound as Dog. The Dog transforms itself to match Adam's desire for an ordinary dog rather than a supernatural beast. The hellhound's transformation symbolizes how Adam bears the human attributes even supernatural entities to bring the catastrophe. Anathema Device, the descendent of Agnes Nutter, gave New Aquarian Digest to Adam sparking curiosity and Critical thinking. He gains knowledge of various conspiracy theories from the magazine. It represents Adam's free will over predestined fate to trigger the Apocalypse. Hewitt's idea of shifting the focus from inevitability to human choices and collective action in disaster management aligns with Adam's young rejection. It demonstrated his Humanity and Personal Choice.

Disaster and Duality in Good Omens

In the chapter Saturday, Gaiman portrays the evolution of Disaster in the world through the International Express deliveryman's delivery of the Silver Crown to Pollution, Sword to War, and Message to Death. Once the delivery man finished his deliveries, he was hit by a German Juggernaut while attempting to cross the road. It highlights the initiation of the Apocalypse. The excerpt, Here's the Uck, used to be the prettiest river in this part of the world, and now it's just a glorified industrial sewer" (Pratchett and Gaiman 186) explains the environmental degradation. "the crown went black" (Pratchett and Gaiman 187) represents power, corruption, and the decay of moralities. "the sky was redder than blood" (Pratchett and Gaiman 189) foreshadows the apocalypse and the impending doom.

The novel's disaster scenario is not viewed as an inevitable conclusion. The duality of cosmic

catastrophe and humanity's capacity to transcend existential challenges play a pivotal role. According to O'Riordan, who incorporated Kenneth's theory that "They indicate a success or failure in the common responsibilities and expectations of public life," disasters are socially produced phenomena that are shaped by human beings rather than by nature or heavenly forces. In human hands, it can be managed or advanced. Human potentials like Mr. Shadwell, a witchfinder organization, Mewton Pulsifier, Anathema Device, a young witch, Adam Young, Aziraphale, and Crowley united to stop the impending global disaster, despite their different origins and original purpose illustrate the duality in Good Omens.

Incorporation of Hewitt's Ideology

Hewitt's ideology on disaster management stresses the significance of human agency and power dynamics in shaping disasters. It is reflected in *Good Omens*, where the characters resist apocalyptic determinism and show resilience and cooperation to avert catastrophe. Crowley and Aziraphale's partnership across moral boundaries and Adam's rejection of his destiny emphasize that apocalypse can be subverted through collective human effort and moralities

Conclusion

And a summer that never ends. And if you want to imagine the future, imagine a boot... no, imagine a sneaker, laces trailing, kicking a pebble; imagine a stick, to poke at interesting things, and throw for a dog that may or may not decide to retrieve it; imagine a tuneless whistle, pounding some luckless popular song into insensibility; imagine figure, half angel, half devil, all human...

Slouching hopefully towards Tadfield.

... for ever. (Pratchett and Gaiman 392)

End of the novel, Gaiman and Pratchett describes a summer that "never ends", implying the significance of timelessness, innocence, hope, and optimism. The

passage invites the reader to experience the carefree youth and endless possibilities. Though the existential threat was addressed through the anthropomorphic portrayal of disaster, Armageddon is prevented by other forces like human agency, Young Adam and Aziraphale, and Crowley's love of life on Earth. The *Good Omens*, provide the reader with an optimistic message about the potential of humanity to overcome the most daunting challenges.

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WOMEN'S IDENTITY AND HEALTH COMMODIFICATION IN MAHASWETA DEVI'S FICTION

RADHIKA. S

*PhD Research Scholar, Department of English and Foreign Languages
Faculty of Engineering and Technology
SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ramapuram, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. NAGAMANI. K

*Research Supervisor, Department of English and Foreign Languages
Faculty of Engineering and Technology
SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ramapuram, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the significance of Jashoda's breasts, with a particular emphasis on their impact in a variety of situations and their eventual influence on her destiny. This sheds light on the manner in which Jashoda was regarded as a commodity and a mere function, as well as the manner in which she was not taken into consideration once she finished breastfeeding and approached middle age. In addition, it's evidence that Jashoda was considered a commodity at the time. The objectification and commercialisation of women on the basis of their physical appearance and beauty is a form of discriminatory behaviour that ought to be avoided by humans everywhere.

Keywords: *commodification, breast, milk, cow, beauty.*

"Breast-Giver," a short story from *Breast Stories* (1997) by Mahasweta Devi, explores themes of female tyranny and objectification. Jashoda, compelled to sell her breast milk to a wealthy family, illustrates how social and economic inequality diminishes the status of women. Devi advocates for social development in post-colonial India through her literary works. She examines the poverty of rural women, caste discrimination, and patriarchy. The examination will focus on gender roles, class dynamics, and narrative disruption. In Mahasweta Devi's novella "Breast Giver," Bengali-Brahmin women are overlooked. The critical academic paradigm of 'Subaltern Studies' highlights marginalised and excluded concepts.

The two protruding structures situated on the anterior superior region of a woman's torso are termed her mammary glands. They are the organs responsible for milk production in women post-partum. The term "breast" is commonly used to refer

to these interior organs. It is not simply a bodily component but also an essential element associated with sexual function. In other words, it is highly significant. Breasts function as significant emblems of gestation and gender in literary works across history. To emphasise these concepts, breasts were utilised. The concept of breasts has consistently garnered significant attention in literary works from the Victorian era and the Literarians. A significant number of Indian women authors often concentrate on the theme of breasts in their creative works. In "Breast Stories," Mahasweta Devi explores the commodification and objectification of the female body, alongside the resilience of femininity. In this work, the author Mahasweta Devi endeavours to utilise the female body as a pivotal symbol for revolution, consciousness, and metamorphosis. In contrast, other authors are endeavouring to emphasise the feminisation of their identities. However, she did not portray the female characters

as heroines; rather, she illustrated them as embodiments of the suffering women endure owing to male authority, their dependence on others, and several related adversities.

The novel *Breast Giver* by Mahasweta Devi illustrates a woman's gestation, sustenance, and endurance. Moreover, the narrative depicts the woman's metamorphosis into an object, namely a lactating equipment. Moreover, she illustrates the metamorphosis of the woman into a utilitarian device. Jashoda was a woman who had lost her source of income after discontinuing breastfeeding. She was an unworthy individual in all aspects. Due to her gender, she owned no material possessions. Her transformation into an insignificant woman was apparent to everyone. The protagonist of the narrative is Jashoda, who also serves as the title. The narrative focusses on her. Yashoda, Krishna's adoptive mother and Nandagopa's wife, symbolises this creature. Her role is to represent Yashoda. In her hometown, Jashoda was referred to as Stanadayini. A woman performing maternity duties is referred to as "stanadayini". Jashoda and Kanganalicharan belonged to a three-member Bengali Brahmin family. Kanganalicharan was her spouse. Their remuneration was inadequate. Kanganalicharan was employed at a confectionery company, whilst Jashoda remained at home. Jashoda's physique and bosom were superb, eliciting admiration from all. Jashoda possessed an extraordinary physique. Kanganalicharan was enthralled by his wife's breasts. The breasts were quite attractive. The phrase "When Kanganal's body did not penetrate hers like a geologist in a darkness illuminated solely by an oil lamp" exemplifies this statement effectively. (*Breast Stories* by Mahasweta Devi, page 72)

The narrative of Jashoda places considerable emphasis on the home linked to the Haldar family. He was a young guy who consistently endeavoured to satisfy the "whim of the mind or body." (*Breast Stories*, Mahasweta Devi, 53) The youngest son of

the Haldar family was a young man. To achieve this goal, he invested much effort. In "Breast Stories," Mahasweta Devi contends that he sought to satisfy his own physical wants. He utilised his domestic culinary skills. He perpetrated physical violence against her, leading to her termination. Kanganalicharan fantasised about his wife's "ample bosom" when incapacitated by the vehicle of Haldar's youngest son. Dreams transpired during Kanganalicharan's injury. Haldar deemed his son's Brahmin assault a significant transgression. He deemed it significant. He determined Kanganalicharan's medical care. Haldar assured Kanganalicharan of his assistance in establishing an enterprise adjacent to his farm. This constituted compensation. This judgement was predicated on his son's amputation of Kanganalicharan. He provided sustenance for the family, while Jashoda earned income by working as a cook at the Haldar residence. She was employed there, although she concentrated on promoting herself at the Haldar residence. She secured employment. Upon contemplating Jashoda's breasts, the Haldar family formulated a self-serving scheme. Jashoda was employed as a wet nurse, milk provider, and surrogate for the Haldar women. Jashoda acquiesced to their conditions.

Davidson, Michele R., et al. assert that culture encompasses beliefs, values, attitudes, and activities. In familial care, it is imperative to recognise the impact of culture on a family's reaction to health-related issues. The absence of responsiveness to Jashoda's health issues contributes to the decline of her well-being. (Davidson, Michele R., et al., 37)

In the narrative of *Breast Giver*, the sacredness and purity of motherhood gradually devolve into the objectification and commodification of the experience. In "The Breast Giver," Mahasweta Devi illustrates the plight of destitute women forced to commodify their bodies for financial security. These women are forced to participate in prostitution to obtain their livelihood. Furthermore, Jashoda fulfilled the stipulation

established by the Haldars, which mandated that she would breastfeed their progeny and act as a surrogate for them. Consequently, Jashoda fulfilled the condition. This was conducted to empower her to autonomously provide for her spouse and children. During her present tribulation, she is willing to sacrifice her own body to aid her family. This suggests that Jashoda was perceived not as an individual but only as a source of nourishment, with her "breasts" being the focal point of her status within the society. Jashoda was not regarded as a person at that time. Jashoda was esteemed as a provider of milk due to the substantial volume present in her breasts. Consequently, she let the infant Haldar to suckle and feed from her. This transpired because she was a supply of milk. Consequently, she adopted the position of "professional mother" for the children, while Kanganalicharan took on the role of "professional father."

He engaged in household tasks, prepared meals, and attended to his children. Jashoda's role as a professional mother, solely tasked with supplying breast milk to the offspring of the Haldar family, is evidenced by the subsequent lines:

In the paved courtyard of the Haldar house's ground floor, more than a dozen fortunate milch cows reside in spacious enclosures. Two Biharis tend to them as maternal cows. There contain substantial quantities of rind, bran, hay, grass, and molasses. Mrs. Haldar posits that an increase in the cow's consumption correlates with a greater yield of milk. Jashoda's position in the home is now situated above the Mother Cows. The mistress's sons manifested as Brahma and generated offspring. "Jashoda safeguards the offspring." (Breast Stories, Mahasweta Devi, 52)

Jashoda was relegated to the same status as other livestock since she was utilized as a feed animal. Conversely, she was seen not as a human being but as a commodity and a provider of "breast milk" for the offspring of Haldars. This was the

dominant perception. Upon considering the information presented in the preceding paragraph, it becomes readily comprehensible. At the Haldar house, she was offered accommodation and ensured access to nutrient-rich food. Consequently, she was capable of generating a greater volume of milk, which her family later utilized to nurse their children. In this situation, Jashoda was not regarded as a wet nurse; instead, she was merely being evaluated for her "brains." Previously, it was widely believed that Jashoda and her husband were deities due to their upper-class status. This was a universally accepted belief. Furthermore, they saw Jashoda as the embodiment of the goddess Durga, which explains the description of her as possessing "beautiful breasts with an abundant supply of milk." Nonetheless, she was regarded as if she were a bovine at a subsequent moment.

Jashoda and India exhibit notable parallels both before and during the nation's quest for independence. Similar to Jashoda, who was exploited for her lactation capabilities, the colonists maximised their gains from India, perceiving it only as a commodity. Conversely, some individuals exploited India's wealth, perceiving it only as a means, upon the nation's attainment of independence. Some individuals acted thus despite the nation supplying millions with sustenance and non-violent living conditions. This issue is neglected, akin to the situation Jashoda experienced, when she was regarded as cattle and no one had the courage to protest. This issue is overlooked as well. Jashoda received care solely from Mrs. Haldar, whose attention was predicated not on recognising Jashoda as a human person, but rather on perceiving her as a provider of food, specifically the milk that Jashoda would supply for Mrs. Haldar's grandchildren. Mrs. Haldar was the sole individual who attended to Jashoda. In the Haldar family, she served as a wet nurse, providing breast milk to the children who came to her for nourishment. She was also responsible for

providing them with the breast milk she had produced. She was regarded by everyone as little more than a basic utility. It can be proven with the below mentioned lines:

"Once the value of Jashoda's milk is recognised, it is seized." "Nourishment and continuous sexual attention are supplied to maintain her in optimal condition for ideal placement." (Breast Stories, Mahasweta Devi, 86)

According to the ladies who belonged to the Haldar family, "breasts" were considered a necessary element. Upon discovering that Jashoda would serve as a wet nurse, the women of the Haldar family expressed satisfaction, as it would allow them to "elude the obligations of motherhood" and "maintain their desired physique and breast contour." Consequently, they were free to "elude the obligations of motherhood." Their ability to don blouses with a "European cut" without encountering obstacles or embarrassment was a source of relief. Subsequently, Jashoda commenced employment with the Haldar family, where she was tasked with caring for their children while also bearing her own offspring. Nevertheless, she was also accountable for caring for her own children. Consequently, she was responsible for the nourishment of about fifty children, twenty of whom were her own and thirty from the Haldar family. While Mrs. Haldar was alive, Jashoda was highly regarded by all and provided with sufficient nourishment and a comfortable residence. Subsequent to Mrs. Haldar's demise, Jashoda was subjected to disrespectful treatment by the Haldar family. It was determined to place her in the accommodations designated for the staff. Due to her previous status as a paragon of virtue and her frequent invitations to various events, she now finds herself in a state of isolation. She was anticipated to seek employment as a cook and reside with the servants to fulfil her obligations. She was additionally mandated to reside with the staff.

After the Haldar family came to the realization

that Jashoda had stopped producing milk, they then came to the conclusion that she was of no value. A member of the Haldar family, Jashoda was given the responsibility of serving as the Stanadayini within their household. It was stated that she is a biological entity that possesses mammary glands, which are the glands that are accountable for the duty of delivering sustenance and support to offspring. During the period that she was nursing, when the children in the home expressed a desire for nourishment, special provisions were prepared to fulfill her requirements in particular. As a result of the fact that she had ceased breastfeeding and that there were no children living in the house, they came to the conclusion that Jashoda was not required. Following thirty years of breastfeeding her children, Jashoda began to doubt her role within the family. She was now living in the basement due to a lack of milk and the absence of children to care for, which caused her to question her function within the family. This was something that she had been doing for the previous thirty years.

Jashoda now perceives her former role as the "milk mother" merely as a distant memory. Kangalicharan, her husband, initially held her in high esteem; however, he eventually began to regard her with disdain. His indifference stemmed from Jashoda's diminished physical appearance and the loss of the "full, beautiful breasts" he once admired, leading to his disinterest. This marked the onset of his neglectful behaviour. He sought companionship with a younger woman to enhance his own satisfaction and happiness, despite the fact that his masculinity hindered his ability to truly enjoy the experience.

Jashoda thought she was an exhausted resource and a source of unreachable minerals. Jashoda thought she had both. Unfortunately, Jashoda was wrong in both ways. She thought she was a member of this organisation. Kangalicharan was exiled from her home and found the Haldars'

home inhospitable. None of these sites fit her. Residents were hostile when she visited one flat. They were the most despicable to her. She needed a useless body to realise her destiny. Her aspirations were intended to be achieved. Jashoda, a loving wife, is declining. An event is coming. She must traverse this life period during her development. Jashoda developed distinct depression symptoms. Her mental and physical health suffered, causing postpartum depression symptoms. Her condition worsened. Following childbirth, a mother's psychological shift may include a dread of losing her child. Jashoda's postpartum depression shows the necessity of receiving help during difficult times. She must prioritise self-care and seek medical help. Jashoda's postpartum depression shows the necessity of receiving help during difficult times. She must prioritise self-care and seek expert help during this difficult time. Jashoda struggled with parenting and mental illness throughout this time.

Obtaining assistance from family, friends, and experts was essential in aiding her to navigate this difficult period. Postpartum depression is a syndrome characterised by such alterations. This alteration may manifest as behavioural, emotional, or physical in character. It is possible that it will be all three. Despite having devoted much of her life to nurturing newborns, Jashoda now felt a profound sense of emptiness and perceived her efforts as futile. This occurred notwithstanding her lifelong dedication to childcare. She perceived her breasts, devoid of any tissue, as analogous to a ship without a steering wheel. She believed that "her own body," which had garnered her fame, wealth, respect, and dignity, was no longer capable of providing support and had completely forfeited its functional abilities. She believed that "her own body" had entirely forfeited its capacity to perform its functions. Mahasweta Devi remarked, "her breasts tend to feel vacant, as if discarded." She never envisioned that a child's lips

would be on her nipple; hence, the occurrence was entirely unforeseen.

Over the course of several years, she had been treating herself as if she were a milk-producing machine and commodifying her own body. As a result, her physical health had suffered significant damage. Now, Jashoda is suffering from an illness. The health status of the eldest daughter-in-law of the Haldar family was brought to the attention of the boys of the family within a short period of time. With the intention of avoiding the chance of a Brahmin woman passing away within their household, they attributed their concern for her care to the fact that they wished to avoid the risk of her going away. A conclusion was reached that the "red lumpy mass on Jashoda's breast was terminal breast cancer." This conclusion was reached as a consequence of the tests that were carried out and the consultation with a medical specialist. During a period in which women were confronted with a variety of obstacles, Mahasweta Devi made efforts to raise awareness about breast cancer and the methods that can be utilized to diagnose it at an earlier stage. She has repeatedly brought up this condition, which results in the deaths of a number of women each year.

Female Jashoda is confused by her breasts. She was called the "milk mother" by the phrase "breasts," which was mentioned earlier. Breasts provided her with food, security, and other necessities for a nurturing life. She was neglected during the Haldars' childrearing. Her breasts were useless. She was ignored. The cancer diagnosis worsened her condition. Fluid-leaking lesions were found around her breast. Her breasts became unsightly and smelt bad. Her carers abandoned her, and she had no visits. Her husband Kangalicharan left her for a younger lady, despite admiring her body and breasts. She was ignored by her own children and the infants she had nursed. No biological children visited her. They betrayed her trust. Her vision showed "the sores on her breast mocking her with numerous

mouths and eyes." Her circumstances were too much for her. Jashoda tenderly cleaned the master's children with soap and oil while they nursed. She did this while nursing the boys. Why did those breasts betray her in the end?" (Breast Stories, Mahasweta Devi, 67)

As the illness metastasised within her body, her loved ones began to distance themselves from her. This transpired during the progression of the malignancy. Her husband not only deprived her of the perks associated with being his wife but also denied her the rights inherent in fulfilling her role as a mother to his children. Moreover, the children ceased to provide care for her and abandoned her to manage independently. Despite her solitary admission to the hospital, no one visited or enquired about her well-being during her stay. This occurred notwithstanding her admission to the hospital. The moment she beheld the medical professionals, she was convinced they were her boys. Mahasweta Devi remarked, "She perceives her milksons globally from various locations."

In the closing moments of her life, as the devastating disease of cancer ravaged her body, her sole companions were her nursing sons, whom she continued to nourish. She attended to them until the conclusion. In truth, she was a Hindu woman abandoned at the hospital due to the dire circumstances she faced. Despite having numerous children, both biological and milksons, she passed away alone in the hospital.

Only after a period did Jashoda realise that her extremities were becoming cold. She was acutely aware that her death was imminent. Jashoda was aware that several individuals were observing her hand, even though she could not open her eyes. A needle was placed to pierce her arm. When an individual inhales internally, they get a sensation of discomfort. It is inescapable. Who is challenging this assertion? Does she have any relations among these individuals? Are you referring to the folks she cared

for in her capacity as a mother, or to those she attended to in a professional capacity? Upon completing her cultivation of the planet, Jashoda contemplated the possibility of her eventual demise occurring independently. A multitude of individuals are regarded as her "milksons," encompassing the physician who conducts daily examinations, the person who will shroud her face, the individual responsible for placing her on a stretcher, the one who will lower her to the cremation site, and the outcast tasked with incinerating her. Assuming the role of Jashoda is crucial for nourishing the planet. An individual must be solitary and devoid of someone to provide them with water to be able to die. Conversely, it was anticipated that an individual would be present at the conclusion of the event. Who exactly is the individual in question? Who was the specific individual? Who precisely is the individual in question? As Jashoda embodied the divine, others comported themselves in accordance with her perspectives. At the time of Jashoda's demise, it was evident that God had also withdrawn. A mortal, who assumes the role of God on Earth due to abandonment by all and a fate of dying in solitude, is inevitably condemned to perish alone. This is due to her inheriting the destiny of dying in solitude. (Breast Stories by Mahasweta Devi, 74)

The sole remnants of her existence were her memories, her name, her recognition, and her identity. All of these items had been mislaid by her. Her only distinction was her role as the sorrowful Brahmin wet nurse who succumbed of breast cancer while isolated in the hospital. Her demise transpired while she was present. As she approached death, she sensed that someone would visit her. "Yet someone was expected to be present at the end. Who was it? Who was it?" (Breast Stories, Mahasweta Devi, 74).

The demise of Jashoda, a woman esteemed for her caste and miraculous attributes, transpired in a manner that was unremarkable. Consequently,

another spirit was engulfed in the tide of commercialisation, commodification, objectification, and enterprise. Jashoda gained notoriety due to the prominence of her breasts. Although she was cremated by a man deemed untouchable, she received considerable reverence as a Brahmin woman. At this juncture, choice is irrelevant; death exhibits no bias. An individual is said to encounter this phenomenon when their mortality is predetermined. The caste of those affected is invariably disregarded, even as it contributes to the severance of souls. At approximately eleven o'clock at night, Jashoda succumbed. The body of Jashoda Devi, a Hindu woman, was placed in the hospital mortuary and subsequently transported to the cremation ground, where it was incinerated by an untouchable. Jashoda was regarded as a divine embodiment, and the actions of others were influenced by her thoughts. Her demise signified the departure of God as well.

When mortal masquerades as God here below, she is forsaken by all, and she must always die alone. (Breast Stories, Mahasweta Devi, 74,) Breast Giver is a narrative centered on breasts and a woman who possesses them within her anatomy. This is the rationale for the narrative being conveyed. This narrative shows female body commodification. The author also shows how others' avarice and self-centredness can affect women. Years earlier, Jashoda gave up her identity as a woman to raise her children as a "milk mother." She was left with two hollow, milkless breasts. She had breast cancer in one breast, but her children never breastfed from the other. "Breast-Giver" explores feminine commodification. Jashoda's breasts, once symbols of motherhood, are now commodities traded for profit. The wealthy Haldar family uses Jashoda's body to achieve their goals. She is used for milk production without regard for her well-being. Devi emphasises

"breast-giver." It implies that Jashoda is only a mother. She is seen as a tool rather as a person with goals. Devi stresses the patriarchal objectification and exploitation of women, making the female body a primary topic.

In conclusion, Mahasweta Devi's *Breasts* serves as a poignant critique of the commodification and objectification of women's bodies. Through the examination of Jashoda's narrative, we gain insight into the global ramifications of gender-based violence and the intersectionality of this phenomenon. Devi's work compels us to reevaluate how women's health and identity are frequently influenced by societal expectations and dynamics, urging us to critically assess the valuation of women in both local and global contexts. The commodification of Jashoda's body transcends local concerns, representing a broader global discourse on gender, class, and power.

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VIVEKANANDA'S VISION OF RADICAL REFORMS THROUGH THE VEDAS

Dr. AMI GHELANI

Independent Scholar

Vadodara, Gujarat

Abstract

The Vedas, eternal and universal, are the basis of Indian culture. Vivekananda called them the scriptures of Hinduism. This paper focuses on Vivekananda's ideas to revive the Vedas as the means to true reform. His vision of radical reform emphasizes breaking social barriers, empowering individuals, and fostering a sense of universal brotherhood. In addition to looking at Vivekananda's views on Vedas and their importance, this paper draws attention to his concept of practical Vedanta, which emphasizes living by the principles of the Vedas in daily life. Vivekananda's thoughts on Vedanta and Upanishads offer a profound and enlightening philosophy. Vivekananda's teaching promotes equality and inspires radical reform, making Vedanta a force for transforming change.

Keywords: *vedanta, radical reform, hinduism*

Introduction

The 19th century is often considered a transformative era in Indian history, marked by cultural and intellectual reawakening under colonial domination. During this time, three towering personalities emerged: Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, and Aurobindo. They inspired people to revive faith in spirituality and build a better world. Their contribution to shaping the world is so great that their message and work are still considered important even after more than a hundred years. According to Aurobindo, the renaissance/new awakening in India came in three steps: reception, rejection, and new creation. Vivekananda believed that true awareness would come only when India returned to its spiritual roots. As it was later practiced by Gandhi and Aurobindo. This paper discusses Vivekananda's ideas on redefining and reimagining the nation based on culture based on Vedic culture. It also focuses on Vivekananda's concept of radical reform and his contribution to a reawakening of the nation in the 19th century.

Foundation of Reform before Vedantic Revival

Before Vivekananda's spiritual revival of Hinduism, several prominent figures led the socio-religious reform movements in India. Raja Rammohun Roy, known as the "Father of the Indian Renaissance," spearheaded the Brahmo Samaj, challenging idolatry, caste discrimination, and social evils like Sati while advocating for women's rights and scientific education. Iswarchandra Vidyasagar furthered these efforts by promoting widow remarriage and women's education, despite societal resistance. The Brahmo Samaj evolved under Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen, who connected social reform with religious renewal. Meanwhile, Henry Derozio's Young Bengal movement pushed radical Western ideals, though with limited grassroots support. In western India, the Prarthana Samaj took a more moderate approach, gaining wider acceptance through its emphasis on caste equality and women's education while respecting traditional values. These reform movements laid the foundation for modern Indian society by challenging orthodox practices and fostering progressive thought. However, the true break in the traditional reform movement came with

leaders like Dayanand Saraswati and Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who advocated for a return to the Vedas and a revival of Vedantic ideas, visions that Vivekananda later carried forward and shared with the world.

Vivekananda believed that these earlier reforms of the past hundred years only touched the surface and didn't reach the majority of people. Issues like widow remarriage and the abolition of Sati mainly affected the educated upper castes, who received their education using resources that belonged to the whole society. These changes were more about fixing their own lives, not about lifting the whole society. Thus, Vivekananda emphasizes the necessity of real reform – a radical reform. Real change has to start from the roots, from the ground level, and then grow upward to build a strong and united India. This kind of deep change isn't quick or easy. It's a big challenge that's been around for hundreds of years, so we shouldn't rush it. In his "My Plan of Campaign" lecture, Vivekananda highlights how his approach to reformation differs from that of all contemporary reformers. Because Vivekananda desired that we return to our origins. "You must go down to the basis of the thing, to the very root of the matter. That is what I call radical reform. Put the fire there and let it burn upwards and make an Indian nation." (132)

Vivekananda emphasizes the necessity of spreading the ideas of Vedanta from door to door to make a radical reform. He also believed that practicing Vedanta in daily life could bring about true reform, as the very root of Indian culture has been based on spirituality since ancient times. The Vedas are considered the foundation of Indian culture and are believed to be divine words of God. They are regarded as the source of all human knowledge – social, spiritual, and scientific. While some civilizations are built upon pillars like politics or intellectualism, Indian civilization is rooted in religion. Therefore, to address the situations of India like

crippling poverty, widespread superstitions, priestcraft, the oppression of women, and the exploitation of the downtrodden, Vivekananda turned to the spiritual roots of India—the knowledge of the Vedas—and reinterpreted them in light of modern needs. Vedanta, the knowledge of the Vedas, is expressed through Upanishads, Smritis, Puranas, and Tantras. Vedanta teaches the oneness and immortality of the soul. These Vedantic ideals, such as the oneness of the soul, unity, and equality, can serve as powerful counters to casteism, inequality, and discrimination. Another key idea of Vedanta is the innate strength or divinity of the soul. This idea uplifts the weak and the downtrodden, demonstrating that Vedanta fosters confidence and self-worth, both essential for meaningful reform.

Practical Vedanta

Vivekananda's concept of Practical Vedanta is one of his most significant contributions to modern Indian philosophy and spirituality. Vivekananda's concept of practical Vedanta focuses on the application of ideals of Vedanta in day-to-day life by all strata of society. Vivekananda believed religion must not remain confined to temples, rituals, or books—it must be lived and expressed through action. He emphasized that real spirituality is not in preaching doctrines but in serving humanity, especially the poor and oppressed. To him, worship of God and man's service were the same, because every human being is a manifestation of the divine. Practical Vedanta, then, is about applying spiritual truths to daily life: being fearless, truthful, and selfless. This approach demands radical change, both in how individuals think and how society functions.

In all his speeches, Vivekananda aimed to convey the message of Practical Vedanta and the transformative power of spiritual knowledge. According to Vivekananda, merely preaching the Gita, Bible, Qur'an, or any other religious scripture is not enough to reform society; it is their application in

daily life that leads people toward true wisdom. Unlike other religions that seek God externally, Vedanta teaches that God resides within us, and knowing the Atman (soul) is the key to understanding the universe. Vedanta upholds that every human is divine, and all virtues stem from this inner divinity. It also promotes tolerance by accepting diverse religious paths as valid. This philosophy has influenced Buddhism, Christianity, and Western philosophical thought, contributing significantly to religious and intellectual revolutions.

Upanishad, the philosophical treatise of the Vedas, talks about the Brahman, the ultimate soul of people. Realization of the truth that the ultimate reality of the soul is present in all individuals is the goal of life. Vivekananda emphasized that all individuals, regardless of occupation, share the same soul. He advocated for equal opportunities for all and faith in the divine presence within ourselves. Each person, he believed, can work out their salvation. Vivekananda highlighted that Vedanta is not only for the ideal world but is equally important in the practical world. He aimed to promote social equality, encourage selfless service, and shape Vedanta in a way that was useful in everyday life. He believed that Vedanta should be lived and experienced, not just studied. For Vivekananda, any theory that couldn't be applied in daily life was of no value. He wanted to make Vedantic knowledge simple and accessible to all. He urged people to believe in the great ideas of Vedanta and apply them in everyday situations. He believed that the true practicality of any reforms lies in practical thinking

Vedanta teaches us to believe in ourselves and love our work. There is no difference between two people; they both have the same soul. The universe is one, and everyone is a part of this one. According to Vivekananda, when we think we can or cannot do something, that belief becomes a superstition. In truth, Vedanta teaches that we can do anything. Just as darkness doesn't last forever, weakness, too, is

not permanent. It only exists in our thoughts. When we think we are weak or impure, we are deceiving ourselves. Such thinking spreads negativity in the world. These beliefs are nothing but forms of mental hypnosis, superstition, and blind faith. Instead, we must shine and realize that we already have everything—purity, freedom, love, and power. We just need to make time from our busy lives to understand and practice these ideals of Vedanta.

Relevance of Practical Vedanta in Radical Reform

The teachings and philosophies of Vivekananda are relevant in the past, present, and future. He has brought the ideals of Vedanta into the lives of the people, which brings radical reform in society. Swami Vivekananda's vision of Practical Vedanta sought to transform religion from a system of rituals into a practical, empowering force rooted in inner strength and self-realization. He emphasized that spiritual wisdom should be accessible to all, including the illiterate and marginalized, integrating the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and Vedanta into daily life. His approach advocated for a universal moral framework grounded in the oneness of existence, promoting mutual respect and tolerance across religions. He believed that true reform arises not from external rituals but from inner transformation, where individuals recognize the divine within themselves. In this approach, spirituality becomes a dynamic force for social good, blending wisdom, action, and compassion to address modern challenges and uplift society.

The modern world is dominated by rational and scientific thinking. Therefore, all spiritual philosophies must resonate with rational thought and universal values. Vivekananda believed that Vedanta aligns with the principles of science and spirituality. It emphasizes inner strength, self-awareness, and the recognition of the divine within every individual, promoting equality and unity. According to Vivekananda, all religious paths are equal, no religion

is higher or lower. The evils or injustices of society, such as superstition and discrimination, and untouchability, could be overcome by recognizing the inherent divinity within every individual. By understanding and embracing this inner truth, one can achieve liberation and foster harmony among all people.

No one can deny the significant influence of Vivekananda in Indian reform and the upliftment of society. Many philosophers and thinkers praised his contribution to the reformation of India through the revival of the Vedas. S. Radhakrishna, India's first president and philosopher, in his speech to the students, said about Vivekananda:

Vivekananda raises work to the level of worship and exhorted us to seek salvation through the service of God in man. If we in our country are profit by the teachings of Vivekananda, it is essential that we should all be interested in not only constructive work, but become dedicated spirits, spirits dedicated to the task of establishing a spiritual religion which transcends ecclesiastical organizations and doctrinal sophistries and subtleties, a religion which leads to the transformation of human society and brings it nearer to the Ram Rajya or the Kingdom of God, which our prophets were set for us. (S. Ramamurthy, 38)

Vivekananda wanted a profound transformation in religious practices. His approach moves beyond traditional rituals, emphasizing a spiritual religion that surpasses institutional boundaries and doctrinal complexities. Such a shift aims to fundamentally reshape society, aligning it more closely with ideals of universal service and spiritual unity. The true essence of Vedanta does not lie in the texts, but it can be found in each person's heart. By practicing its ideals, society may improve this inner wisdom and foster knowledge, pleasure, and harmony. This spiritual realization leads to fulfillment by releasing one from material limitations. Re-establishing a connection with these spiritual foundations and

prioritizing compassion and inner strength above external power is necessary to revitalize society and eliminate superstitions and injustices. India's longstanding tenacity in conserving its religious legacy highlights the superiority of spirituality over violence. India can spread a message of hope and togetherness throughout the world and build a civilization based on spiritual principles by accepting and sharing this inherent divinity.

Conclusion

India has always held a unique national mission to offer the ideals of Vedanta to the world. Over the last two centuries, many reformers have contributed significantly to the awakening of Indian society, addressing the needs of their times. However, Swami Vivekananda, at the close of the 19th century, transcended the boundaries set by these reformers. He envisioned not just social reform, but a revival rooted in the eternal knowledge of the Vedas, placing particular emphasis on the transformative power of Vedanta philosophy. Vivekananda highlighted the Vedantic ideals of oneness, strength, faith in the self, and the divine presence within every individual. According to him, these ideals have the potential to bring about true reformation, not merely external or superficial changes, but a deep, radical transformation of the human spirit and society. By internalizing and living the Vedantic truth of the soul's unity, humanity can rise above divisions, and a sense of equality and brotherhood can be established. Social evils like exploitation and oppression can be eliminated as the privileged sections begin to serve the underprivileged, inspired by a sense of spiritual solidarity.

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CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Dr. VETRISSELVI G

*Assistant Professor, Department of English
College of Science and Humanities
SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Vadapalani, Tamil Nadu*

Dr. VISWAPRAKASH V

*Associate Professor, Department of Management
SRM Valliammai Engineering College, Kattankulathur, Tamil Nadu*

Abstract

Communication problems are typically rooted in culture. A group or community that we share common experiences with, which influence our worldview, is referred to as having a culture. Finding common ground across different groups in our culture is essential to establish effective channels of cross-cultural communication. Gathering information and working in a team are other important aspects of communication, in addition to speaking, writing, and editing. In the twenty-first-century economy, this entails cross-cultural communication. The aim of cross-cultural communication is to recognize and comprehend the communication styles of people from various cultural backgrounds. In addition to this research paper, analysing Hurn and Tomalin's Cross-Cultural Communication: Theory and Practice (2013), which elaborates on developing cross-cultural communication skills at the global level and their effect on culture. This research article inspects features, strategies, and techniques to improve cross-cultural communication with reference to the theoretical framework, which is to transfer skills, technology, and knowledge across cultures and overcome barriers in a multicultural team.

Keywords: *language, culture, communication, strategy, differences, similarities, conversations, behavior, etiquettes, etc.*

Objective: The objective of this research paper is to understand the main concept of theoretical and research background, identifying and applying strategies related to cross-cultural communication to overcome the barriers for effective 3C's.

Research Questions

1. What are the strategies and techniques of 3C's and how to develop them in 21st century?
2. How to overcome barriers in 3C's and certain tips to improve 3C's?

Introduction

Dealing with individuals from different cultures in manner that reduces miscommunication and maximizes the opportunity to forge solid cross-cultural connections is known as cross-cultural communication. It encompasses groups that one

joins or becomes a part of, can pick up a new culture by relocating to a different area, or by experiencing a daily economic status shift. Culture can be thought of as belonging to multiple cultures at once. Knowledge is essential for successful cross-cultural communication. First and foremost, it's critical that individuals recognize the possible obstacles to cross-cultural communication and make a deliberate effort to overcome them. Secondly, it is crucial to accept that one's endeavors may not always yield results and modify one's conduct accordingly. Releasing the right responses is more important for effective cross-cultural communication than sending the right message, claim Hall and Hall (1990) (Hall, 1990). A group of people has created its own set of norms for behaviour, beliefs, and aesthetic standards, thought patterns, and communication methods throughout time in order to secure its survival. According to

Trompenaars (1993), culture is a shared set of meanings (Trompenaars, 1993). Different cultural standards and expectations for behaviour vary with regard to social interactions, official meetings, and negotiations, among other formal and informal contexts. Misunderstandings may arise due to a lack of knowledge and comprehension of these distinctions. This study article discusses the strategies of cross-cultural communication, offers suggestion on how to create the 3Cs, and propose some alternate ways for getting beyond the obstacles in the three 3Cs.

Cross-Cultural Communication: Strategies

Strategy 1: Exposure is the most effective method for learning a new language and experiencing a foreign culture can also be beneficial. According to Trompenaars (2000), culture gives people a purposeful setting in which to interact, reflect, and face the outside world (Trompenaars, 2000). Sometimes, this may not be find as practical, but depending on other sources such as listening to radio stations, watching movies, arranging a trip to religious places, and other kind of blending into other culture can be an easy way of adapting to the new culture. To put it briefly, the greatest way to begin understanding any culture is by firsthand experience.

Strategy 2: Differences can begin to feel like a hazard at first. People like to feel one with the new environment, shows that they have an ability to communicate, interpret facets of behavior that sometimes fail to stick with one's real habitual actions or experiences. This experience may create a mood of loneliness, feel like a stranger, but it is essential to keep these feelings aside in a perspective, cope with the differences and adapt to accept one as commonalities. According to Hurn and Tomalin (2013), Different cultures have varied expectations for appropriate behaviour in official and informal contexts (Tomalin, 2013). For example, social interactions, meetings, and negotiations. A lack of

understanding and consciousness of these differences can make misunderstandings and in some situations, even offence.

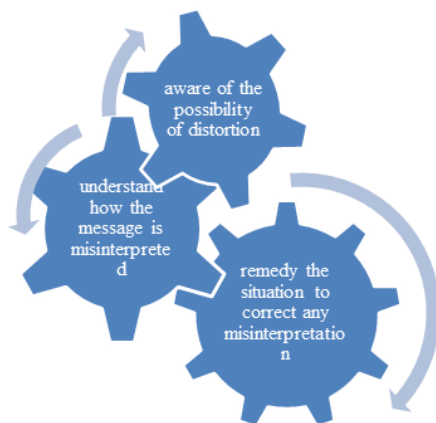
Instead of appreciating the distinctions, there is frequently a temptation to draw assumptions about how the foreign culture and one's own are similar. For instance, there are numerous delicate ways in which the cultures of Britain and America differ from one another, despite the views of both countries that there are very little differences between them. These differences are only entirely acknowledged when the two live and work mutually in each other's cultures.

Strategy 3: Overgeneralization -based stereotyping is a common occurrence, particularly when one occasionally encounters with people from different cultures. The human mind automatically attempts to construct some kind of order or structure from what is perceived when faced with uncertainty. This is particularly true when uncertainty makes us feel exposed. As a result, the mind forms its own set of guidelines or generalizations that may be founded in certain apparent patterns and realities but do not take into consideration individual variances and actual experience.

According to Hurn and Tomalin (2013) people form "pre-established expectations" (Tomalin, 2013, p. 13) from other people think and believe. According to him, a stereotype is a collection of ideas and perspectives about individuals who belong to a different group. When experiences defy our established notions, they are met with ambiguity. In reaction, we attempt to lump individuals into an unreliable category and leave them in the dark. Stereotyping results from categorising, which simplifies the classification of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds? As a result of these categories' association with the unknown, there is a propensity to frequently associate them with unpleasant feelings. Stereotyping is a quick and easy way to categorise people, especially those from different cultures, although it can be good or negative and does not

allow for variation. According to Hurn and Tomalin, stereotypes are harmless when applied as a general guideline, but they can be harmful, unsafe, and racist when believed to be the complete truth about a different group of people.

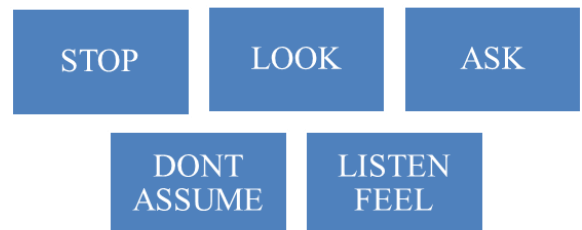
Strategy 4: Within groupings, there is always greater variation than between them. This indicates that the variance within each group outweighs the differences between them. Put otherwise, both categories contain individuals who are bold and timid, truthful and dishonest, and aggressive and accommodative. Subsequently, every group comprises a diverse mix of individuals, with patterns within each group being more similar than dissimilar. Simply put, the common practices and rituals among the members of the group are shaped by their shared culture and history. The core work is done in the same way, but different languages and coding are used to accomplish it. Because it requires examining and comprehending other people's systems in order to communicate across two platforms, this type of communication is known as cross-cultural communication as examine and comprehend the method of others to be capable to correspond between the two platforms. Hence, Nancy Mitford (1945) utters, "Abroad is unutterable bloody and foreigners are friends" (Mitford, 1945, p. 15)



Disparities in perception are frequently the root cause of cultural differences. The issue is that when

communicating globally, people frequently misinterpret the entire context. While committing errors in perception and taking offence at things that the speaker in their context would deem completely non-confrontational. For instance, both direct and indirect criticism. It's crucial to avoid criticizing someone directly in China, Japan, and, to a lesser extent, South Korea in order to preserve their reputation. Therefore, when there are cultural differences between the sender and the recipient, there is a much higher chance of communication failure.

Strategy 5: Cultures are always evolving, particularly in the ways that they interact. Cultures seem to be static, yet they shift, flow, and even change from within over time. However, interactions between cultures that emphasize distinct binding rituals and values and encourage disparate communication methods quicken the pace of change. The end effect is frequently disorienting, but both cultures always evolve in the process.



The above diagram projects useful procedure for the culture bond. The primary word stop refers in circumstances of indistinctness, and accepted inclination is to speed up and extract different cultures in a situation. When gaze at the group of people and listen how they speak and share about their cultural values; it is to observe what does the individual culture convey? Ask when something is incorrect; inquire courteously if there is whatever thing can be done. This will not cause offence, people will be contented when showing concern and

knowing interest on other culture. Don't assume states that making assumptions in everything that lead to be dangerous thing. The outcome of it predicts assuming other culture in a negative way. The final key word suggests that listen and feel the atmosphere of one's cultural values. The conversation or the discussion of cross-cultural communication scenario would be neutral instead of hostile.

To reduce the barriers in effective cross-cultural communication, the following points can ponder and influence the culture.

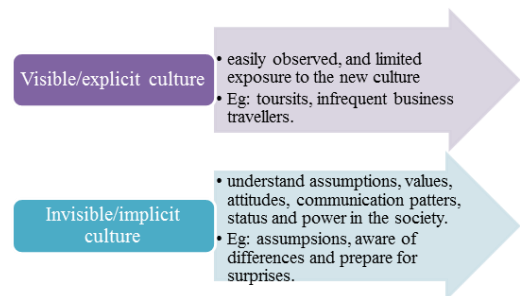
- ✓ By actively listening to one's own words, one might avoid making hasty judgements that are not in line with their inherent meaning. Consequently, cultivate the ability to listen.
- ✓ In order to obtain feedback, it is necessary to determine whether other individuals comprehend the meaning of what they are expressing and making. This is due to the fact that an individual's impressions are frequently founded on their own personal value system. This may prove to be difficult due to the fact that, for instance, in many Asian cultures, it is considered rude to disagree or accept a negative response.
- ✓ Before evaluating and responding to the messages delivered by other communicators, it is important to make an effort to comprehend and respect them.
- ✓ Access to communication resources and opportunities is crucial for the realisation of human potential and the improvement of the welfare of families, communities, and society.
- ✓ It is essential to cultivate communication environments that are characterised by compassion and reciprocal comprehension, which honour the unique needs and characteristics of individual communicators.
- ✓ When presented with significant decisions, it is important to encourage the sharing of information, viewpoints, and feelings, while

simultaneously maintaining a respect for privacy and confidentiality.

- ✓ This means that we should take responsibility for the immediate and long-term consequences that our words have, and we should also expect others to do the same.
- ✓ In order to establish communication channels, it is not a problem to do so.

Oberg's Iceberg Analogy

The following analogy examines the two types of culture which are required at cross-cultural communication.



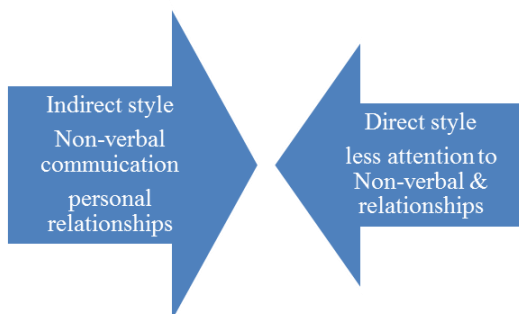
Possible Areas of Cross-Cultural Friction

A small outcome at the beginning can save a lot of miscommunications.

Hot spot 1: Different cultures may have different customs concerning about the proper technique to initiate and end a conversation. There are certain ways of commencing a conversation or concluding may lead to impolite. These are considered as artificial customs sometimes, and there is no universal way to initiate or build a conversation, in short, one's behavior matters everything. It includes modes of address, salutations, and levels of reverence to age or social position, designation, agreeing ways to conclude the conversation elegantly. Evidently, this will also address gender inequalities, much to the dismay of many in the West. Levitt (1983) observes that different cultural practices, national preferences and standards are indications of the past. (1983, 92-101.)

Edward T. and Mildred R. Hall in their book *Understanding Cultural Differences* (1990) examine diverse communication styles and impact of behavior in different cultures. The Halls proposed two key principles of 3C's one is high-context and the other is low-context communication. A high-context communicator indirectly confers instruction and proposal and thus has implicit information. Their style of communication is 'indirect' or 'implicit' (Tomalin, 2013, p. 22). High-context communicators are Japanese, Arabs, Koreans, Chinese, Italians and Mediterranean people too. A low-context communicator is contrast to the high-context communicator. The message and information conveyed directly and explicitly in the form of memos, legal documents and written statements. The Germans, Dutch, British, Australians, Americans, Scandinavians and Canadians set the gateway of low-context communication.

Comparison of high-context and low-context communication is given below.



High-Context Communication Low- Context Communication

Hot spot 2: While it is more suitable in certain cultures to acquire turns and twist in an interactive way, it is more imperative in others to pay attention carefully and without responding right away in case it is taken as a challenge. This is primarily depends on the audience, the conversation's setting, and the degree of personal connection between the participants. According to Hurn and Tomalin (2013),

diverse cultural perspectives exist about the importance of time (Tomalin, 2013). Disparities among tourists, business associates, and the global community can lead to miscommunication and irritation. Differences in attitudes can also cause impatience, disturbance, and humiliation in a conversation; hence, socializing became a challenging one.

Hot spot 3: When it comes to the issue of interruptions, the same considerations are taken into consideration. Certain cultures consider disruptions of the discourse to be the norm, whether they be vocal, physical, or emotional. This is especially true when it comes to men or those who are considered to be on equal equality. It is possible that many people in Europe and the United States will misinterpret this kind of engagement as an argument or a hostile conversation; nevertheless, this is not the case.

Trompenaars looks at culture as a standard with distinguish interruptions too. He has recognized five dimensions of proportions to relate one culture to other, the diffuse versus specific dimension is relevant and express similar idea of interruptions. His particular dimension explains how others might divert a person's attention from their own personality level or from the level that is acceptable in a certain circumstance. Individuals allow others to enter and disrupt their private space by sharing, but when they are in a confined area, they keep their distance and share exclusively with those in their immediate circle.

Hot spot 4: Open conversation about money, much less the kind of intimate family concerns that frequently headline afternoon chat shows on television in the West, is frowned upon in certain circles. This is especially true in the West. Travellers and businesses should familiarise themselves with the customs that pertain to the closure of contracts, the conduct of business, and the degree to which particulars are predetermined and documented in writing across cultural boundaries. When it comes to culture and language, Lewis (2011) argues that the

entire issue of people having a variety of language patterns and using their words in a manner that is distinctive to their country eventually ends in misconceptions that influence both expression and intention. This is because people use their words in how they are used in their country (Lewis, p.21, 2011).

Hot spot 5: There are certain styles of communication in which silent is expected prior to a response, which is a sign of thinking and respect for the person who initially spoke. On the other hand, in other settings, silence may be interpreted as a sign of hostility. A twenty-second silence at a conference is considered to be too protracted in Western culture, which causes discomfort among those who are participating. Without fail, someone will interrupt in order to break the awkward silence that has been occurring. The responses to silent, on the other hand, are not uniformly consistent across the board.

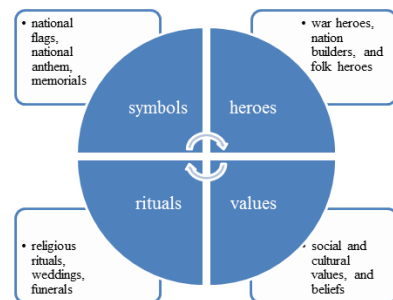
Hot spot 6: People in Western societies frequently try to build an immediate connection with one another through the use of humour; nevertheless, this method is not generally considered to be appropriate. Among certain individuals, the use of humour may be interpreted as a show of contempt, thereby highlighting a domain in which errors regularly arise. In certain situations, the establishment of rapport can be accomplished through the use of humour, provided that it resonates with a mutual comprehension.

Hot spot 7: At what point is it appropriate to discuss more sensitive subjects during a conversation, a lengthier conversation, or a negotiation? On the other hand, at what point in a conversation is it appropriate to just enquire about the directions available? The importance of understanding how sequencing influences efficacy cannot be overstated. This is due to the fact that every culture has created conventions that enable sensitive matters to be addressed in a manner that respects all individuals involved, despite the fact that

these approaches can vary. Both time and sequencing are really essential. Whether it is offered too early or too late, according to tradition, a question that has been well formulated can have multiple implications for the one who is listening to it and can impact subsequent behaviour when it is asked.

Hofstede and Minkov identified sixth dimension which proposes people in societies are able to satisfy their basic needs and aspirations freely. They are “subjective well-being” (Minkov, 2010, P. 282). People in certain culture follow strict norms of social behavior, and even their desires and wishes are suppressed by the principles which results in restriction of freedom. It is unsociable and incorrect to spend leisure time as entertainment. This dimension is concerned with well-being and happiness of the society they belong to. Thus it is sensitive to neglect their norms. Hofstede (2013) extends his research by viewing the new dimension with the differences between “indulgent and restrained societies” in their independent life, their general norms of behavior, their attitude and approach towards people in domestic and public life, and the influence of politics. (Hofstede, 2013, p.41)

His four manifestations which represent the value of their culture are follows:



Techniques to improve Cross-cultural Communication:

Tips 1: When English is the common language in 3Cs, this does not mean that speaking in a normal speed improves the effectual delivery. Slow down, speak clearly and ensure to pronounce each word clearly will be effective. Hurn and Tomalin, “different

languages are spoken at different speeds and with different degrees of inflection" which affects the speed of delivery in oral communication (Tomalin, 2013, p. 79). It is essential to note that language is a matter of custom, courtesy and taboo as well as convey meaning. A concept that appears simple to one's mind can cause confusion and difficult in grasp in other's mind. (Binyon, 2001).

Tips 2: When people from different cultures are confronted with a scenario, asking them double questions helps them comprehend the situation and react only one at a time. It is therefore possible for a different inquiry to assist one in comprehending and answering appropriately. It has been suggested by Hurn and Tomalin that the act of asking questions provides opportunities to get further information about individuals in a manner that is both objective and non-threatening (Tomalin, 2013).

Tips 3: Negative questions and responses are a major source of misconceptions in cross-cultural communication. When responding in English, we say "yes" when the response is affirmative and "no" when it is negative. However, in some cultures, a simple "yes" or "no" indicates whether the person asking the question is correct or incorrect. As an illustration, the answer to the query "Are you not coming? It's possible that "Yes" means "Yes, I'm not coming." It is also feasible to say, "No, I am not coming," in this situation. Regarding 3C's, seeking acceptable outcome of any situation has been described as "Getting to yes without going to war" (Fisher and Ury, 2003, p. 21),

Tips 4: It is essential to be kind and easygoing when engaging in conversation with people from different cultures. Noting that supporting those who struggle with English helps them grow as individuals and provides them with self-assurance, support, and inspiration is something that should be taken into consideration. Cohen (1999) says "Cultural meanings are basically subjective meanings shared by members of a particular cultural group." This is

according to Cohen's interpretation of the concept.

Tips 5: Always remember that you should never assume that someone you are communicating with from a different cultural background has understood you correctly. As a person who is an active listener, it is essential to pay attention. It is necessary to summarise what has been presented in order to verify its accuracy. This method demonstrates a high level of effectiveness in ensuring that the correctness of communication across cultural boundaries is maintained. In order to revitalise the concepts of building cross-cultural communication skills, it is necessary to investigate the steps that one must do in order to grow acclimated to the situation in order to achieve a thriving result.

Tips 6: In a lot of different cultures, business is taken extremely seriously, and people always make sure to follow the proper etiquette and act professionally. When it comes to corporate environments, jokes and comedy are not always received with joy. Differences in culture are the cause of this phenomenon. Before using the humour that is being taught, it is important to verify if it is understood in the new culture. As an illustration, sarcasm from the United Kingdom is often seen unfavourably in other countries. According to Hurn and Tomalin (2013), experienced travellers are aware that it is better to refrain from using irony and jokes until they have a solid understanding of the other culture's idea of appropriate humour (Tomanlin, 2013). This is because jokes and irony can be considered offensive to the different culture.

Tips 7: There are various civilisations that have their own communication etiquette. Participating in cross-cultural awareness training or conducting study on the culture that is being targeted is always a good investment. Adler states that "high aspirations and ethical standards" (Adler, 1999, p.197) are the underlying necessity for professional practices that have been demonstrated to be effective.

Conclusion

Cross-Cultural Communication challenged preconceived notions, introduced fresh perspectives, and demonstrated how maintaining multiple cultures within a society's framework may be beneficial.

It is vital in global business management and marketing that 3C's improves cooperation, understanding and faith in international negotiations and relations. 3C's are prerequisite for working and living harmoniously with other members of international community. Ravitch (1990) defined as, the official public policy that emphasizes tolerance and mutual respect for cultural variations within national borders in order to manage cultural diversity in a multiethnic society (Ravitch, 1990). The efficacy of 3C is contingent upon various factors such as personal training, country features, business culture, and individual personality. 3C's provides certain benefits for the people who live in cross-cultural society. It seeks to foster cross-cultural trust as well as self-awareness and an understanding of one's own advantages and disadvantages. People's problems can be reduced when we comprehend the tactics, frictions, interference, and tips of the three Cs discussed in this research paper. Identifying 3C's strategies and techniques eradicate barriers within and across culture. Her goals include fostering intercultural trust, helping people become more self-aware, and teaching them about their own advantages and disadvantages. When we understand the strategies, frictions, interference, and tips of the three Cs covered in this research report, we can lessen people's issues. By recognizing 3C's tactics and strategies, obstacles both inside and between cultures are removed.

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CONTRIBUTION OF CHAWLS IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MUMBAI

Ms. DURGA KALSEKAR & Ms. RASIKA PATIL

*UG Students, Department of History
Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Matunga (East), Mumbai*

Dr. PRADEEP D. WAGHMARE

*Associate Professor & Head, Department of History,
Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Matunga (East), Mumbai*

Abstract

Chawls, the dense tenement housing blocks constructed primarily between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, played a crucial role in Mumbai's economic development. Chawls, which were first constructed to house the expanding industrial workforce particularly textile mill workers offered reasonably priced housing near places of employment, promoting high productivity and aiding in the city's development into India's preeminent commercial center. Chawls contributed considerably to both the formal and informal economies by serving as locations for small-scale business, informal markets, and social reproduction of the workforce in addition to their function as a source of industrial labor. The industrial boom, post-independence consolidation, and post-industrial restructuring are the three stages during which this research analyzes the economic impact of chawls. It makes the case that chawls were a vital economic institution that influenced Mumbai's development trajectory rather than just being residential infrastructure.

Keywords: *chawls, mumbai, economic development, industrial housing, informal economy, textile industry, urban history.*

Introduction

Mumbai's economic history is deeply intertwined with its working-class housing, particularly the iconic chawls, which emerged in the late 19th century as a response to rapid industrial expansion. These structures housed thousands of migrant laborers working in textile mills, docks, and factories, and served as hubs of economic life, hosting home-based production, small-scale trade, and labor organization, ultimately shaping the city's working-class identity and culture.

This paper examines the contribution of chawls to Mumbai's economic development by focusing on:

- the role of chawls in sustaining Mumbai's industrial labor force during its manufacturing peak.
- the integration and significance of informal economic activities within chawl communities.
- the continuing impact of chawls informal economic activities on Mumbai's economic geography in the post-industrial era.

Methodology

To explore the historical background, economic relevance, and contemporary realities of Mumbai's chawls, we employed a mixed-method research strategy that integrates both qualitative and quantitative tools. This approach involved collecting data from primary and secondary sources, conducting policy reviews, and engaging in interviews and case studies. Primary data was obtained through conversations with residents and subject experts (urban historians), on-site visits to chawls including BDD, BIT, and Kondaji, and structured surveys. Secondary data comprised academic publications, news articles, and official policy documents.

Methods of Data Collection

A mixed-method framework was adopted to investigate the historical, economic, and present-day dynamics of Mumbai's chawls. Primary data collection included interviews with residents and subject experts (urban historians), as well as field observations in chawls such as BDD, BIT, and

Kondaji. Quantitative data was gathered through surveys that captured residents' economic conditions and aspirations. Secondary sources such as scholarly research and government reports provided contextual depth. The data was analyzed using both thematic and statistical techniques to uncover significant trends. The resulting report offers a holistic understanding of chawl life, economic challenges, and their evolving role in Mumbai's urban and heritage landscape.

Origin and Evolution of Chawls

The word 'chawl' is derived from the marathi word 'चाळ', which originally referred as anklet, and by extension came to be signify corridors or galleries. The industrial surge of the 19th century, fueled by the global impact of the Industrial Revolution and a spike in cotton demand during the American Civil War, prompted both Indian entrepreneurs and British traders to establish textile mills in Mumbai. The city's first mill, the Bombay Spinning and Weaving Company, was founded in 1854 at Tardeo by Cowasjee Nanabhoy Davar. By the end of the century, Mumbai had become a major textile hub, with approximately 178 mills operating primarily concentrated in Girangaon, or the "village of mills," which encompassed neighborhoods such as Worli, Parel, Lalbaugh, Tardeo, and Byculla.

This industrial boom triggered a wave of migration, drawing people from diverse regions and backgrounds. The upper and middle classes arrived seeking social and economic advancement, while the working class migrated in search of survival and short-term employment. Settlement patterns reflected these aspirations: upper-caste Maharashtrians made homes in Girgaon, the middle class settled in Girangaon, and migrants from economically disadvantaged areas moved into neighborhoods like Kamathipura, Kumbharwada, and Nagapada.

Initially, migration was predominantly male, but over time, families joined, leading to overcrowding and pressure on basic amenities in chawls. This resulted in deteriorating sanitary conditions and strained infrastructure. To address the housing crisis

brought on by large-scale migration, chawls emerged as a practical and scalable solution. However, unequal land distribution between the colonial "white town" and native settlements forced expansion into reclaimed marshy areas, further complicating urban planning.

Land ownership during this period was dominated by three groups: private landlords, mill owners, and the British government. Private landowners, especially in Girgaon, converted orchards into chawls as a form of investment, collecting rent from tenants. Mill owners also constructed chawls near their factories to accommodate their labor force, reinforcing the link between industrial growth and the evolution of Mumbai's housing landscape.

- The rise of Textile Mills

Mumbai, often called the City of Dreams and India's economic capital, was once known as the Manchester of India. Throughout history, it has been a land of aspirations fostering ambitions, witnessing successes, and at times, seeing dreams crumble. Originally a port city, Bombay evolved from a bustling trading hub into a major manufacturing center by the mid-1880s. The rise of textile mills transformed Bombay, starting with the Bombay Spinning Mill in 1854. This booming industry boosted the economy, created jobs, and attracted a large workforce, leading to the formation of Girangaon, or the "village of mills," with over 60 mills from Lalbaug to Parel and Worli to Sewri. Chawls were built to house workers, fostering a vibrant, multicultural community whose lives influenced literature and shaped the city's socio-political history.

- Evolution of Khanaval System

The Khanaval system, which originated in Mumbai's chawls as a communal food service primarily for single male migrants, evolved over time in response to changing social, economic, and cultural conditions. Initially, khanavals emerged as a necessity to provide affordable and familiar meals to mill workers who lived in chawls. Women played a crucial role in managing these kitchens, offering a taste of home-cooked food to workers who were often far from their

families. Khanavals became integral to chawl life, fostering social bonds and cultural exchange among residents. They were spaces where women could exert influence and contribute economically to their families. Khanavals, community-run eateries, were vital during Mumbai's textile boom, providing affordable meals to mill workers living in chawls. Run mostly by women, they offered both livelihood and a sense of community, adapting to diverse migrant cuisines. Though many vanished with the mills' decline, their legacy lives on through tiffin services, preserving regional food traditions and supporting social bonds. Khanavals remain an important part of Mumbai's cultural and social fabric.

Small Businesses and Informal Economy

Chawls played a vital role in supporting Mumbai's small businesses and informal economy during the industrial boom. Due to overcrowding and limited jobs, many residents turned to entrepreneurship, starting tailoring units, food stalls, and repair shops that served both locals and nearby areas. Chawls became economic hubs, with residents also working as street vendors, domestic helpers, recyclers, and artisans. Women led home-based industries like papad-making, stitching, and zari work, contributing financially while preserving traditional crafts in the urban setting.

One standout example of chawl entrepreneurship is the story of Bedekar Masale. Founded at Shantaram Chawl in 1910 by Vishwanath Parsharam Bedekar as a small grocery shop, the business expanded under his son Vasudev in 1917 to include pickles and spice blends. Their products gained immense popularity and even served as home remedies during the 1918 influenza epidemic, reflecting the synergy between culinary heritage and community health. From a small shop in a Mumbai chawl, Bedekar Masale has now become a well-known brand in India and abroad, proving that dedication and quality can turn a small idea into a lasting legacy.

Challenges and Opportunities Associated with Redevelopment

While the history of chawls is well documented, the legal framework for their redevelopment remains scattered and inaccessible to the public. This section explores key legal provisions shaping the process. Chawls, though historically and culturally significant, now face decay, overcrowding, and financial strain. To address this, the government has launched various redevelopment schemes since independence. While some have upgraded housing, many face delays, legal hurdles, corruption, and displacement. This section examines major policies, their challenges, and the social and economic impacts of redevelopment.

Beginning with The Bombay Rent Control Act, 1947, this legislation was aimed at regulating rent, repair and evictions regarding certain premises in Mumbai. The act in order to prevent landlords from charging excessive rent to the tenants established "a standard rent". The landlords were not permitted to demand more than this standard rent. Also, the tenants were granted security of tenure against the landlord i.e. the landlord would evict them only on specific grounds such as non-payment of rent, subletting without permission, or the landlord's genuine need for the property. The Bombay Rent Control Act, meant to protect tenants, eventually created problems for both tenants and landlords. With rents frozen at 1940 levels often as low as ₹50 landlords couldn't maintain buildings, leading to structural decay. The lack of financial returns discouraged new rental housing and repairs. It also led to the pagadi system, where tenants had partial ownership and landlords limited control, complicating redevelopment. As noted by architect Neera Adarkar, this caused landlords to lose interest in building chawls. In 1997, the Supreme Court deemed the Act's provisions "no longer reasonable." To address these issues, the Maharashtra Rent Control Act, 1999 was introduced, unifying various state rent laws. It allowed landlords to raise rent by 4% annually and by 15% for improvements, with the consent of 70% of tenants.

The maintenance of the structures was the duty of the landlord and if he neglects it the tenants can undertake the repair by deducting it from the rent. Though the reforms relaxed the rent control measures to some extent it did not completely solve the problem. The Maharashtra Rent Control Act, 1999, came five decades later till then many buildings had already decayed beyond repair. Also, the modest increase in rent didn't provide sufficient financial incentives to landlords to indulge into repair or construct new rental buildings. Rent control measures had a big impact on the BIT Chawls in Mazgaon and Mumbai Central, Bhatia Chawl, several other chawls in Girgaon, Kondaji Chawl in Parel, and many other parts throughout the city.

The Development Control Regulation (DCR) 33(7) was enacted in 1991 to encourage the rebuilding of old, decaying chawls and cessed buildings (buildings that pay MHADA a repair cess). This clause provided additional Floor Space Index (FSI) as an incentive to developers, making redevelopment financially appealing. The primary goal of DCR 33(7) was to rehabilitate existing tenants in newly erected buildings. To replace physically unsound buildings with new ones and to ensure that developers profited from increased FSI. However, the execution of DCR 33(7) became profit-driven rather than welfare-oriented. Instead of prioritizing improved living conditions for existing tenants, many developers concentrated on increasing saleable areas for new buyers. In numerous situations, tenants were promised larger, nicer apartments, but delays, legal issues, and FSI exploitation resulted in unmet promises and prolonged relocation. The lack of sufficient oversight by MHADA and municipal authorities enabled developers to alter agreements and prioritize commercial benefits over tenant welfare.

The Chikhalwadi chawl redevelopment in Tardeo demonstrates the shortcomings of DCR 33(7), which prioritizes profit before tenant welfare. The Shreepati Group of Companies launched the project in 1999, obtaining the required 70% permission; however, numerous tenants later withdrew their assent, claiming coercion and a lack of openness. Despite

objections, officials approved the project, exposing supervision flaws. Parts of the chawl were razed in 2019, moving occupants to transit accommodations, but reconstruction has yet to begin. Although DCR 33(7) provides additional FSI to ensure viability, delays, financial mismanagement, and lax enforcement have kept renters in limbo for over two decades. This case demonstrates how regulatory and monitoring gaps allow real estate advantages to outweigh timely rehabilitation, a persistent issue in Mumbai's chawl redevelopment. FSI under DCR 33(7) was meant to support chawl redevelopment by allowing more saleable units, but it often served developer profits over tenant welfare. In areas like Worli and Parel, this led to gentrification and displacement. The BIT Chawls case shows how increased FSI didn't benefit residents, with delays, neglect, and smaller or distant rehousing. Instead of ensuring fair housing, FSI often sidelined original communities.

In 2018, the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) aiming to fasten the redevelopment process of cessed buildings introduced an amendment. Under this act, if the landowner fails to initiate a redevelopment proposal within 6 months, the tenants are empowered to do so in the next 6 months with 51% of consent of the tenants. If the both fail MHADA shall interfere and take over the redevelopment itself. Chawl redevelopment has often been stalled by bureaucratic delays, legal hurdles, and financial issues, leaving tenants in aging buildings or inadequate transit camps. Many, like those in Kondaji Chawl, struggle to find willing developers, fearing MHADA might merge smaller plots into larger schemes, adding uncertainty. Despite these challenges, successful cases like BDD Chawl in Worli and Abhyudaya Nagar in Kalachowki show that with transparent planning, clear timelines, and accountable execution, redevelopment can improve living conditions, offering modern homes, better infrastructure, and safety for residents.

Economic Relevance of Chawls Today

Despite Mumbai's shift toward a service-oriented and finance-driven economy, chawls continue to play a vital role in the city's socio-economic fabric. These tenement-style housing blocks provide some of the most affordable living spaces for low-income and migrant workers, many of whom are employed in informal sectors, domestic services, construction, and small-scale retail. By offering proximity to commercial hubs and transportation networks, chawls enable these workers to remain economically active and integrated into the urban workforce.

Moreover, the communal layout and high-density nature of chawls foster vibrant micro-economies. Residents often engage in small-scale entrepreneurship, such as tailoring, food vending, repair services, and home-based manufacturing. These activities not only supplement household incomes but also contribute to the informal economy that underpins much of Mumbai's daily functioning. Chawls thus serve as incubators for economic resilience, allowing marginalized populations to sustain livelihoods in an increasingly expensive urban environment. Chawls are more than relics of industrial history, they are dynamic spaces that continue to support labor mobility, economic participation, and grassroots enterprise in contemporary Mumbai.

Conclusion

Originally constructed during the colonial period to accommodate mill workers, Mumbai's chawls were never just low-cost housing. They were vibrant social ecosystems. Their architectural design, featuring communal corridors, courtyards, and shared facilities, nurtured a culture of cooperation and collective living. These spaces fostered strong community ties and became fertile ground for solidarity and mutual support. Beyond their social significance, chawls played a pivotal role in shaping the city's political landscape. Their compact and interconnected layouts facilitated swift communication and mobilization, turning them into strategic hubs for labor activism and political movements. Landmark events such as the 1982 textile strike led by Dr. Datta Samant and the

Sanyukta Maharashtra Movement found powerful momentum within these walls, embedding chawls deeply into Mumbai's working-class and political identity. Economically, chawls sustained a robust informal sector. Residents often operated small businesses, tailoring shops, tiffin services, grocery stalls that not only supported household incomes but also contributed to the local economy. These micro-enterprises showcased the ingenuity and resilience of the working class, transforming chawls into self-sufficient urban microcosms. However, the wave of redevelopment sweeping across Mumbai has begun to reshape this landscape. While new housing projects promise improved infrastructure and living standards, they frequently disrupt the social cohesion, cultural practices, and historical essence that define chawl life. Issues like gentrification, displacement, and prolonged redevelopment timelines risk erasing the rich heritage and everyday vitality of these communities. Given their enduring legacy, chawls must be recognized not merely as outdated housing but as dynamic cultural institutions that reflect the soul of Mumbai. A thoughtful and inclusive approach is essential, one that balances modernization with preservation. Documenting their histories, conserving select structures, encouraging heritage tourism, and ensuring resident participation in planning processes are crucial steps toward safeguarding their legacy. Ultimately, chawls represent more than bricks and mortar. They are emblems of perseverance, identity, and collective urban memory.

*This research paper is prepared under the Seed Money Research Project Grant given by Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai.

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