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Editor-in-Chief

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Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Binod Mishra

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Editorial

The fifty-first volume of *Indian Journal of English Studies* is in your hands. Fifty years of a journal is really a remarkable feat. It is because of the constant co-operation, interest and enthusiasm of the teaching and learning fraternity who are active members of the Association for English Studies of India. My interest in this journal was enkindled by one of my teachers, and since then every year I had been waiting for December to get a copy of IJES through one teacher or the other. Journals of English those days used to be a rare gift procured not as easily as today. It is, indeed, a proud moment to be a part of the galaxy of contributors whose articles stirred in me an interest to read English as a subject, which would become both the means of my physical and intellectual existence.

Students and researchers of today are the blessed lot since they have plenty of journals, where they can get their works published. While majority of them do not bother to attend conferences and present papers, they often miss the gem of knowledge exchanged with teachers and fellow researchers. Moreover, many of them also nurture the impression that such things can take shape once they enter the teaching profession. Some of them also rejoice in the glorious illusion that World Wide Web preserves everything and hence hankering after books and ransacking libraries is simply wastage of time. But we have to take lessons from the Man Booker Prize Committee 2013, which has falsified many such illusions. Although Eleanor Catton bagged the prestigious Man Booker Prize 2013, works of other five shortlisted novelists too are highly inspiring.

The writers whose works continued to keep the judges toiling for short listing the winner of Man Booker Prize 2013 have much to offer. Six major writers, who kept the judges and literary lovers of the world struggling, have not only varied backgrounds, but they have dedicated themselves to chiselling their literary sparks either through film-making or media. While all of them are novelists, three of them are

women in their thirties or forties. Their literary expeditions began much earlier and the experiences they gathered through the rough and tumble of life culminated in bringing unique and original creative works. The final winner **Eleanor Catton**, born in Canada in 1985 and raised in New Zealand, proves that neither age nor birth in a particular country can ensure greatness but it is an innovative and imaginative mind that can overcome all odds. Her novel *The Luminaries*, a murder mystery based on gold rush, contains 832 pages; yet it has been appreciated because of its 'extremely gripping narrative technique'. Catton has attained at 28 what many of us are not able to do even in our lifetime.

Another author who could make it to the final six is fifty seven year old Canadian-American novelist **Ruth Ozeki**. A film-maker and a Buddhist priest, Ozeki tried different vocations before taking to writing. Her patience brought her laurels with an award winning film named *Halving the Bones*. Her book shortlisted among the final six, *A Tale for the Time Being*, reflects her subtle narrative technique and concentrates on diary writing, which is a form of self-discovery. Writing the past is not only challenging but also rewarding, since it offers to the coming generation the continuous hide and seek of time in an age of profit and loss. History cannot be divorced from literature and the vice versa since the two embalm each other.

The poet who said 'in movement alone is rest' still remains the torchbearer to upcoming generations and it is no surprise to find yet another novelist continuing her sojourn on these lines. **NoViolet Bulawayo** (born in 1981), a Zimbabwean author, not only became the first black African woman but also the first Zimbabwean to be shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* records the displacement and arrival that a ten year old girl interfaces through the mirror of memory along with her friends who have nothing to resort to except their past. Darling, the heroine of the novel, ventures to travel to America, the land of opportunities but is soon disillusioned

because of her immigrant status. The theme of Bulawayo's book appears bordering on identity and nostalgia that is true of all writers keen on mixing their memory with desire.

While new writers like Catton and Bulawayo created waves because of their experimentation, the veteran English writer, **Jim Crace** who had a number of awards to his name, once again created ripples by being among the six shortlisted names. An experienced author of good number of short stories and plays, Crace made news with his last novel *Harvest*, a description of pastoral idyll that transports readers to a world steeped in ancient beliefs that disintegrates humans from fellow humans just for petty gains. Narrow divides and falling moral standards, because of overriding considerations of power and prejudice in a community, mar the momentous change of harvest season and snatch the benign atmosphere of plenty by penury mixed with alarm and anticipation.

Colm Toibin, the Irish journalist turned travel writer's delineation of Mary as a solitary woman in his novel *The Testament of Mary*, blends his imagination with mother Mary's private grief for her son Jesus put on the cross. Toibin depicts the mother as rebutting the belief that her son was the son of God and flees to save herself. Jesus, according to his mother, was surrounded by men who were not trustworthy. Mary's suffering becomes the suffering of every mother who has lost her son for some reason or the other. The audacity with which the novelist prompts Mary to break the silence allows Toibin to score an edge over the myth steeped in history. Toibin's novel, with its deft handling of theme and its attempt to humanise Mary, had continued long as hot favourites for this year's Man Booker.

Jhumpa Lahiri, yet another contender for Man Booker Prize, as we already know has been straddling between two cultures. The acclaim and space which, Nilanjana Sudeshna alias Jhumpa Lahiri, carved with *The Namesake* and *Unaccustomed Earth*, had raised high hopes among Indians both at home and abroad. Lahiri's latest creation, *The Lowland* shortlisted among other six novels, records the nostalgia and the suffering born of the separation

of two brothers who had built great expectations merely to end in utter frustration. The commingling of history and politics that divides homes and families has been lent personal touches, yet Lahiri's novel is not devoid of the universal element that literature has offered in all times.

Literature, which transcends time and place, no doubt, repeats itself like history. While the theorists and new thinkers prefer to provide innovative interpretations and dig new insights, creative sparks continue to mirror the expectations and trepidations that most often shake the basic foundations of every society. *Indian Journal of English Studies* has continued to stand as a vanguard all these years and endeavoured to record the pulse of literary aficionados by giving voice to free and independent critical as well as creative thoughts of participants, congregating each year from all parts of India at a selected site of learning. The fifty first volume of the journal is a vehicle of these thoughts and opinions presented in the 57th AIETC held at Vallabh Vidyanagar, Anand, Gujarat, 21-23 December, 2013. The articles of this volume cover the various genres of literature, also taking in its stride papers on English Language Teaching, Translation Studies, Ecocriticism, Diasporic Studies, African and American Literature. The volume sincerely attempts to encourage young researchers, whose voices most often get unheard in the melee of serious and pedantic deliberations made by seasoned scholars. While due care has been taken in terms of selection, editing and organization of the matter, human limitations can always be put on the back burner. I do hope that the views of benevolent readers and scholar-critics will ennoble my spirits once again to steer through new challenges in the times to come.

BINOD MISHRA

Editor-in-Chief

Why, How, and What to Teach: Solving the Dilemma of English Teachers Today

*Pashupati Jha**

My dear co-travellers,

The caption of my paper should not give you the wrong impression that I am going to adopt a preaching stance in the fashion of holier than thou attitude. You are my worthy colleagues and friends and I request you very modestly to allow me to share my ideas and experiences with you. Generally, Presidential Address in this annual august assembly is highly scholarly, and I do not even dream of such a pretension. I am a common man who has been teaching for more than three and half decades in all types of institutions—average, above average, good, and excellent. The only binding link while teaching in those different seats of learning has been my sincerity—I have never shied away from my duty and has always taught with the best of my ability. And I assure you, my friends, despite all the unfortunate un-academic things making rounds in colleges and universities in the last few decades, a sincere teacher still gets attention and encouragement from his students and, ultimately, from his authorities and colleagues too. What more a teacher should want! The origin of my address lies in my deep-felt concern for the sad academic scenario in the country once known for scholastic height and cultural values. If things have gone to abysmal depth today, we mostly blame the powers to be and look on helplessly. But ours is the prime stake in higher education; it is the question of our prestige, our status and identity. In the past, teachers were revered by students, parents, society, and even by the rulers. Can't we go for soul-searching to restore the pristine

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glory of education and thus of teachers too? It has become more important now when in the global scenario, the existence of a country largely depends on its knowledge economy. But the situation is largely going down the drain in our country. If still our academics are performing well, their number is quite low—considering the vast population, it is almost negligible. Yet, there are occasional silver linings amid the engulfing darkness; though the general situation is disturbing enough there still exist islands of excellence—there are still a few dozen universities and institutions in the country maintaining their standard of teaching and research. But in most of the states that I have visited, students visit colleges only twice a year—at the time of admission and at that of examination. My humble endeavour here is to suggest some measures that can arrest this degeneration, leading subsequently to gradual improvement.

My talk is divided into three parts—why to teach, how to teach, and what to teach. Why to teach relates to clarifying the career option—should one prefer teaching to other jobs! Should those who are already in, stick to it! In some cases we come to teaching after exhausting all other options—guided by a young man's dream of stars and uniform I myself had toyed with the idea of becoming an army or police officer first. But my teacher-father prevailed upon me to carry on with the family tradition and become a teacher for which I always remain grateful to him—most of the time a father knows his son better than the young son knows himself. Teaching is the only profession where you earn and learn both. Thanks to the sixth pay commission, for the first time in many decades, teachers feel financially comfortable. But what is more important, you not only do earn money but also earn the respect of hundreds of students that you teach each year. In most cases this respect continues for life. Most of us encounter our old students in offices, at bus-stops, railway-stations and airports, ready to help us though we have forgotten their faces. Sometimes we get help from the obliged parents too. Can you find such a pervasive respect

in other professions? What is more, even an average teacher gets respect, of course less than good teachers. It is in our Indian blood to treat teacher with reverence. Moreover, a teacher does hardly retire. There is always some opportunity waiting for *retyrement* of teachers—they are appointed as Emeritus Fellow or Emeritus Professor or Honorary Director/Advisor in private academic institutions. The Government too has agreed for the re-employment of teachers till the age of seventy.

Furthermore, you learn every time while preparing for the class and enhance your knowledge every moment. If you are teaching in a good institution where only bright students are admitted, your rate of intellectual growth would be even faster. But for all these valuable returns, you have to take interest in your profession and enjoy it as a mission. Kindly make teaching your love, your passion. It is the noblest profession on earth; I rather feel the term 'profession' inadequate for it. And kindly don't think it all an empty dream; I have personally lived through it for the last thirty six years, with all its ups and downs. I, and most of us here, have given the best years of our lives to it, and the goddess of learning would not be unkind to such a devotion.

Teachers are at the base of all education, whether arts, science, commerce, medicine, law, technology, performing arts etc. So the entire educated population in all types of job is, in varying degree, obliged to you. Where will you find such a comprehensive acceptance? Where will you get such a vast following? Dr Rajendra Prasad, our first President and a great scholar of Persian and Sanskrit, started his life as a teacher and then moved to politics because it was call of the hour. It is said that in one of his examinations there was the famous comment that the examinee knew better than the examiner. Our next President, S. Radhakrishnan, was a world-famous teacher and scholar. Dr Zakir Hussain was a great educationist and founded Jamia Millia Islamia, now a central university. Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma was also a great scholar and had taught at Lucknow and

Cambridge Universities. Mr K.R.Narayanan, like all of us here, had Masters Degree in English and he was the first Dalit in Kerala to get a first class in MA (English). Later he shifted to Economics and taught at the Delhi School of Economics for some time. These are only a few examples to point out that teaching is not a discarded profession where you come only after exhausting all other options. So, if you have joined the fraternity of teachers, there is much more chance that you may become a highly respected and fulfilled person, if you work really hard for it.

Now, the next question is how to teach. I seek your apology first by pointing out that it cannot be taught how to teach; it cannot be lectured upon how to engage your class. It is specifically much more difficult to talk on this subject before such a galaxy of teachers and scholars sitting before me. But then, I have a fervent plea; I am just sharing my experience with my friends, and it is for you how much of it you accept and how much of it you reject. First of all, you have to feel sufficiently proud of yourself that you have selected a very ideal profession and you need not justify your existence before anyone—generations of your students would proclaim your worth. Secondly, you have to take interest in your subject; I would rather request you to love your subject. Once you love your subject, your commitment to it would grow every day, increasing your grasp of it. The most essential pre-requisite of a teacher is conceptual clarity and comprehensive knowledge of the subject. You cannot cheat your students for long, even if you want to, by just fluent and flawless expression; expression needs substantial elements behind it to sustain your one-hour meaningful stay in the class. And as learning is a life-long process, you should not stop enhancing your knowledge at any stage of your teaching, thinking that it is enough now. Only a good reader can become a good teacher.

There are many stages of mastering your subject: reading, thinking, understanding, imagining, and finally assimilating. First, reading should be for knowing the basic facts of the

text; the second reading should be much more meticulous to know the many nuances of the text. This reading for the second time should lead to shaping your personal idea and estimate of the text, resulting into the discovery of new facts about it. I firmly believe that every student/teacher of literature should form his/her own idea of the text before going to critical books on it. Personal appreciation gives you a better grip on the text than external criticism. External critical opinion is meant to further enhance your personal grasp; while your individual understanding is essential, criticism is additional input. In the course of my long stint as a teacher, I have found many of my friends, who don't have courage to face the class without sufficient critical reading. This dependence on spoon-feeding is quite dangerous because it throttles your originality; it smothers your creativity. It is much more helpful to go through three-four more books by the same author to know more of the prescribed text. I here recollect with reverence my remarkably wonderful teacher, Prof Shankaranand Palit, who used to almost force us to read at home almost all the novels of D.H.Lawrence before coming to his class of *Sons and Lovers*. And his list used to include even less known novel, *The White Peacock*, having autobiographical references that would help in better understanding of *Sons and Lovers*. Similarly, while teaching us *Lamia* by John Keats, he would command us to read his other narrative poems like *The Eve of St. Agnes*, *Isabella*, and *Hyperion*, to have a broader view of Keats as a narrative poet. As there was no television and Internet those days, and as teachers' words were command for the students, we generally used to be in awe of the great master, habitually following his orders. Even today too, a good teacher with persuasive skills can mould his students that way. Literature is such a subject that the more you read it, the more you understand; you can put the author in a wider perspective before your students.

Now I come to imagining and assimilating part of study and teaching. Imagination is needed in literature because

a reader's/student's experience is limited, while literature deals with all types of characters, situations, events and experience. A teacher/student may be a good or a wicked person, may be rich or poor, ugly or beautiful, male or female; he can't be both at the same time. But in literature he may have to face the opposite of what he is. How can he understand something that is outside his experience? Imagination comes here to his rescue. I found that in my class of Narayan's *The Guide*, boys were unnecessarily critical of Rosie's final break-up with Raju calling it a blatant betrayal; and girls were unreasonably critical of Raju's material exploitation of Rosie's dance, calling him a fake lover. Then I requested my female students to put themselves in Raju's shoes and male students in Rosie's situation. I urged them further to forget their gender, or to become neuter gender while reading literature, otherwise their understanding would be biased and limited. The same principle is operative in other situations too. When Keats talks of "Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam/ of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn," in his "Ode to a Nightingale", only a highly imaginative teacher/student can unravel and understand the wonderfully mysterious charm of the medieval age. Similar is the case with Coleridge's "Kubla Khan": "Weave a circle round him thrice, / And close your eyes with holy dread, / For he on honey-dew hath fed, / And drunk the milk of Paradise." An unimaginative reader will never be able to grasp the total significance of these lines where mystery, meaning, feeling, music, and awe are all spontaneously transfused together.

Only an intellectual understanding of literature, to me, is a debatable question. Too much focus on intellectual perception alone has killed the very joy of reading/teaching literature. Literature is different from science, social science, and engineering where intellectual intelligence is the key word. But in understanding literature, music, and painting imaginative intelligence is the first requirement. Making literature a class-room activity alone, with most of the

academics becoming creative writers themselves, has not been a one-sided blessing; at times it has become a curse as well.

Let me now talk of the positive side of this coin when teachers are creative writers as well. A lot of Indian Academics are poets too, such as Nissim Ezekiel, Shiv K. Kumar, Jayanta Mahapatra (he, of course, was teaching Physics), R.Parthasarathy, A.K.Ramanujan, Nirranjan Mohanty, R.K.Singh, Charu Sheel Singh

They were successful because in their case, intellectual elements were subordinated to, or balanced with, poetic sensibility. But in recent years, teachers of English in hundreds are writing poems, most of them in mistaken belief that their M.A and Ph.D. in literature gives them licence to become a poet. Only two months back in October this year, Mr. Pronab Kumar Majumder has edited a poetry anthology of thirty five poets: *English Poetry in India: A Twenty First Century Review*. Out of them twenty poets are academics. So, more than fifty seven percent of the active poets writing in English today are members of English faculty. Compare it with British poetry. As far as I know only a few of them had scholarly background like John Milton, John Donne, Samuel Johnson, G.M.Hopkins, T.S.Eliot and a few others. The Indian scenario leads to only one big question: does your intellectual background alone make you a better creative writer? Let me yet talk positively about this creative explosion on the campus. My experience of teaching creative writing to IIT students has reinforced my belief that creative writing, by its very nature, makes men more sensitive towards others. I should be forgiven by my friends here when I quote my own lines from the Preface to my first collection of poems:

‘....there has been so much of cerebral focus in life that head has completely overthrown the qualities of heart. This lop-sided development has narrowed down the immense possibilities of life to mere self-gratification at all cost, resulting into worst type of cruelty, killing, rape, corruption and communal violence. While civilization is progressing,

culture is degenerating in the same proportion. This decline in cultural values can be arrested if there is a revival of interest in poetry and other forms of creativity, which make us sensitive human beings....So, cultivate a taste for poetry and save mankind from further cruelty—it is not just a chance that all great scriptures are written in verse.' (*Cross and Creation*, p.9)

It is pertinent here to examine what prominent statesmen and professionals think of poetry. John F. Kennedy has said: "When power narrows the area of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses." There has been very amazing but authentic American report as recently as December 9, 2012 appearing in *The Times of India*. It quotes John Coleman writing in the *Harvard Business Review* that an appreciation of poetry is vital to personal and professional development. It further says that at the University of California in Irvine, doctors are taught poetry to improve their levels of empathy with patients. It is an established fact that subjects like poetry helps in enhancing emotional quotient and improving emotional stability. Another benefit of creative writers teaching literature in the class is their personal knowledge of the creative process; it goes a long way in originally explaining the creativity of authors being taught by him in the class. His knowledge from reading critical books is definitely enhanced further by his own creativity, for he knows the process behind literary creation. So, I fully agree with the view of Prof H.H. Anniah Gowda while giving his Presidential address at B.H.U., Varanasi, that teaching, etc.

English language and literature is "creative" (p.299). In other subjects of science, social science, commerce etc. a teacher needs knowledge alone; a teacher of English should also possess, additionally, creative imagination and intelligence, otherwise even a scholarly person in English department would maximum be a good teacher but never a great teacher. That is why I heartily appreciate the trend

of English faculty writing poems, novels, and short stories. But then, I have some reservations too. This trend has become so fashionable that some of them have rushed in where angels fear to tread. This is particularly very sad when the poet-teacher does not know that poetry is not a mere play with sounds, words, and rhymes; it is also not a plain statement of ideas and thoughts. Eliot is very much right when he points out that things which could be expressed in prose must be written in prose. Poetry is the communication mode for the rest of them where normal prose fails. I sometimes wonder at examination papers asking: 'What is the central theme of this poem'? To me, a better question should have been, 'What is the central feeling of this poem'? It is relevant to novels and short stories written by academics to know how they are different from essays. The narrative line in fiction should not drag but move smoothly; characters should not be sketchy but drawn with all possible depth; and the prose should not be verbose but flowing fluently from page to page. But if they write with sufficient and varied experience of life and literature, the chance of success both as a writer and teacher is much more assured.

Now the seminal question of assimilation. A good English teacher studies, thinks, imagines and understands his subject. But a better teacher also assimilates his subject in his mindscape, thought and behavioural pattern. His subject becomes his life line. I would rather say that without such assimilation, knowledge remains at the stage of information only. Because a few of us unfortunately fail to assimilate the liberal spirit of literature in our life blood, so we indulge in petty departmental politics, are at times jealous of our sincere colleagues, and do a lot of things that have never been a part of this noble vocation. I have seen that those who are really great teachers are also great persons. But those who have understood literature intellectually alone and have never thought of assimilating it in their philosophy of life are most of the time arrogant and scheming individuals. In a country where Guru is equated with *Brahma, Vishnu*

and *Mahesha*, is asking him to be a good person something unnatural and uncalled for? And I repeat, I do not want to put all the blames on authorities and society for today's academic mess, and earnestly request the august audience here to come out of their sedate cocoon and build their work and image afresh. As teachers in our motherland are still given respect that is found very less elsewhere in the world, and that respect is not forced but spontaneous, we can easily restore the lost glory of teachers by our matching thought and action.

Now moving from poetic idealism to prosaic action. Teaching a text between the lines, annotating each word and expression, is monotonous but primary task. Yet, what is needed much more is to explain the spirit behind a literary text, explore its soul to inspire the students, to initiate them in the golden domain of creativity. If it is a poem, encourage students to recite the same in the class. They should try to grasp the flow of rhythm and feeling themselves, and then the subtle nuances should finally be explained by the teacher. In a novel and long narrative poem, the focus should be on important paragraphs/stanzas which are more seminal in understanding the text. In a play, students should be told to enact scenes to know the vitality of the dialogue and the importance of body language. Reciting poems and enacting plays would also help them in improving their spoken English.

There are then two more essential components here that I call "whatness" and 'whyness" of the text. *Whatness* is the bare fact of the text that leads only to the surface meaning; but more important is explaining the *whyness* of the text. Describing several phases of Henchard's life in Hardy's novel comes under the first category. But more important for a teacher is to explain why does he become so bitter; why does he mistreat Jane in the beginning and begins to love her so intensely later on; why is he finally driven to desperation and death; is he himself responsible for his tragedy or something else is there to it? As homework, a teacher may even leave some *whys* for students to be replied

by them in the next class. This type of concentration on the *whyness* part of your lesson would force the otherwise passive students to participate in the process of learning, which would surcharge the classroom ambience and activity. This would also develop a fine critical sense among students. Here I quote a small poem of Wordsworth to illustrate my point:

A slumber did my spirit seal
I had no human fears;
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

Why is this small poem so popular and famous? Apparently, it expresses the deep anguish of the poet at the sudden and shocking death of Lucy. But this alone would not make it such a great poem. It contains the answer of two *whys*: why Wordsworth could become such a great Nature poet and why could he be such a great humane poet on the whole. Wordsworth loved Lucy so much and she has now been buried in earth making herself part of the entire world, with rocks and stones and trees symbolizing entire Nature. So if he wants to love the dead Lucy, he will have to love the entire Nature of which Lucy has become an ingredient. This love for Nature inspired Wordsworth to write poem after poem on it, making him finally the finest poet of Nature in British poetry. Secondly, the implication of loving entire earth, is loving all the people of this planet, transforming love for an individual to the level of universal love, bringing the element of deep humanity to the poetics of Wordsworth. This blend of naturalism and humanism is the primary reason for making Wordsworth such a great poet. This type of asking 'why' leads to more involvement of the teacher/

student in the text. Teaching would no more be a one-way traffic then; the teacher lecturing all the time without knowing the response of his students. Teaching should be interactive where students should be allowed to participate actively in the process of disseminating knowledge. This is one of the ways of changing teaching to learning mode.

It is important to inculcate and encourage originality among students of literature. One of the methods of encouraging originality is to allow students occasionally to go against the established belief about an author/work; no belief anyway is going to stay forever. As Tennyson has already said, the old order has to yield place to the new. So unless the established order is challenged, nothing new would emerge. In my time of M.A examination, one question was frequently asked: How is *Hamlet* an artistic failure? I was fascinated by the character of Hamlet, and I felt furious and thought Eliot wrong in his estimate of the great Shakespearean tragedy. But my teacher shouted me down in the class, considering me not even a pigmy before the giant Eliot. But in the examination I questioned the mathematical absoluteness of Eliot that *the only way* of expressing emotion in art is through objective-correlative. I objected to Eliot's words "the only way"—this statement leaves absolutely no alternative before a writer but to express emotion through objective co-relative. I argued further that despite Eliot's dictum, *Hamlet* is still famous and 'to be or not to be that is the question,' has become a recurring critical point in everyone's life. I also pointed out that when Francisco, the guard says: "Tis bitter cold,/And I am sick at heart," the sickness of his heart is objectified by the bitter cold outside. I do not know what the examiner felt about my answer, but he gave me the highest mark in Shakespeare paper. What is important here is the questioning and inquisitive spirit among young learners should be encouraged; that may eventually lead to originality. If Dryden may ask it is not enough that Aristotle said so, why it should not be asked today that it is not enough that Arnold, Eliot or Derrida said so.

I now come to the onerous area of the application of theories. Aping the selfish reason of the Western academia that there should be much critical materials to deliver a series of lectures in the class, we have made text subservient to theories—the author is dead, the text is dead, only the theory is alive and kicking. I personally feel that all the theories should be collected in one paper at the Masters level for teaching and explaining, and their application in other papers should be the barest minimum and not intrusive at all. I have seen some of my otherwise brilliant colleagues hammering theories into a text, yoking the text and the theory by violence together, stretching their intellect in the wrong direction. No creative writer reads critical theories before writing a poem or a novel or a play. Theories, furthermore, cannot test the greatness of a text; otherwise Keats would have been lost to plasters and pills. Lastly, theories hardly ever help us in the inherent enjoyment of a piece of art. We enjoy a poem before caring to understand its prosody, before we know whether it is a classical, romantic or modern poem. We enjoy a building before we know whether it is built in Baroque, Gothic or Rococo style of architecture; we listen to a song for its sonorous music and are transported to another world, least caring whether it is sung in what ragas—*Ahir Bhairav*, *Asavari* or *Madhuvanti*. Too much intellectualization of literature becomes a deterrent for its growth. So, I agree with my far worthy predecessor Prof S.Ramaswamy, President of the 56th All India English Teachers Conference, that “literature is celebration—not cerebation.” (p.3). Or, to appease my intellectual friends sitting in large number before me, I may say that literature is first a celebration and then only a cerebation.

What to teach is also a debatable question because it relates to the total course structure of English, especially at the M.A. level. The hegemony of England over English is long over; both English language and literature is global in nature and scope now. So a change in the course structure is the need of the hour. One of the functional solutions to

the dilemma of what to teach to the students of English would be to recognize which is already accepted in the global literary scene—we have to include not only the British, but American, Canadian, Australian, African and Asian writers writing in English. I suggest that of the total authors prescribed in the English syllabus in each paper at the Masters level, half should be British and the next half should be from other countries and continents where people are writing creatively in English Language. With passage of time, this proportion may change further. There should also be a paper on Media Studies focusing on the use of spoken and written English in newspapers and on television. In order to broaden the vision of students, one paper should be on World Classics in English Translation. I also believe that one compulsory paper should be on Creative Writing in English too so that the creativity among students is stimulated, leading to a better understanding of literature on their part. So, the first draft of the tentative syllabus for further debate would be something like the following:

1. Renaissance Literature
2. Literature of the Seventeenth Century
3. Literature of the Eighteenth Century
4. Nineteenth Century Literature
5. Modern and Contemporary Literature
6. Critical Theory
7. ELT & Spoken English
8. World Classics in English Translation
9. Creative Writing in English
10. Media Studies and English

It should be noted that I have not used 'British' in the first five papers suggested by me; I have left them open-ended to support my earlier idea that not only British but creative authors writing in English from other parts of the globe should also be included. In a semester system, there is scope for a total of twelve papers with three papers in each

semester. The two additional papers, in that case, should be used for optional subjects, such as Linguistics, Indian Literature in English, ESP etc. It is a radical change and its acceptance across the board would take some time. Apparently, the course looks very vast, but students of literature should cultivate the habit of reading as much as possible. In American universities, a student/scholar doing Masters or Ph.D course has to read the double of what he would read in India. It is also important that all the universities should have almost similar courses; then only the Union Public Service Commission and the University Grants Commission can formulate uniform questions for Civil Services and National Eligibility Test. I have only initiated the debate; it should be brought to fruition by my scholarly, intelligent, and committed colleagues working in different universities. I thank you all for listening to me with such attention and kind consideration.

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Teaching Stress and Rhythm through Poetry

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In the teaching of English pronunciation, stress is of vital importance, because individual vowel sounds assume their values in respect of the position of stress (primary and secondary) within a word. This becomes obvious when we examine the stress shift in the following sets:

Photography	Academy	Present(n.Adj)
Photographer	Academic	Conduct(n)
Photographic	Present(v)	Conduct(v)

In the analysis according to generative phonology, the position is quite clear. According to Chomsky and Hall, stress in English can be predicted in most cases on the basis of rules.¹ (1968) Also, when the underlying representation passes through cycles of derivation, stress is assigned and the vowels are adjusted accordingly

In recent decades the crucial importance of stress has been recognized by producers of teaching material. In addition to a lot of recorded material, text books include stress as a teaching item from the earliest stage. To quote one example of a book. *Simple Speaking Activities* 1999's 5th impression 2002 by Jill and Charles Hadfield, presents 30 lessons at elementary level: they note learning of stress pattern and intonation, will be troublesome items (p.7) and suggest the following steps as regards the teaching of stress pattern: Get the learner to clap out the rhythm before saying the word or sentence.

Get the learners to tap out the rhythm in their desk as they repeat the sentence.

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Dictate the word or sentence and get the learner to mark the stress. (p.8)

In this book , the first lesson contains the following exercise:

Practice the stress patterns in the dialogue;

Hello my name's Ben. What's your name?

My name's Kate, Nice to meet you.

Nice to meet you too. (p.13)

Correct stressing at once achieves two objectives; it helps the learner to adjust the vowel sounds in a word or utterance and it ensures global intelligibility. The native varieties of English – British, American, and Australian generally agree regarding the placing of primary and secondary stresses.

Now the nature of stress in English and Arabic is very different. Stress in English is based on energetic articulation; more muscular energy than is used for unstressed syllables" (Roach, 200:93). Perceptually, prominence is felt through loudness, length, and pitch and vowel quality. In Arabic, however, the basic Phonetic factor appears to be length (where it is present). Prominence, according to Mitchell (1977), depends on the quantitative syllabic pattern of the whole word" (p.26). A.s. Tritton (1979) states the rules of accentuation in the following words:

The accent rests on –

- (1) The penultimate syllable when it is long
- (2) On the ante-penultimate syllable when it is long and penultimate short.
- (3) On the long syllable before the antepenultimate when the penultimate and antepenultimate are both short,

on the first syllable if there is no such long vowel
(p.2)

As to rhythm (which of course, can't be thought of in isolation from some kind of accentuation) English has its own stress. Timed rhythms and its own pattern of beats and musical phrase which, evidently is different from that of Arabic. Lack of people rhythm will certainly render an utter strange and un-english. Since rhythm is an integral part of the form of a word or sentence, it helps us indirectly in identifying words and utterances and assigning their communicative meaning.

Where the teaching of English stress and rhythm is involved, poetry offers some clear advantages. Stress pattern and rhythm are clearly marked in recitation and stressing in poetry is almost like beats in music; it also etches out clearly the principal tunes such as falling and rising - which are also employed in conversation. Poetry cannot be taught effectively unless it is actually performed by the teacher and this demands metrical analysis and preparation. In an article published in 1985, I referred to the distinctive properties of creative writing; these are special attention to words and meaning, imagined contents and mnemonic quality. This article is included in my book *Applied Linguistics* (2004:95-106). In a research paper Linda Thomson reports the findings of a research project carried out in a primary school in the north-east of England. After analyzing the student responses (in a recorded form) it was found that most informants in their own individual ways mentioned what may be called the aural quality of the poetic genre. The specific elements singled out by them are rhyme and rhythm. They were also impressed by the affective element in poetry (in Thomson Linda, ed. 1996:4-8).

Before we begin using poetry for the teaching of stress and rhythm, we must clarify our ideas on these phenomena as regards English. The natural rhythm of English is based on a foot or phrase which consists of one stressed syllable

followed by 0 to three weak syllables. In poetry the stresses are strongly marked as if they were musical beats and a single verse generally consists of four stresses linked by alliteration. This is the kind of rhythm that arises out of the genius of the English language. Phoneticians generally agree to this view. Abercrombie holds that a foot in English speech begins with a stressed syllable which may or may not be followed by unstressed syllables. When this does not happen, he assumes that there is a silent stress in the beginning.....G.M. Hopkins's sprung rhythm has a similar basis which in his view was constant with the genius of English. Sprung rhythm has four kinds of foot—each beginning with a stressed syllable: single stressed syllable; stressed syllable followed by one unstressed syllable; one stressed followed by two unstressed and one stressed followed by three unstressed Hopkins also makes provision for 'outrides' and continuous scansion. His aim, as he himself asserted, was to make use of the movements of everyday speech, his sprung rhythm 'may be regarded as a kind of free verse based partly on accentual meters' (Baldick, 7; 242). The models for Hopkins' experiment were chiefly nursery rhymes and Anglo-Saxon poetry, for which great interest arose during the last decades of the 19th century and many Old English poems were rendered into modern English by Ezra Pound and other writers.

We are now in a position to exemplify sprung rhythm. Old English and traditional Medieval verse, and nursery rhymes in the context of speech rhythms of everyday English, wherever Hopkins uses sprung rhythm, the stresses are strongly marked and the foot varies as outlined above (if there are no outrides and continuous scansion).

(a) [|]Glory be to [|]God for [|]dappled things (Pied Beauty)

(a) Thou mastering me
 God! Gives of breath and bread;

Worlds strand, away of the sea;

Lord of living and dead.

(*The Wreck of the Deutschland*)

It should be noted how the stresses are strongly marked and are, therefore, easier to teach, imitate and repeat. The rhythm is also closer to English speech. In a letter to Robert Bridges, Hopkins explained,

Why do I employ sprung rhythm at all?

Because it is the nearest to the rhythm of prose, the least forced, the most rhetorical and emphatic of all possible rhythms.....

Old English poetry followed the same kind of metrical phrase: a line generally consists of four feet with one stress in each foot and three stressed syllables are linked by alliteration. There is also a juncture at or near the middle of the line.

Ic com frod feores ; ic ne wil be,

Ac ic me be health minum plaforde

Be swa leofan man pence began pence

I am old of life ; hence I will not,

But by the side of my lord,

by the man so does , i intend to be lie (*Piers the Ploughman*)

And here is a piece from *The Vision of Piers The Ploughman*, a sample of traditional Medieval verse:

Brewers and bakers and butches and cook

Such man, os this mould can most harm work

To poorer people, that piece-meal buy

For they poison the people, both privily and of

We should note that in both cases mentioned above, alliteration helps in the learning of stress and rhythm and modernized versions could be taught if they keep alletration intact.

Nursery Rhymes also employ the native rhythmic movement and beat – like stress with two to four units in each line. As we shall find out when we analyze their text, they offer some other advantages to the learner:

1. Jack and Jill went up the hill.
To fetch a pail of water
Jack fells down and broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.
2. There was a little girl
who had a little curl
right in the middle of her forehead;
and when she was good ,
she was very, very good
but when she was bad she was horrid
3. Rock- a- bye baby on the treetop
When the wind blows,
The cradle will fall
And down will come baby
Cradle and all.

Apart from strongly marked stress, variable phrase structure and isochronous rhythm, the examples show how the adjective preceding a noun requires secondary stress and when two stressed syllables come together, the speaker should try to adjust the duration of time. These and many other features of pronunciation will become clear when the audio versions are heard again and again. Nursery rhymes in CD's can be readily procured or accessed on the Internet. Linda Holl has referred to a study by Bryant and Bradley which shows that "children who have experienced nursery rhymes and rhymed poetry generally (like that of A.A. Milne) in the pre-school phase have no trouble learning to read when they start school, and develop fluency sooner than other. This is because the presence of phonological patterns like alliteration and rhyme promotes in children the capacity for recognizing sounds that are similar or the same (in Thomson Linda, P.77).

I have included a reference to Nursery rhymes for four reasons; first, the rhythms of modern poetry have nursery rhymes as one of their sources; secondly, Nursery rhymes prominently highlight the features of stress and rhythm in English; thirdly, adults, while reading nursery rhymes to children, enjoy this kind of poetry themselves and fourthly, the child in us never disappears entirely. The adult learner must participate in language games, structural drills, role playing, turn taking and recitation if they have to acquire proficiency in the use of the language.

We must now turn to living English speech in order to show how the kinds of poetry we have discussed can serve as a model for stress and rhythm as used in modern English speech; take the utterance;

Which is the |plane for | Aden|, please

The first foot has one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed ones, the second one stressed followed by one unstressed syllable but in actual utterance all the four feet must be isochronous more or less. We can cite some more example with initial stress :

not very |much

Yes, I\ love it.

It should also be noticed that rhythmic units do not coincide with grammatical phrases. This The first step in teaching stress and rhythm of English should be to select rhythms, lullabies and poems which begin with a stressed syllable and have the foot structure as described above. However, it cannot be claimed that there is no other class of utterances which began with one or more unstressed syllables. We can account for such initial feet as the basis of silent stress hypothesis and in actual classroom presentation the teacher can start beating the rhythm before the actual speech begins. (This procedure is not uncommon in music).

| , I was | only | trying to | help

| There's | nothing, | can | say

Since this kind of initial foot is quite common, we can account for it by assuming an introductory unit, a kind of truncated foot which lacks a stressed syllable, and such a foot can occur only initially in an utterance.

We have seen that modern prosody beginning with G.M. Hopkins arises out of the natural rhythm of spoken English. But what about English poetry from Chaucer to Hopkins and —even after Hopkins. Is that poetry totally opposed to the rhythmic genius of English? The issue certainly demands an explanation, if not satisfactory answer.

Classical meters (iambic trochaic, etc .) were imported into Britain in 14th century and right from the beginning poets realized that they did not accord with the natural rhythms of English ; they were meant for the ancient languages whose natural rhythm was based on long and short syllables .English poets , therefore, attempted significant deviations from the norm and these changes were sactioned as part of poetic licence.The most widely used deviations were cutting off an unstressed syllable from the beginning or end of a line adding an unstressed syllable anywhere and substituting one kind of foot for another.The net result was a kind of flexibility which bridged the gap between classical rhythm and the rhythms of living English. Some of the most effective and memorable lines were produced in this way. Here are some examples:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
(Marlowe?)

Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears!

I came to bury Caesar, not to praise him. (Shakespeare)

Told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying
nothing. (Shakespeare)

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise. (Milton)
 Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven. (Milton)
 Tiger, tiger, burning bright. (Blake)
 Shades of the prison house begin to close. (Wordsworth)

Dramatic verse of Shakespeare, Milton's highly flexible lines in *Samson Agonistes* and Browning's dramatic monologues offer excellent material for teaching English stress and rhythm provided they are treated as specimens of authentic speech. In this connection, Marjory Boulton has raised an interesting issue. She argues that if Hamlet's famous line, "to be or not to be that is the question" is delivered strictly as iambic pentameter, it loses its true effect. It must be uttered with the inflexions of living speech (*Anatomy of Poetry*).

Poetry is perhaps the best material for teaching emphatic and contrastive stress. We know that, generally, single syllable function words do not receive stress in English conversation unless their meaning is emphasized or contrasted. Let's look at the following line:

My heart leaps up when I behold

In this line the pronoun I is placed in a stressed position; this emphatic stress pronoun is interpretable in terms of the romantic theory of poetry. Similarly, Hugh MacDiarmid contrasts effectively his own relation to the people with that of the Auden group who, according to him, belong to the middle class. He says,

They are for the the people, I am of them.

Before we proceed further, it seems necessary to modify the assumption that the rhythmic foot in English consists of a stressed syllable either alone or followed by up to three unstressed syllables, because the possible occurrence of unstressed syllables in the beginning cannot be denied although it can be rationalized by postulating an initial

stress. Following Wenk and Wioland (1982), we can point two kinds of foot ; leader timed, when the stressed syllable in the initial position and *trailer time* , where unstressed syllable or syllables come in the beginning.

With this modification to our concept of foot structure, we are in a position to approach the task of materials selection keeping constantly in the view the fact that our focus is on the teaching of stress and rhythm of English. Some guidelines for material selection for rhythm of English been indicated and within the suggested parameters the teacher is free to utilize his own insight and criteria to supplement the material and fill in the gaps.

We can begin with old English poetry in modern English version making sure that the modern rendering preserves the stressing and rhythmic patterns of the original. Next we can select some nursery rhymes, most of which are easily available in CDs and DVDs. Selecting poetry from Chaucer to Georgians (Hopkins would be an exception) one has to be more cautious but Shakespeare's dramatic verse the Bible (1611), Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Browning's dramatic monologues will easily pass muster, among modern poetry choice must fall, among others on T.S.Eliot Auden and Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes is also eligible for using beat – like stresses

In the end I would like to pay special attention to T.S.Eliot in relation to the rhythmic contour of English, It appears to me that English prefers stress – timed unit with a maximal projection of four syllables including the stressed one. Longer stretches can encompass two to six units or feet. The line or speech span tends to break when we go beyond six feet and below two feet would not give any rhythmic feel, but in the company of longer feet it may occur.

T.S. Eliot is interesting because he can easily move between two and six feet although his norm as in old English poetry and nursery rhymes is four feet. I shall now give some example from his poems:

The river sweats
 Oil and tar
 The barges drift
 With the turning tide
 Red sails
 Wide

To leeward swing on the heavy spar.

(The Waste Land)

My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin
 My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple
 pin-

(The Love Song of Alfred J. Prufrock)

The last example comes from the beginning of *The Waste Land*, which, I guess, represents the focus from which the poet can freely move either way – to two or six syllables:

April is the cruelest month, breeding
 Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
 Memory and desire, stirring
 Dull roots with spring rain

Let me end this paper by citing some parallel examples at random from textbooks on spoken English:

It's under the table
 They're on the windowsill.
 How about going on a picnic?
 Then ill get the lunch ready.
 Oh, yes , he does write to his parents
 Would you care for some more children?
 All right, but just a snack.

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Postcolonial Discourse and After

Avadhesh Kumar Singh*

Discourse is a much ab/used term nowadays. The term attained currency after Michel Foucault's studies. Everything became a discourse. Its definition, however, often eludes many. Discourse is a body of statements that are arranged in a regular and systematic manner. Writing on Foucault's methods Gavin Kendell and Gary Wickham in *Using Foucault's Methods* (1999) have stated that the steps that are based on acceptance of the issues pertaining to the definition of discourse as a body of regular and systematic statements include: how these statements are arranged?; what can be written or said and what cannot be?; how spaces in which new statements can be made are created; and how practice materials and discursive materials are made at the same time?

It is a resounding common place these days that all discourses are discourses of power. Rightly, because discourses deal with knowledge, and knowledge is power. 'Knowledge is power' is a slogan, for knowledge is not power in itself. It becomes power only after it is implemented. Here, the agencies and institutions that control the production and dissemination of knowledge determine the processes of acquisition, preservation, creation, application and dissemination (read marketing and pricing). The process goes on in a spiral manner.

In the early part of human civilization, all discourses were discourses of existence. After physical existence dealing with human life, the universe and man's place in the universe. the attention was diverted to metaphysical questions and aspects. Whatever remained beyond the pale of human

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understanding was apotheosized and worshipped in different forms in different names. That is how along with metaphysical discourse, mythological and religious discourses came into existence. Philosophical discourse occupied the area between religion and mythology. From these domains whatever was proved empirically and positivistically with demonstrable evidence was put in the scientific discipline.

The discourses of existence found two major directions: Discourse of Love and Discourse of Power. The former involved submission of oneself to the other. It was of three kinds: the submission of higher self to lower self, the submission of lower self to higher self, and the submission of two equal selves. The first submission falls into the category of affection, the second devotion and third love. It may be seen in operation in the *Bhakti* movement in India particularly.

With the discourse of the Western modernity, the discourse of love was replaced by the discourse of power which led to focus on identity and dignity that were denied by the exploitative forces. The discourse of love came to be abused by the hegemonic groups who used the unquestioning surrender in love or devotion in love for exploiting the weak and vulnerable sections of the society, and constructed the discourses or misinterpreted the existing discourses to suit their ends. It led to colonization or exploitation and marginalization of a large segment of people. It is evident in the discourses that came to be constructed belatedly by marginalised groups in the obtaining literary and artistic discourses: Dalit Discourses, Feminist Discourses, Diaspora Discourses, Regional Discourses and Identity Discourses

In a way, all these discourses are marked by intersectionality and influence/reception studies. In this sense all of them are translated discourses, as they came to be influenced by their intercontinental counterparts. The Black Movement influenced the Dalit movement and discourse in India, the Western Feminist movement impacted feminist

movements/discourses in India, Diaspora discourse was international in its origin but had different phases and shades, as it straddled different countries and continents. The regional and identity discourses came into existence with the modern discourses. Accordingly, they found different manifestations in terms of countries and identities—race, religion, caste, class, gender and community. Moreover, they intersect each other and co-exist simultaneously.

These discourses have considerably been shaped by the off-shoots of Post structuralism and deconstruction which is post structuralism put to practice. The sceptical reading led to beginning and proliferation of two inter-related discourses—postcolonialism and postmodernism.

Post-colonialism is still in news, though postmodernism, its contemporary discourse, is on its way out, after Nicolas Bourriaud, the French thinker, painter and curator, pronounced the 'death' of postmodernism, who in March 2009 declared the manifesto of altermodernism, "Altermodernism: Postmodernism is Dead" in the Tate Arts Gallery. One of the reasons for it is that postmodernism was a perception that changed the perception of looking at things with focus on little narratives rather than on the grand narrative, and in the process brought marginal little narratives in the centre of discussion and its study. A close reading of altermodernism reveals that there is not much new in it except the fact that it accepts the existence of the others and their modernities in the light of exponential changes brought about by ICT revolution and the means of transport, and considered them worth study. Its real contribution is in the form of the concept of the new artist as the ivy creeper that grows wherever it is thrown.

Between the two terms I find post-coloniality to be more suitable than post-colonialism as discourse. Post-coloniality is a state of mind and resistance against exploitation, its processes, agencies and discourses. Post-coloniality happens not necessarily with political independence but after

intellectual independence. The hangover of colonialism casts its shadow even after the colonialism. The colonial mentality becomes a pathological disease, if it continues, even in the post-colonial period, something which Satchidanand Hiranandana Vatsyana 'Agyeya' discussed in his essay "Bhasha, Kala aur Aupniveshik Manasikata" ("Language, Art and Colonial Mentality"), and he had commented upon the so-called modern artists of his time. According to him, Amrita Shergil was modern but her modernity contained in it the pain of not belonging to India. But other modern artists were not like her. They were neither related nor did their work have any pain for not belonging to India. They did not have any anguish at their condition. On the contrary, they felt more comfortable with it; rather they found themselves in a state of convenience, even profit and superiority. He found greater problem with the contemporary critic. To cite him:

"He [the Indian contemporary critic] criticises in English, for he cannot do so in a language other than English. He has not learnt any other language other than English to do so. He does not have even the knowledge of vocabulary of art in an Indian language, and the vocabulary that he uses their *samskaras* are so alien that they cannot be applied; and the history of those terms that may be applied is so entwined with colonialism that to consider Indian history on their basis would amount to seeing it with alien eyes." (177)

Postcolonial criticism has enriched pedagogy of English studies with the process of de-canonisation in the 1980s, and sceptical reading of texts and reconstruction of discourse after rejecting the colonial discourses. It has helped in new interpretations of even canonical texts like Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello* and *The Tempest*. William Shakespeare is not beyond scepticism, even scepticism any more.

Hitherto reverential attitude to Shakespeare has now been replaced by irreverential playfulness. The first phase

of postcolonial discourse was reactionary and concerned with the anxiety of being PC (politically correct). The second phase of post-colonialism is free from the reactionary tendencies. For instance, Shakespeare came to India with English language and Englishmen. In the first phase it led to bardolatry on the one hand and, on the few other occasions, to bardicide. The second phase of post-colonialism is marked by acceptance of Shakespeare as one of our own, and thereby having the space of playing with him. The second phase needs no Papal stamp of approval for Indian English writing by English (wo)man.

The question is: Is it possible to do postcolonial criticism in a language other than English (read Indian in our context) in the present state?

If one goes by the obtaining proliferation of English at different levels, the answer would certainly be in negative. Like most of Indian language writers who wish to have been English writers or to still wish at least to be translated in English, Indian critics, including our nativists, wish to be in English. English is the coveted desire, Indian languages and criticism in them merely an option and compulsion, less out of conviction or commitment and more out of helplessness. Compulsion and helplessness cannot be even the frail foundation of postcolonialism—be it the first or third phase. Despite it, the fact is that some of the best instances of resistance to colonialism or intellectual subservience have been articulated in criticism in Indian languages.

The larger consequences and response to it may be discerned in mainstream Indian pedagogy. It has taken a step, but just one by bringing in literatures written in languages of post-colonial societies through their translation in English. The postcolonial discourse in a society like India is being mediated in the language of the erstwhile coloniser. [The author of the present piece is fully aware of this limitation.] Some might put forward the argument that Indian English is now an Indian language. But the fact is

that true criticism of Indian art and literature, leave aside the postcolonial criticism, is not still possible in English as English does not have these words; and our colonial mindset does not allow the reverse use of these terms i.e., using and explaining them in English.

Post-colonialism is neither a homogenous nor a static discourse. Different colonial societies have had their own shares and shades of experiences of colonialism. In fact, within a colonized society, its different sections experienced different kinds of perceptions of colonialism. These sections included the convenient 'other' that sided with the coloniser and reaped the harvest of its support to the coloniser, 'the antagonist other' that resisted coloniser, 'the ambivalent other' that loved and hated depending on its convenience or otherwise, and 'the indifferent other' like the marginalised sections like the voiceless downtrodden or *sadhus* and *sanyasi-s* who had abandoned society for different reasons and were least bothered about whosoever was the ruler and subscribed to Tulsidasa's words, "*Kou nrip hoi hamain ka hani.*" ('Whosoever is the ruler makes no difference to me.') These diverse segments experienced colonization in different ways in different parts of the country and responded accordingly. Dalit discourse, for instance, found the colonial period congenial for sowing the seeds of emancipation from the dominance of castes and untouchability in the light of the western education system, though Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar had questioned the genuineness of the efforts of the Raj in alleviating the pain and distress of the Dalits.

Post-colonial criticism in literature is at least a few steps away from being really postcolonial. It would come a little closer to being truly postcolonial when Departments of English will begin to teach English and non-English texts in their languages and students will be allowed to write their examinations not necessarily in English but in their languages. The anglophiles may scoff at the idea but it would do a lot of service to literary studies, as the basic purpose of literature is to enrich literary sensibility, and

inculcate literary values which are nothing but human values and consequently values of life. Students who bring the so-called bad English bring in rich literary sensibility which gets erased, as it has to pass through a language in which they are not proficient.

At least I look forward to this postcolonial pedagogical shift in/through postcolonial in Indian higher education when literatures, including English, will be taught in Departments of Literatures, and students will be free to read and write in language(s) of their choice. As mentioned elsewhere, the second phase of postcolonialism is marked by the use of English language as one's own and its handle without any psychological lumber. The flip-side of this postcolonial phase is that those who think English to be their own and take it a little too far and shun their own language(s) forgetting in the process that ignoring one's own languages would peril the culture(s) concerned in the end.

If the attitude of playfulness or playing with the colonial language i.e., English is a criterion, there have been many minds in all Indian languages—writers, critics and thinkers in the colonial period who have excelled in it. Bhartendu Harishchandra's response to Shakespeare in the form of his translation of *The Merchant of Venice* is a case in view. In the period of the height of colonial period after India had lost the struggle of Independence of 1857, Bhartendu was unawed by Shakespeare's repute. With the aim of enriching his language Hindi, he translated *The Merchant of Venice* not literally but contextualised in Indian culture that privileges *bandhutva* (brotherhood) in principle over racial hatred. Bhartendu heralded the shift in the beginning of the translation by citing the Sanskrit *shloka* as an epigraph and adding it:

"¹Durlabha gunino shoorah datarashchatidurabhah
Mitrathe tyaktsarvasvo bandhursarvaswo durlabhah."

(Virtuous and brave are rare; even rarer are donors

Those who sacrifice everything for the friend, hard to find are such brothers.)

Incidentally, he did not stop here. Rather, he added one couplet from Urdu in *shikta* script without mentioning the name of the poet. It read thus:

“Khuda mile to mile ashna nahin mana
Kisi ka koi nahin dost sab kahani hai.”

(If I see God, fine but do not consider him so dear. No one is a friend, it is nothing but fiction.)

However, he did not translate Sanskrit and Urdu couplets into Hindi. Perhaps he thought that his readers would know enough Devnagari and Urdu Shikasta scripts, or those who did not, he signalled a message indirectly that in India they need to know these languages or they should, for knowing their meaning, reach out to those who knew them. As regards the question of English, they need not go anywhere, as he was making them available through his Hindi translation. Shakespeare even in his wildest dreams would not have imagined that the very first page of his play in its Hindi *avatar* would be in three languages, other than English. (Please see the scanned copy of the first page of Bhartendu's translation.) It would be fitting to know it here that he had translated the first part of it and published it in 1880 but could not complete it because of his death at the age of 35 in 1885. It was completed later by Pandit Ramshankar Vyas and Babu Radha Krishna Das.

Bhartendu's translation is marked by confidence in self and culture that go into making of post-coloniality. To begin with he did not translate the title of the play *The Merchant of Venice* in Hindi literally as “*Venice ka Vyapari*” that might have been a natural and choice for most of us. He treaded the harder path and made a conscious but difficult choice but *Durlabh Bandhu*, in the process he shifted the focus from Shylock to Antonio. He made nomenclatural changes in the names of the characters and places. With his

translational craft he transforms Venice and Belmont into Vanshapur and Vilvamatha. The characters like Antonio (Ananta), Bassanio (Basant), Salanio (Salone), Salarino (Saral), Launcelot (Lavang), Gratiano (Girish), Stephano (Toophani), Duke (Mandaleshwar) among others. The female characters like Portia, Nerrisa and Jessica appear as Purushree, Narshree and Jayshree. The choice for Shylock is even more inventive and interesting. He makes Shylock an Indian Jain Shailaksh (Stone-eyed). He has not only retained onomastic connections but also the spirit of the Jewish character by making Shailaksh, a Jain. The Jains in India are money-lenders who are not subjected to any hatred like the Jews but the perception of moneylenders is such that they are often not projected as kind and compassionate.

In the play there is a line by Lancelot, "Sola, sola! No ha, ho! Sola, sola!" I could not understand it. In early 1980s when I had asked its meaning, my teachers at the undergraduate level snubbed me by saying that such a piece is not important from examination's view point. Others did not help me. Later I came to know about Bhartendu's translation of the play. I went straight to it, and saw the line in Bhartendu thus:

"Dhootoo dhootoo pipee pipee dhootoo dhootoo".

(Act V, Scene 1, Line 39)

The 'educated' professors of English either dared not or did not understand that Shakespeare was using words for sounds that made sense to the emotive state of the character, Bhartendu, who despite being 'uneducated' in English, was not, along with his co-translators, did almost hundred years earlier. He played with the master's (Mistress's) bars Shakespeare and his English, and made it his own. The question is: Who is the real postcolonial? Bhartendu of the colonial period or the educated teachers of English of the so-called postcolonial period? Or those of us who feel more comfortable in English or any other foreign language for the

sake of either convenience or prestige and shun their own language? The problem is not with the choice of language or the model but with the attitude of cultural submission and acceptance of intellectual bankruptcy.

Many a serious scholar has been concerned with the question in different Indian languages. One of the most distinguished critics and literary historiographers Acharya Ramchandra Shukla considered it seriously. In 1935 he had remarked in his Presidential Speech:

About criticism I have only this much to say that we find more endeavours of impressionistic criticism are seen than pure (*shuddha*) criticism. In the impressionistic criticism one does not come across the attributes of poets, as we come to know about embellished images of personal feelings and emotions of critics. But one wants to read a piece of criticism...(262)

Perhaps, he did not see much progress in this direction. His project did not find many takers or he did not see much headway in the direction of intellectual de-colonization in the literary sphere. Therefore, he had to restate his anguish when he had cautioned the authors in his Welcome Address in the 28th Assembly Session to *Akhil Bhartiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan* (All India Hindi Literature Conference):

I have a request to all the dignitaries that you please awaken such a sense of literary independence in all of us that we stop longing for everything European and accept only those things after considering them with a sense of discretion as are of permanent values and which are suitable for our conditions. Such is the condition of Europe today that all eternal elements that sustain life are going out of all aspects of their lives. Be it politics, society or literature, all are trembling. Take the case of the Russian Bolsheviks, they would with disdain term all literature to be bourgeois literature and would ask us to depend on the literature of carpenters, blacksmiths and labourers. Look at Germany; the literature written only in the support of the Nazis' can survive there. Mr Freud has died recently. According to his

understanding, even dreams are mere shadows of gratification of our unfulfilled desires, and all our arts like poetry are mere means of unfulfilled sexual desires. The important thing for us to remember is if we should keep writing after accepting these things as they are, or we should find an independent way for ourselves after considering our internal and external conditions and examining various tendencies of different countries of the world. (*Chintamani* Part 3, p. 276) [Translated from Hindi by me.]

Acharya Shukla may be faulted for his insistence to 'depend on the literature of carpenters, blacksmiths and labourers' with justification to an extent because any art activity that gets divorced from, or ignores labour becomes parasitic in the long run. But that is not our principal concern here. The issue is how and to what extent we may use the term post-colonial criticism for Acharya Shukla's pieces. Politically and historically speaking, Shukla was writing it in the colonial period. But he was resisting the supremacy of the European colonial structures, and submission of Indian intellectuals to them. Hence, his conscious resistance of alien models out of intellectual dependence speaks of his postcoloniality in the colonial period.

To term Acharya Shukla a post-colonial critic would amount to his reduction to a category or proposal. The fact is that he is more than it. He is against the state of submission or mental subjugation of Indian writers on European critical paradigms.

The reality check of the postcolonialism and after reveals that the discussion of its phases is purely academic in nature. In the discussion of postcolonialism, the fact is postcolonialism as such is a myth, for exploitation—internal and external—are in still in existence, its forms have changed and become subtle and sophisticated in the prevailing culture of connivance. The base and structure exist now only in Marxist texts, in reality they have been eroded. The class distinctions have been rendered meaningless in the 21st century. The

binaries of categories and classes have also collapsed. We may have to think beyond and take cognizance of the continuum. But how can different phases of postcolonial discourses and practices be consequential, if eco-psychopolitical and cultural processes of exploitation are neither revealed nor critiqued?

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The Vocabulary of (Other) Things: Material Culture and Globality in English Literature

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This essay traces English literature's engagement with the world from the 16th century to the beginnings of the 20th. English literature, I hypothesize, has always been concerned with the racial and cultural Other and this concern manifests in the form of a globality. I use 'globality' in opposition to David Arnold's argument (2005) about the 'tropicality' to be found in English discourses about the tropics in the nineteenth century.¹ It echoes also Mary Louise Pratt's concept of the Eurocentric 'planetary consciousness' that she traces to eighteenth century natural history (2003). Globality in English literature is the imaginative construction of the world, with all its racial and cultural differences. This essay focuses on a particular modality of speaking about globality in English literature: material objects of/from foreign places. It proposes that *England's engagement with the world, and the globality in its literary texts, took the form of an engagement with the material objects from round the world.*

Edmund Spenser was fascinated by New World plants. The wealth and jewellery of Indian and Arab emperors came in for attention in Marlowe, Shakespeare, Drayton and Bacon. House décor with imported goods and objects is described in detail in Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen and other eighteenth century authors. Tea, cotton, china/porcelain, tapestries, coffee, Kashmiri shawls, tobacco and cocoa, accompanied by appurtenances and rituals of consumption such as tea-pots or china, figure in numerous

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texts from Pepys and Congreve right up to Samuel Coleridge, Joanna Baillie, William Cowper and Charlotte Brontë. An India 'stone' is the centre of Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*. Besides these everyday commodities, exhibitions and museums from the 'curiosity cabinets' of the seventeenth century, the botanical gardens of the mid-nineteenth century organized by Joseph Hooker and Joseph Banks, to the industrial exhibitions of the late nineteenth century invariably had plants, flowers, art objects, tapestries and designs from all parts of the world. Upper class and royal households had rooms filled with artefacts and ornamental objects from the colonies. Add to these varied representations of slave or foreign bodies reduced to objects for different ideological reasons and with different emphases – from dismemberment to emancipation to insubstantiality – from Aphra Behn to Bram Stoker and Joseph Conrad and we have an encyclopaedic collection of England's forms of engagement with foreign 'objects'. The globality of English literature is associated, this essay demonstrates, with objects and commodities. That is, we can think of a *globality of objects*, of various kinds, values, significations and symbolisms that signal English literature's trans-national engagements.

The literary and cultural imagination of England, right from the sixteenth century, documented the encountered with the racial, national and cultural Other in terms of material objects and goods from outside its geopolitical borders. This essay examines the language of commodities and the vocabulary of objects and material culture that commodifies the non-European Other in English literature. It studies the vocabulary of material objects by examining texts in which objects from Asia, China, Arabia and the Americas figure either in terms of set-descriptions or in conjunction with the lives of characters.

In material culture, theorist Janet Hoskins' words, we can discern a 'narrative elaboration' of objects in the context of human settings and 'lifestories' (2006: 78-9). The vocabulary of things demonstrates, I argue, a history of

England's engagement with what I call Other-objects. England's transnational concerns, this essay shows, manifest in the form of desires for, fascination with and anxieties about Other-objects.

Three key articulations of the vocabulary of things can be seen in English literature, 1550-1900, and form the three sections of the essay. In section one; I look at the vocabulary of English consumption of foreign products. In the second, I look at the discourse of spectacle where the English literary text speaks of the exhibiting of foreign objects in particular ways as part of their self-fashioning. In section three I turn to the fear of the Other-object where the foreign matter becomes a source of anxiety as expressed in the vocabulary of things.

Matters for Consumption

The vocabulary of foreign things we see in English writing was not restricted simply to the consuming tea or tobacco or cocoa or sugar. Integral to consumption were both the appurtenances of consumption and the ritualized processes of consumption. Thus from the mid-seventeenth century tea, coffee, sugar and tobacco were major constituents of England's grocery expenditure (Smith 1996: 183).² China and porcelain, by the age of Charles Lamb (to whose essays 'Old China' I shall return later), were no longer luxury products but products of mass consumption that, in Karen Fang's words, 'offer[ed] everyday access to an exotic world' (2003: 823). The Other-objects get absorbed into English domestic and public spaces, rituals of dining and display, so that they become 'Englished'. English lifestories as reflected in its literature, I propose, were constituted by the foreign objects consumed within domestic as well as public spaces. The 'domestic', the *OED* informs us, means 'of or pertaining to one's own country or nation; not foreign, internal, inland, "home"'. Yet this domesticity, that by definition excludes the foreign, is constituted by something foreign. The Other-object consumed thus became a part of English culture, and

this material Othering in literature is precisely what I plan to trace here. While looking at everyday consumption I focus on Other-objects that become a *habit* with the English.

One of the first Other-objects that made its way into everyday English consumption and which eventually provoked, as early as 1604 (in King James' *A Counter-blaste to Tobacco*), furious diatribes, was tobacco. Edmund Spenser in *The Faerie Queen* (Book III, Canto VI, 32) has been credited with the first literary/poetical reference to tobacco: Spenser refers to its medicinal properties. Francis Beaumont's brother, John Beaumont's *The Metamorphosis of Tobacco* (1602) had praised the substance as something that inspires with its 'ethereal vapours'. He even claimed that in the age of barbarism, it inspired poetry and religious belief. More significantly, Beaumont linked tobacco cultivation with Empire and English fortunes, praising the Queen for having:

uncontroll'd stretcht out her mighty hand
Over Virginia and the New-found-land,
And spread the colors of our English Rose
In the far countries where Tobacco grows,
And tam'd the savage nations of the West,
Which of this jewel were in vain possest.

To have acquired the territory where tobacco grew, says Beaumont, is truly a magnificent achievement, for anyway the 'savage nations' of the New World (the 'West' in the above lines) had 'possessed' this jewel in 'vain'. Beaumont concludes his hagiography with

For this our praised plant on high doth soar,
Above the baser dross of earthly ore,
Like the brave spirit and ambitious mind
Whose eaglet's eyes the sunbeams cannot blind;
Nor can the clog of poverty depress
Such souls in base and native lowliness,
But proudly scorning to behold the Earth,
They leap at crowns, and reach above their birth.

Beaumont here compares gold unfavourably with tobacco.

Jonson's Bobadill, a tobacconist, in *Every Man in His Humour* (staged in 1605) claimed that for twenty one days in the Indies they had not 'nutriment' but the fumes of tobacco and declares it to be 'divine'. Bobadill also claims tobacco had medicinal properties that healed numerous ailments (III. V: 77-95. Jonson of course is satirizing these claims, and Bobadill).

Let us now turn to the preeminent English beverage of habit, tea. 'I did send for a cup of tee (a China drink) of which I never had drank before', wrote Samuel Pepys in his diary entry of 25 September 1660 (Pepys 1825). In an often-ignored exchange in William Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700), a few decades after Pepys, Mirabel announces that, after their marriage, he would allow Millimant to serve only 'native' drinks to visitors: 'tea, chocolate and coffee' (IV.5). Tea, a product of China and India, has become a 'native drink'. On Belinda's dressing table appear, satirizes Alexander Pope in *The Rape of the Lock* 'unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here, the various offerings of the world appear'. The world is consumed by the Englishwoman in the form of jewellery and fashion accessories, and thus emerges the English woman's globality of objects.

Pepys marks the event as special, for a foreign product has been imbibed. The second example is more interesting. Tea, chocolate and coffee in Congreve's account function as markers of Englishness, but also of English domesticity. What Mirabel is proposing is tea-serving – which is gendered in the above lines – and tea- or coffee-drinking with visitors is a *habit* they must acquire. English domesticity, as I mentioned above, is now constituted by the foreign so that the foreign has been habituated to and been given a habitation. Visitors imply socialization and therefore all the norms of social interaction are in place, of which, hereafter the consumption of tea or coffee would be one. The consumption of these drinks, in the social space (which might be thought of somewhere between the private and the public) of the home such as the parlour, constructs the

identity of the household through a repeated set of rituals. Thus we need to pay attention not just to the Other-object here but also to the apparatuses of consumption.

The vocabulary of things that ties object biographies with individual lives, social functions, economy and even national character is exemplified in Alexander Pope's inventory of products of mass consumption and rituals of consumption in *The Rape of the Lock* (1712) wherein coffee, sugar and lacquer function as signs of the English business class plotting profits, strategies and politics. These become in a sense appurtenances to the *public* display of English power and authority. Pope mentions coffee, but there was more literature on tea.

Tea-drinking is a good habit, as several texts of the eighteenth century would state. Peter Motteux's *A Poem Upon Tea* (1712) began by listing the medicinal advantages of the drink. 'It has', writes Motteux in his Preface, 'the balm and comfort of a cordial, without the headiness of our strong spirits'. 'It cheers the heart, without disordering the head', he continues. Motteux also cleverly makes tea the drink that unites classes in England: it is the 'treat of the frugal, yet the regale of the luxurious'. He then lists the deleterious effects of wine in the very opening lines of the poem. He moves on to deride coffee as equally dangerous as a drink. Motteux treats tea as the drink of English Enlightenment itself (Beth Kowaleski-Wallace 1994: 133). He describes tea as replacing wine because, once people recognize the abusive nature of wines, 'tea, temperance and reason will prevail' (9). Tea, says Motteux, 'gives light'. Tea, Motteux seems to suggest, is a national drink. By identifying this imported object and gesturing at its intimate relationship with the lives of every kind of Englishman and woman, Motteux has demonstrated the incorporation of the Other into English culture.

Advising the English on how to be properly English were Joseph Addison and Richard Steele through the columns of *The Spectator*. Joseph Addison's emphatic statement from

The Spectator suggests tea as the typical English beverage: 'all well-regulated families ... set apart an hour every morning for tea and bread and butter' (*The Spectator* No. 10). Tea is an integral feature, Addison believes, of 'well-regulated families'. It had become the standard bearer of English middle class respectability.³

If Motteux presents the lives of Englishmen and women as narratives of tea-drinking and Addison declares tea-drinking as a sign of the moral economy of families, William Cowper treats tea and the ritual of tea-drinking as a marker of quiet English domesticity. In *The Task*, Cowper would paint a picture of such warm English domesticity (in contrast with Pope's depiction of the public ritual of coffee-drinking):

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

Like Motteux, Cowper also sees tea as distinguished from wine in that it does not 'inebriate'. Cowper's eulogy of tea is that it *centers* the English home. Tea-drinking as a ritual in Cowper marks a withdrawal from the world's chaos into the quiet routine of placid consumption. At the heart of a pleasant evening in the English home is tea.

Later writers would, similarly, focus on both the beverage and the appurtenances and social rituals of consumption. ST Coleridge in 'Monody on a Tea-kettle' (1790) speaks of his great 'domestic griefs': 'the tea-kettle is spoilt and Coleridge is undone'. Like Motteux and Cowper, Coleridge also evidently sees tea as the centrepiece of quiet English domesticity, and tea as a beverage that is calming:

Delightful Tea!

With thee compar'd what yields the madd'ning Vine?
Sweet power! Who know'st to spread the calm delight,
And the pure joy prolong to midmost night!

In the case of Joanna Baillie's 'To a Teapot', the tea pot is used again as a sign of English identity, but in a different sense. On the walls of the painted tea pot, says Baillie, 'a distant nation's manners we behold'. The tea vessel becomes synecdochic of a culture and the means of English culture's acquisition of knowledge. The tea pot becomes a much-coveted and admired object of aristocratic, upper class women: 'its three-tired ruffle, and displayed the swell/And gentle rounding of her lily arm.../And as she poured the beverage, through the room/Was spread its fleeting, delicate perfume'.

At this point in Baillie's poem the tea-pot is a luxury item, affordable by the wealthy. Baillie links the femininity of the woman with the tea-pot to the object itself – thus merging object biography with human biography. The teapot is elaborated in the narrative of the woman's life – the courtship, the quiet romance and the imminent domesticity.

But Baillie's paradigmatic poem also gestures at the mass consumption of china and tea-pot later when she speaks of the working classes also consuming tea:

And what the changeful fleeting crowd, who sip
The unhonoured beverage with contemptuous lip,
Enjoy amidst the tangled, giddy maze,
Their languid eye—their listless air betrays.

Tea-drinking is no more the ritualized structure of English upper class domesticity. Eventually of course it has to be shelved because it is too old and faded: 'the honours of thy course are passed away'. But then it quickly gets appropriated by connoisseurs and art collectors:

Sober connoisseurs, with wrinkled brow
And spectacles on nose, thy parts inspect,
And by grave rules approve thee or reject.

What Baillie does here is a fascinating object biography of the tea-pot. She unites multiple layers of society through the teapot which therefore takes on the form and content of an changing-yet-unchanging *English* thing: with

different meanings to different classes but indispensable, coveted and desired by all. Decades later we see a reaffirmation of the centrality of tea and tea-drinking to English domesticity in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*:

During tea, the minute thing's movements and behaviour gave, as usual, full occupation to the eye. First she directed Warren, as he placed the chairs.

"Put papa's chair here, and mine near it, between papa and Mrs. Bretton: *I must hand his tea.*"

She took her own seat, and beckoned with her hand to her father.

"Be near me, as if we were at home, papa."

(emphasis in original)

The arrangement of the table, the seating order and of course the (gendered) service are a part of the comforting ritual of tea-drinking, together they make the individuals feel 'at home'. Brontë would emphasize the centrality of tea-time throughout the novel:

How pleasant it was in its air of perfect domestic comfort! How warm in its amber lamp-light and vermilion fire-flush! To render the picture perfect, tea stood ready on the table—an English tea, whereof the whole shining service glanced at me familiarly; from the solid silver urn, of antique pattern, and the massive pot of the same metal, to the thin porcelain cups, dark with purple and gilding. I knew the very seed-cake of peculiar form, baked in a peculiar mould, which always had a place on the tea-table at Bretton. Graham liked it, and there it was as of yore—set before Graham's plate with the silver knife and fork beside it.

The serving of tea – a gendered theme as noted already – is a moment where in affections, domestic tensions and individual character are all played out. The 'perfect domestic comfort' in the above passage is a vocabulary of things and human lives, showing how each partakes of and constitutes the other so that this perfection is achieved.

This description of an Other-object as 'comfort' rather than as luxury was partly due to the increased circulation of such products in England's homes and tea- and coffee-houses. But it was partly due to the shifting sense of 'luxury' itself. Objects like china, cotton, muslin and others arrived as luxuries and then percolated downward into the class hierarchies, even as the very notion of luxury changed during the eighteenth century. By the eighteenth century, argue Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, 'luxury gradually lost its former associations with corruption and vice, and came to include production, trade and the civilising impact of superfluous commodities' (Berg and Eger 2003: 7). These commodities included, Berg notes, 'Asian consumer goods – cottons, especially muslins and printed calicoes, silk, porcelain, ornamental brass and ironware, lacquer and paper goods – became imported luxuries in Europe, and were later to become indigenous European consumer goods' (7). This means, simply, people across the class spectrum could afford new habits, whether in beverages or in clothing. And this implies a shift in the narrative elaborations of the Other-objects themselves as they move into the lives of workers, dairy farmers, earls and dukes and tradesmen.

But consumption could also take a very different route: in the form of home décor and the collection. The spectacularization of foreign bodies through apparel, décor, art collections but also the formal rituals around consumption – of, say, tea – with porcelain ware was a key form of engagement with the Other-object.

Spectacular Matter

Texts in which the wealth of other nations was documented, it could be proposed, a cultural imaginary of wealthy lands and a fantasy of profit and conquest was engendered. Gentlemen who acquired products and curios from various parts of the world often put together a curiosity cabinet in the Early Modern period or simply displayed it as furnishings and décor in the Victorian. Displaying the

Other-object in some form or the other was a prominent mode of appropriating the Other. It must be noted that such displays were not always only private, larger and officially created spaces such as gardens and museums as documented in other writings across the centuries constitute a vocabulary of things in which the lives of Other-objects begins to permeate English lives and identities. The 'aesthetics of British mercantilism' as James Bunn termed it (1980) involved such displays of assorted Other-objects. Collections of Other-objects shaped English taste, attitudes and even styles of art. That is, *the arrival and circulation of exotic objects was instrumental in forming English cosmopolitan tastes in art or gardening or décor but also ensured that English homes, museums and gardens were spaces of assimilation of these accidental or intentional by-products of English imperial processes.* English domesticity, to phrase it differently, was if not constructed, partially informed by the globality of objects that passed through kitchens, dining tables, parlours and bedrooms.

In this process of objectifying Englishness occasionally the imported object is invested with English meanings divergent from or indifferent to the original. Thus in Lamb's 'Old China', he writes of the china tea-cup as: 'those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective'. Lamb carefully disconnects the china from its origins, meanings and cultural connections here. As a first step in the indigenization of china, Lamb has successfully emptied the cup of any meaning preliminary to giving it new ones. Lamb's Elia makes a case for the use of china (in the face of opposition by his austere cousin, Bridget) that tells us the new meanings of these Other-objects. One must, says Elia, 'live better, and lie softer'. This includes, Elia points out, 'well-carpeted fireside, sitting on this luxurious sofa'. Consumption here of imported objects that have since gotten indigenized, says Lamb, is a marker of improved living conditions, and therefore of their social

mobility. Other-objects, to phrase it differently, become symbolic of advancement, progress and English modernity itself. (Of course it is evident that circumstances have enabled their acquisition of china: Elia refers to recent 'favourable circumstances' – which, Karen Fang says, refers to imperialism [2003: 819] – and better incomes.)

In Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814), Lady Bertram wants her nephew, at the start of his naval career, to go to India. Her reason is very simple: 'that I may have a shawl. I think I will have two shawls'. In a brilliant scene of self-fashioning through commodities, in *Villette* a rather desperate and perhaps lower-class working woman acquires a job in a Belgian family. Lucy Snowe tells the story:

I think myself, she might possibly have been a hanger-on, nurse, fosterer, or washerwoman, in some Irish family: she spoke a smothered tongue, curiously overlaid with mincing cockney inflections. By some means or other she had acquired, and now held in possession, a wardrobe of rather suspicious splendour—gowns of stiff and costly silk, fitting her indifferently, and apparently made for other proportions than those they now adorned; caps with real lace borders, and—the chief item in the inventory, the spell by which she struck a certain awe through the household, quelling the otherwise scornfully disposed teachers and servants, and, so long as her broad shoulders wore the folds of that majestic drapery, even influencing Madame herself—a real Indian shawl—"un véritable cachemire," as Madame Beck said, with unmixed reverence and amaze. I feel quite sure that without this "cachemire" she would not have kept her footing in the pensionnat for two days: by virtue of it, and it only, she maintained the same a month.

Brontë is here demonstrating the power of an Other-object. The object biography of the imported shawl bestows upon its wearer a smattering of dignity, air of trustworthiness and moral rectitude. *Villette* presents yet another element within the discourse of consumption where Other-objects are not merely conveniences of luxuries. they are markers of taste, moral correctness and social status.

By the mid-eighteenth century, an individual's personality, Deborah Cohen argues, was deemed to be intertwined with the domestic interior, and objects were modes of self-expression. Taste became a major concern for the middle and upper classes and led, in Cohen's words, to the 'moralization of possession' (2006: 19). These possessions were now inclusive of objects that were patently *not* English but had been absorbed into English culture so thoroughly that, as the lines from *Villette* demonstrate, it had become inconceivable to think of Englishness without the ownership of some such object, Englishness would remain incomplete or suspect. As Suzanne Daly puts it in her analysis of the Kashmiri shawl in Victorian England, the foreign accessory became 'a marker of respectable English womanhood and as magical and mysterious "oriental" garments' (2002: 238. Also Zutshi 2009). Strangely though Daly ignores the point that the magic and mysteriousness of the oriental garment becomes emblematic of an English rectitude and pragmatism in *Villette*, just as china becomes in Elia's account a symbol of irreversible English progress. There is no magic when the oriental object is Englished in the process of self-fashioning, and English identity itself relies on the consumption of global objects.

The wealth of the Indies was a subject that never ceased to fascinate the Early Modern writer. Travel writers brought back stories of the wealth of Arabia and the Indies, and these fed directly into accounts of grandiose, sometimes garish, spectacles of mercantile fantasy in the early eras. In Geoffrey Chaucer's 'The Knight's Tale', the 'king of Inde', Emetreus, is practically covered in jewellery:

Upon a steed bay trapped in steel,
Covered in clooth of goldm dyapredweel,
Cam riding lyke the god of armes, Mars.
His cot-armure was of cloth of Tars
Couched with perles white and round and grete;
His sadel was of brend gold new ybete;
A mantelet upon his shulderhangynge.
Bret-ful of rubyes red as fyrsparklynge... (2157-2164)

Marlowe's Faustus plans to send the spirits he would eventually command through necromancy to India: 'I'll have them fly to India for gold, /ransack ocean for orient pearl,/ and search all corners of the new-found world for/for pleasant fruits and princely delicates' (I: 84-7). Barabas says: 'give me the merchants of the Indian mines,/That trade in metal of the purest mould' (*The Jew of Malta* I.i. 19-20). The Persian aristocrats, says Marlowe in *Tamburlaine, part I*, 'march in coats of gold/with costly jewels hanging at their ears' (I.i. 143-4).

In Middleton's *Triumphs of Honour and Industry* (1617) he describes India as a 'rich personage', the 'seat of merchandise', holding a 'wedge of gold' in her hand as she rides an 'illustrious chariot'. Besides the mention of Peru, Virginia and the Amazons in Book 2 of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser's Garden of Adonis offers interesting insights into a new kind of commodity that brought the Other closer to the English sensibilities: plant life. Spenser mentions Amaranthus, a New World flower, in the course of his botanical account:

And all about grew every sort of flower,
To which sad lovers were transformed of yore;
Fresh Hyacinthus, Phoebus paramour,
And dearest love:
Foolish Narciss, that likes the watery shore,
Sad Amaranthus, made a flower but late,
Sad Amaranthus, in whose purple gore
Me seems I see Amintas wretched fate,
To whom sweet poets verse hath given endless date,

(III. vi. 45)

Edward Test shows how the amaranthus enters the English imagination through Spenser's account, and carries with it stereotypes of Mexican bloodshed and brutalities (2009: 257). Gardens, such as the one in Spenser, were attempts to collect the known universe into a manageable *hortus conclusus*, an enclosed garden (Drayton 2005: 6).

Right up to the seventeenth century, gardens were seen as bringing together 'all the tributaries of Creation' (11-12). Travellers brought back specimens of plants, flowers and seeds. What emerges here is the European insistence on botanical collection, classification and knowledge about plant life from around the world – which reaches its apotheosis in the work of Joseph Hooker, Joseph Banks, Robert Kyd and the botanists of the nineteenth century working in Kew and other great gardens of metropolitan London – that then dovetails into an imperial project of knowledge of the Other culture/region/nation. The plant-as-object becomes the means of engaging with the Other, in the form of myth, as seen in the Spenser lines above, or in the form of discovering underlying principles of order. The botanical garden was a useful metaphor for such a process of establishing both knowledge and power.

For Alexander Pope in *Windsor Forest* the forest was an integral component of not only English topography but of its culture as well. Gesturing at the English enthusiasm for New World and Asian plants Pope writes:

Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
The weeping amber of the balmy tree,
While by our oaks the precious loads are born,
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.

Pope proposes that England's oaks remain its chief resource. In his note to 'oaks' Pope mentions the fact that ships are built of English oak, and these ships bring spices ('loads') to England and also help her travel far and establish her Empire. Thus Pope sees the English oak as a symbol of the culture and nation's stability but also as a symbol of her imperial ambitions, facilitated by the very nature of the oak tree's wood. James Grainger's long poem *The Sugar-Cane* (1764) was a paean to the crop but also glorified slavery by demonstrating how 'with placid looks' and 'willing ardour' the slaves went to work in the plantations. Grainger's narrative maps the conquest and settlement of the Caribbean, the topography and geology: the kind of soils needed for sugar

cane and then focuses on the profits to be had from the crop. In Maria Edgeworth's short story *The Grateful Negro* the slaves of Mr Edwards have little gardens attached to their huts, and they get one day to cultivate them. Unlike other farmers, says Edgeworth, Edwards did not take away their produce. Crops in such representations become integral to the image of the labouring Englishman.

Elsewhere Pope would present carefully planned English gardens with their collection of antiquarian buildings and exotic plants as wonderful English spectacles. Here the material culture of the distant shores become spectacles for the amusement and enjoyment of the English, but more importantly such gardens become embodiments of the English ability to enclose, encapsulate and comprehend the variety of the world. Pope would write in his 'Epistle to Burlington' of the latter's ability to have in his gardens at Stowe, temples and assorted architectural wonders, as befits royalty with *taste*.

Chinese temples or pagodas became common sights in English gardens in the eighteenth century. Later of course the Chinese garden of Kublai Khan (first described by Venetian traveller Marco Polo) would be extolled as a paradisaical, even near-utopian, place in Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan' (1797). 'Chinoiserie' was a major movement from the early eighteenth century, as David Porter demonstrates (1999). As expected, the movement was informed by current trends of thought about China (as in the case of Orientalism). In Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675), in the famous 'china scene' Lady Fidget complains 'I have been toying and moyling for the prettiest piece of China, my dear' (IV.i). In a series of *double-entendres*, Squeamish offers his 'China', comments on Horner's China, Horner does not think he can 'make enough China' for all the women, and Lady Fidget declares: 'we women of quality never think we have China enough'. Wycherley links the Other-object here with English morality when he shows how the upper class English woman's pursuit of consumer satisfaction in the form of porcelain also

makes her an 'immoral' woman in pursuit of sexual gratification, since 'China' is clearly a coded reference to sex. In similar fashion the breaking of china suggests the loss of English feminine innocence (Porter 1999: 48) in Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*:

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
 And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
 Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,
 When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last;
 Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high,
 In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie.

While in this case it does seem to reveal an underlying anxiety about English society, the piece of china becomes a useful device in which to speak of the unspeakable (the loss of innocence). Yet it is also about the more public displays of character and individuality in the form of commodities.

Elsewhere, in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, there is, as Elaine Freedgood notes, considerable insistence on the appropriate furniture for English homes. Mahogany, the wood of choice in the novel, is a marker of the imperial violence that enables the import of wood that then constitutes English domesticity (see 2006: 3). The prevalence of particular tropical wood in the novel also gestures at is the incorporation of the Other-object into English households as markers of English domesticity. It is this domestication of the Other-object that enables English self-fashioning.

Jewels and precious ornaments and stones remained of course the most fascinating object-spectacles for the English when viewing Africa, the Arab world or the East. An extended account of the English trade with 'Indians' in Behn's *Oroonoko* is almost entirely in terms of commodities:

"trading with them for their fish, venison, buffalo's skins, and little rarities; as marmosets, a sort of monkey, as big as a rat or weasel, but of marvelous and delicate shape, having face and hands like a human creature; and cousheries, a little beast in the form and fashion of a lion, as big as

a kitten, but so exactly made in all parts like that noble beast that it is it in miniature. Then for little parakatoes, great parrots, mackaws, and a thousand other birds and beasts of wonderful and surprising forms, shapes, and colors. For skins of prodigious snakes, of which there are some threescore yards in length; as is the skin of one that may be seen at his Majesty's Antiquary's; where are also some rare flies, of amazing forms and colors, presented to 'em by myself; some as big as my fist, some less; and all of various excellencies, such as art cannot imitate. Then we trade for feathers, which they order into all shapes, make themselves little short habits of 'em and glorious wreaths for their heads, necks, arms, and legs, whose tinctures are unconceivable."

Then Behn's female narrator immediately shifts focus into ornaments: 'I had a set of these presented to me, and I gave 'em to the King's Theater, and it was the dress of the Indian Queen'. Behn's narrator is also impressed by the natives' skills in making ornaments. We are given a glimpse of the spectacle she herself witnessed:

knives, axes, pins, and needles; which they used only as tools to drill holes with in their ears, noses, and lips, where they hang a great many little things; as long beads, bits of tin, brass or silver beat thin, and any shining trinket. The beads they weave into aprons about a quarter of an ell long, and of the same breadth; working them very prettily in flowers of several colors; which apron they wear just before 'em ... They thread these beads also on long cotton threads, and make girdles to tie their aprons to, which come twenty times, or more, about the waist, and then cross, like a shoulder-belt, both ways, and round their necks, arms, and legs. This adornment, with their long black hair, and the face painted in little specks or flowers here and there, makes 'em a wonderful figure to behold...

The effect here of this dizzying description is to transform the native *body* into spectacle: we see from Behn's description that both their nakedness and their ornament-laden bodies are equally attractive as spectacles. In the theatre of early

colonial encounters, this spectacularization is, I propose, a significant one, for it offers the native body as something to be seen, as something to be civilized (the bodies are naked), as something to be admired (for their statuesque beauty, as Behn seems to do) and their jewellery (Ferguson 1996). That is, the spectacle of Other-objects here marks a specific kind of encounter: of colonial capitalism.

The spectacularization of native bodies, and their skills, achieves another effect: the native body as a reduced body, their skills as less valuable. A preeminent example of this form of commodification – where the native body is a spectacle and the object of an English gaze – is William Hazlitt's essay 'The Indian Jugglers'. Hazlitt begins by an elaborate eulogy to the juggler. He is watching, he says, a brilliant spectacle of the Indian's skill:

It is the utmost stretch of human ingenuity, which nothing but the bending the faculties of body and mind to it from the tenderest infancy with incessant, ever-anxious application up to manhood, can accomplish or make even a slight approach to.

He is made aware, he says, of his own inadequacies when he sees these feats:

seeing the Indian Jugglers does. It makes me ashamed of myself. I ask what there is that I can do as well as this! Nothing. What have I been doing all my life! Have I been idle, or have I nothing to shew for all my labour and pains! Or have I passed my time in pouring words like water into empty sieves, rolling a stone up a hill and then down again, trying to prove an argument in the teeth of facts, and looking for causes in the dark, and not finding them? Is there no one thing in which I can challenge competition, that I can bring as an instance of exact perfection, in which others cannot find a flaw? The utmost I can pretend to is to write a description of what this fellow can do ... I have always had this feeling of the inefficacy and slow progress of intellectual compared to mechanical excellence, and it has always made me somewhat dissatisfied.

Hazlitt then proceeds to meditate upon the mechanics of this kind of feat:

I might observe that mechanical dexterity is confined to doing some one particular thing, which you can repeat as often as you please, in which you know whether you succeed or fail, and where the point of perfection consists in succeeding in a given undertaking. - In mechanical efforts, you improve by perpetual practice, and you do so infallibly, because the object to be attained is not a matter of taste or fancy or opinion, but of actual experiment, in which you must either do the thing or not do it ... There is then in this sort of manual dexterity, first a gradual aptitude acquired to a given exertion of muscular power, from constant repetition, and in the next place, an exact knowledge how much is still wanting and necessary to be supplied. The obvious test is to increase the effort or nicety of the operation, and still to find it come true. The muscles ply instinctively to the dictates of habit. Certain movements and impressions of the hand and eye, having been repeated together an infinite number of times are unconsciously but unavoidably cemented into closer and closer union; the limbs require little more than to be put in motion for them to follow a regular track with ease and certainty; so that mere intention of the will acts mathematically, like touching the spring of a machine, and you come with Locksley in *Ivanhoe*, shooting at a mark, 'to allow for the wind.'

Then Hazlitt makes the damning comparison of these mechanical artists with other kinds of artists:

But the artist undertakes to imitate another, or to do what nature has done, and this it appears is more difficult, *viz.* to copy what she has set before us in the face of nature or 'human face divine,' entire and without a blemish, than to keep up four brass balls at the same instant; for the one is done by the power of human skill and industry; and the other never was nor will be ... there have been more people in the world who could dance on a rope like the one than who could paint like Sir Joshua [Reynolds]

Hazlitt argues that any single instance of manual dexterity – such as that of the Indian jugglers – pales in comparison with art and other intellectual exercises. Mechanical arts acquired through skills, he says, are limited to a performance, and do not leave lasting changes in the world: 'No act terminating in itself constitutes greatness'.

Spectacularizing Indian bodies in the mechanical arts, as Hazlitt does, is to reinstate a traditional binary. The Eastern skill is entirely through practice and repetition. Further it is limited to a performance or two with no lasting impact. The native body acquires these skills and performs these feats only through years of repeated and rigorous training. Hazlitt here, I propose, reduces the native body to a mindless matter, to endless and ultimate futile exercise of mechanical skills. These have nothing to do with latent genius or taste in Hazlitt's indictment. To quote again:

In mechanical efforts, you improve by perpetual practice, and you do so infallibly, because the object to be attained is not a matter of taste or fancy or opinion, but of actual experiment, in which you must either do the thing or not do it...

In contrast with these, Hazlitt offers us painting, fine arts and other domains in which taste and genius are visible. Such skills as the jugglers exhibit lack taste of genius because they simply repeat their performances till they get better at the feat.

Comparing the juggler with Joshua Reynolds Hazlitt exhibits considerable contempt for the mechanical arts. The word 'mechanical' occurs 9 times in the short essay. The word itself, from Shakespeare's (in)famous 'rude mechanicals' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III. iii: 9-10), as Patricia Parker notes, was used to describe an artisan, 'one who worked with the material, manual labor, or the work of the hand' (1996: 45). It was, she argues, in contrast with both the natural-spontaneous as well as the contemplative. Hazlitt's use of the term repeatedly through his essay captures this

contrast nicely: of Eastern mechanical skill and the Western contemplative spontaneous talents or genius of Reynolds and others. He underscores the contrast in other ways as well in his spectacularization of the native body/skill. These skills are repetitive and acquired through repetition (to cite Parker again, the mechanical is also connected with theatrical mimicry and mechanical reproduction, 47). Great art, Hazlitt proposes, cannot be achieved merely through repetition nor can it be reproduced, unlike the skills of the jugglers. Spectacularization here results in reducing the Eastern skills to matter, to bodies and repetitions, lacking taste, genius or lasting value.

That Indian artists were curios whose consumption was contingent upon English dominions in India rather than on the artistry of the artists comes home to us in James Green's poem, 'Indian Jugglers' (1820). Green's poem, narrated from the Indian jugglers' point of view, speaks of the shift in perceptions of their art by the English. It opens with: We were a curio back then, historical/now, dark and small, barefoot, in shawls...

The Daniells (Thomas and William) painted them, as they did the Taj Mahal and when exhibited in London, Green says, 'everyone wanted to havalooksee'. But after 1857 the perceptions of these Indian artists changes: we were the rotten curio,/ungrateful, badly-behaved. Nobody wants to now immortalize them in art, says Green. Painters like the Daniells who specialized in Indian subjects, notes Green, were side-lined in favour of painterslike Gainsborough who did traditional English subjects. The poem ends with: The Anglo-Indian School of artists was done for/as we were (the clever people juggling). Whether the 'clever people' refers to the Indian jugglers or to the cleverness of the English in changing the market demand for Indian artistry (and British art founded on Indian artistry) is left unclear. In either case, what emerges from the poem is the market forces that determine the value of any Eastern art or artefact. In and of themselves the Eastern juggler has no lasting value (those are restricted, Green's poem seems to suggest,

to properly English goods, like Gainsborough paintings of English countryside life), and recalling Hazlitt's formulation, leave no mark on the world of either art or consumption.

Material Threats

The transition of Oriental, New World and other goods from luxury to mass consumption during the seventeenth century meant, as I have suggested above, the incorporation of these products into English everyday life across classes. What used to be the purview of elite consumption now became items in working class life as well, and this, I suggest, is the source of the anxiety about Other-objects that we can discern as a parallel tradition in the vocabulary of things in English writings. Material threats as seen in these writings were not only about the undermining of English economy, production and consumption; they were also about the decadence, corruption and degradation of English qualities. An entire variety of foreign objects have, at some point or other, induced anxieties in England regarding their corrupting influence. In what follows I examine a few of these Other-objects as represented in literary texts.⁴

Philip Massinger in 'London's Lamentable Estate' () was one of the earliest to speak of England's deplorable transition to immoral luxury through conspicuous consumption:

From all parts of the world, thou hadst supplie
 Of what was wanting to thy luxurie:
 Barbary, Sugars: Zant, Oile: tapestrie
 T'adorne thy proud walls, Brabant made for Thee:
 Now were the Indies slowe to feed thy sence
 With cassia, mirrhe (farr'fetch'd with deere expence):
 The sea, her pearle: and many a boystrous knock
 Compelled the sparckling diamond, from the Rock,
 To deck thy daughters: in a word th'adst all
 That could in compasse of thy wishes fall.
 But theis great gifts (abus'd) first bredd in thee
 A stupid sloth, and dull securitie
 The parent of destruction...

Massinger makes it clear that the global trade that might have benefited the economy of England had also induced corruption. In what is surely an indictment of the first stage of British mercantile expansion and trade Massinger faults not the trade per se but the weakness of English character that had allowed the love of luxury to 'dull' their security and engineer destruction through excessive consumption. Massinger's inventory of foreign objects ranges from food to décor and jewellery, thus suggesting that a variety of products were responsible. Massinger transforms the wonder of the world's variety seen in the travelogues of the age (Greenblatt 1992, Sell 2006, Nayar 2008, 2012) into an *anxiety* over this same material variety. Instead of the *hortus conclusus* of a perfect garden in which many varieties of plants are arranged in harmonious order, Massinger shows the prodigious variety as multiplying England's problems.

If Massinger was offering an entire catalogue of Other-objects that threatened to corrupt England, one particular product came in for sustained attention for its ability to instil addiction: tobacco. John Goodman's survey (1993) documents the cultures of tobacco, and the literature of Early Modern England seems to suggest a culture of anxiety around this particular foreign object.⁵ In this connection, James I's *A Counter-blaste to Tobacco* (1604) offers us a prototype of what I have called material anxieties. James I in his address to the Reader justifies his stance by declaring that the body-politic, like the body, was prone to diseases and as the physician of the nation it was his duty to cure the sickness. And, he writes, 'And surely in my opinion, there cannot be a more base, and yet hurtfull, corruption in a Countrey, then is the vile use (or other abuse) of taking Tobacco in this Kingdome'. James argues that things with godly, necessary or honourable grounds can be imported into England, but tobacco originates in a land of 'base corruption and barbarity' (the American land) and invented by 'barbarous Indians' as an antidote to filthy diseases they in particular suffered

from such as the 'pox' (Jeffrey Knapp points out that this was a standard trope in the Early Modern narratives about savages: that they 'always hold the wrong thing in "precious estimation" - not gold, for instance, but trifles', 1988: 35).⁶ James then uses the Other-object tobacco to speak of different cultures:

what honour or policy can move us to imitate the barbarous and beastly manners of the wild, godless, and slavish *Indians*, especially in so vile and stinking a custom? Shall wee that disdain to imitate the manners of our neighbour *France* ... and that cannot endure the spirit of the *Spaniards* (their King being now comparable in largeness of Dominions, to the great Emperor of *Turkie*) ... shall we, I say, without blushing, abase our selves so far, as to imitate these beastly *Indians*, slaves to the *Spaniards*, refuse to the world, and as yet aliens from the holy Covenant of God? Why doe we not as well imitate them in walking naked as they do? in preferring glasses, feathers, and such toys, to gold and precious stones, as they do? yea why do we not deny God and adore the Devil, as they do?

Rejecting the arguments about tobacco's medicinal benefits and proposes that the English who took to it did so merely because of the novelty (the word occurs four times in this short piece) of 'his product. To adapt a practice because it is foreign and novel, argues James, is absurd. James warns that tobacco has become a *habit* and an addiction for several English:

many in this kingdom have had such a continual use of taking this unsavoury smoke, as now they are not able to forbear the same, no more than an old drunkard can abide to be long sober, without falling into an incurable weakness and evil constitution: for their continual custom hath made to them.

It 'disables' the body of the Englishman for himself and the country, and thus causes him to renege on his responsibilities, says James. It is uncivil - and therefore contrary to English manners - to smoke at dining tables,

puffing out smoke at each other, continues James. Eventually, says James this would lead to England becoming the subject of contempt among other cultures, 'wondered at by all foreign civil Nations, and by all strangers that come among you, to be scorned and condemned'.

James' treatise dismisses tobacco for being of base origins (among barbaric foreign nations), addictive, contrary to accepted medical theories, novel and for being a practice that strikes at the root of English civility and manners. An object that disturbs English manners and bodies, his thesis states, cannot be of any value no matter how wondrous its novelty might be. James' rejection of tobacco born of an anxiety of invasion by foreign products is cast as a defence therefore of English identity itself. The values of beliefs of the English, he seems to say, are at stake in the consumption of tobacco. Clearly, then, the Other-object is invested with far more than edible or nutritional values.

If James I warned the English public against the loss of Englishness due to the consumption of tobacco, John Donne's 'Elegy 11: The Bracelet', argues a case against foreign coins and currency that, according to Donne, damage English economy and habits. Donne makes a comparison between English currency and foreign ones:

Were they but crowns of France, I carèd not,
For most of these their country's natural rot,
I think, possesseth ; they come here to us
So pale, so lame, so lean, so ruinous.
And howsoe'er French kings most Christian be,
Their crowns are circumcised most Jewishly.
Or were they Spanish stamps, still travelling,
That are become as Catholic as their king ;

Yet these coins circulate, and this is Donne's anxiety about foreign matter. Donne makes the claim that 'with foreign gold bribed to betray/Thy country', thus indicating corruption that arrives in the form of foreign monies – material – that then undermines English sovereignty. As

instances of the ruinous effects of these foreign bodies Donne writes:

As streams, like veins, run through th' earth's every part,
Visit all countries, and have slily made
Gorgeous France, ruin'd, ragged and decay'd,
Scotland, which knew no state, proud in one day,
And mangled seventeen-headed Belgia...

True, as Stephen Deng observes (2009: 268-9), there is in Donne's diatribe an anxiety about the pernicious economic and political impact of foreign gold and currency, but what is more significant for our purposes is Donne's focus on the symbolic value of foreign matter, of the additional significance and cultural realities he associates with the coins: in particular, of English morality and religion.

Within the discourse of consumption, exemplified in Donne's poem about foreign currency and gold being absorbed into English usage, in several Other-objects were treated as disruptive of English domesticity. Here we see the resignification of the Other-object and the rituals of English consumption into something troubling of English identity. If, as de Grazia et al argue that objects 'can be made to absorb other evanescent cultural realities', then these resignifications gesture at the complicated shifts in gender and class identity in a England's society.

Take for instance Congreve's *The Double Dealer*. In the play Congreve satirizes women who drink tea as the ladies retire to 'tea and scandal, according to their ancient custom'. This suggests that the entire ritual of *women's* tea-drinking and gossip – at least in Congreve's imagination – marked a disruption of quiet, quiescent English domesticity (Kowaleski-Wallace 1994: 132). In Eliza Haywood's *The Female Spectator*, she echoes this sentiment that tea might alter the English woman's taste irrevocably and thus ruin the peace of the home. A letter from 'John Careful' in *The Female Spectator* mourns the fact that 'the tea table ... costs more to support than would maintain two children (quoted

in Kowaleski-Wallace 137). Edward Young, more famous for his *Night Thoughts*, would damn the tea-drinking woman thus: 'For her own breakfast she'll project a scheme, Nor take her *tea* without a strategem' (*Love of Fame*, Satire vi). A sustained expression of the anxiety around the female consumer is seen in John Gay's 'To a Lady on Her Passion for Old China'.

How her eyes languish with desire!
How blest, how happy should I be,
Were that fond glance bestow'd on me!
New doubts and fears within me war:
What rival's near? A *China* jar.

Says the speaker:

Husbands more covetous than sage
Condemn this *China*-buying rage;
They count that woman's prudence little,
Who sets her heart on things so brittle.

And then he cautions Laura:

Love, *Laura*, love, while youth is warm,
For each new winter breaks a charm;
And woman's not like *China* sold,
But cheaper grows in growing old;
Then quickly chuse the prudent part,
Or else you break a faithful heart.

To invest in 'brittle' substances like china ware the poet argues, is to demonstrate a 'little' mind. The poet warns that all this might cause her to defer more important matters, such as love, marriage and domesticity. Just as James I warned that English civility was at stake with increasing tobacco consumption at dinner tables, Gay forges an link between the woman's china and the consequent threat to domesticity.

Even though, as noted above, luxury had lost some of its potency as evil and wicked, anxieties continued to swirl around luxury goods. When John Gay prayed, 'o Britain,

chosen Port of trade/May luxury ne'er thy sons invade! ('The Man, the Cat, the Dog and the Fly', Fable 8, *Fables by John Gay*, 1732), he was worrying about the loss of an austere Englishness to the vice of luxury.

In other cases the increasing circulation of luxury goods from the outposts of the Empire were treated by some commentators as signs of British corruption. Alexander Pope's *Windsor Forest* captures this anxiety of invasion by different cultures, peoples and their material objects. Converting the spectacle of cultural encounters into a source of anxiety at multiple fashions, physiognomies and lifestyles, Pope writes:

The time shall come, when free as seas or wind
Unbounded *Thames* shall flow for all mankind,
Whole nations enter with each swelling tyde,
And seas but join the regions they divide;
Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
And the new world launch forth to seek the old.
Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tyde,
And feather'd people croud my wealthy side,
And naked youths and painted chiefs admire
Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!

Reversing the so-called colonial gaze (that postcolonial critics discern in English writings about non-European nations), Pope here speculates upon the English becoming the subject of non-European gazes. The Englishman's attire, their speech and skin colour become the spectacles for the amusement of the rest of the world.

Another dimension to this thematic of English corruption due to exposure to foreign objects might be read into the concerns expressed in numerous texts about English greed for gold and profits. William Cowper in 'Charity' castigates the English for focusing entirely on their profits to the detriment of their human impulses. Hannah More in 'Slavery: A Poem' writes of the 'sordid lust of gold their fate controls,/ The basest appetite of basest souls' in the English. The threat trade poses is of some mythic English virtue and Christian humanity in abolitionist poetry such as this.

Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* revolves around the corruption and disaster that arrives in an English house as a result of the precious stone, whose origins are in India. This is one account of the influence of the stone: 'here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian diamond – bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues, set loose on us by the vengeance of a dead man...'. Originating from the 'forehead of an Indian idol' it has now invaded English domesticity. What makes the stone even more of a problem for English domesticity is that it is not comprehensible, not amenable to English rational processes: it falls outside English epistemic prowess. Here is the first full-fledged account of the diamond:

Lord bless us! it WAS a Diamond! As large, or nearly, as a plover's egg! The light that streamed from it was like the light of the harvest moon. When you looked down into the stone, you looked into a yellow deep that drew your eyes into it so that they saw nothing else. It seemed unfathomable; this jewel, that you could hold between your finger and thumb, seemed unfathomable as the heavens themselves. We set it in the sun, and then shut the light out of the room, and it shone awfully out of the depths of its own brightness, with a moony gleam, in the dark. No wonder Miss Rachel was fascinated: no wonder her cousins screamed. The Diamond laid such a hold on ME that I burst out with as large an "O" as the Bouncers themselves. The only one of us who kept his senses was Mr. Godfrey. He put an arm round each of his sister's waists, and, looking compassionately backwards and forwards between the Diamond and me, said, "Carbon Betteredge! mere carbon, my good friend, after all!"

The account speaks of the mesmerizing effect of the stone upon the English imagination, emotion and rationality. Godfrey's attempt at bringing it into the ambit of English scientific rationality – 'mere carbon' – is an attempt to assert English control over the 'devilish' Other-object. In an astute reading Ashish Roy notes how the entire English household needs to place the stone under constant surveillance. The

stone, having been brought there by English travellers, is now the object of careful scrutiny and constant investigation. It marks, in Roy's words, an 'apprehension of the primitive' within a 'more modern system of control' (1993: 661). Thus Rachel Verrinder wonders if she should 'put the Indian diamond in the Indian cabinet, for the purpose of permitting two beautiful native productions to admire each other' (). This suggests not just the *witnessing* of the two Indian curios – the cabinet and the diamond – but also organizes a common narrative that apprehends them within English domesticity and 'cabinet culture' preliminary to an inquiry into their stories. The stone is of course a spectacle, a curio for exhibition but at the same time represents an 'unfathomable' (Collins' term) thing that might just *escape* comprehension. Yet the attempt of the English household seems to be to domesticate it, display it as a family heirloom or exhibition but in all cases, domesticate it. If the domestic is, as noted at the beginning, exclusive of the foreign Collins is trying to suggest, I believe, that the foreign has come to reside at the heart of the domestic.

Conclusion

That the Empire – any Empire – was founded on the need for territory and *materials* (spices, cotton, gold, and now, oil) are a truism. But exactly, how did these material objects going back and circulating with England engage the attention of its people? How does the arrival of India cotton, Chinese tea or African fruit influence the imagination of the English? Much more needs to be done by way of examining other kinds of 'objects' and material culture that entered English society and therefore their cultural imaginary. In this essay I have proposed that material culture from foreign places were at the forefront of the literary imagination and reflects the cultural literacy about the East and other places in the form of objects of consumption. The Other was primarily, as I have argued an Other-object.

NOTES

- i It should be clear that the take-off point for any study of European literature's engagement with the real and imagined racial-cultural Other is Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978).
- ii In fact the demand for tea was so high by the 1780s that vast quantities were smuggled into Britain, with some accounts computing the quantity at 7,500,000 pounds a year, and the other, between 4,000,000 and 6,000,000 pounds (H-C Mui and L.H. Mui 1968: 44).
- iii Maxine Berg notes that tea drinking was initially also a domestic event but later even the laboring and working classes, by the mid-eighteenth century, began consuming it as a form of polite behavior. More interesting, Berg notes that tea-drinking became a public ritual in tea and coffee houses (2007: 230).
- iv Daniel Vitkus argues that the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, which had won territory from Venice and Spain in the sixteenth century and conquered Egypt, was colonizing the European territories during the era when European nations were looking at the New World and the Indies for trade and/or conquest. Vitkus' is an important intervention in Early Modern studies for his focus on Turkish-European tensions but also for his revisioning of the proto-colonial movements by speaking of these kinds of reversals (Vitkus 1997). For English literature's, more specifically Spenser's, engagements with Turkey in the Early Modern period see Hollings (2010).
- v Tobacco's connection with Britain's imperial project has also been studied. See Knapp (1988). *The Worke of Chimney Sweepers* (anonymous, identified only as 'Philaretus') compared the effects of tobacco to the soot that caused illness in chimney sweepers. As response Roger Marbrecke wrote *A Defence of Tabacco* (1602).
- vi This view of the indigenous people, whether of Africa, Asia or America, as valuing baubles and fetishizing what the European took to be mere trifles gathered discursive strength in the post-1700s. The Europeans described any object valued by the Africans as 'fetishes' and this grew out of context where a shared value of commodities for trade had to be established. For a study of Western representations of African, specifically Asante fetishes in the colonial era see Engmann (2012).

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Whither English Studies in India?

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The subject of this essay is diverse and complex. Teachers and students, educationists and scholars, administrators and policy-makers at all levels, planners and the government at the state and the national reach are necessarily well within its ambit. The very scope of such a project, therefore, is beyond the means of an individual effort such as this one. Therefore, I will approach my task by focussing only on our undergraduate students as it is they who need to be nurtured and a foundation prepared at the right time in their formative years. I don't mean to ignore the post-graduate students; but the ground is similar. First, I will state, shorn of misplaced sentiment or flights of fancy or mere rhetoric, where matters stand in our undergraduate classes. Second, I will discuss what is a teacher's basic role and responsibility. This will comprise what we as teachers should aim at by emphasizing reasonable goals to be pursued sincerely and with dedication. Third, a much-needed caveat emptor, namely, a look at the Derridean and post-Derridean state of affairs in the Anglo-American academia and at the winds blowing from the Hudson and the Mississippi, the Thames and the Cam which may not be useful to our students or teachers. Such an investigation has, I believe, a direct bearing on what we do in our classrooms. In this last segment, I must tread gingerly as what I state may not sit well with some of the readers of IJES.

First: How prepared are our undergraduate students scholastically? With rare exceptions, as in our metropolitan colleges and universities, are they competent in the English language? How initiated are they into reading creative literature? A few poems, a play or a short, simplified and

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abbreviated novel they might know in the classroom will, in all likelihood, be their first brush, and the only one. There is the unending trimming of the syllabus, watering it down with fewer, simpler and shorter textbooks. If there is anything demanding or challenging in the text-books or in the syllabus, it is a terror to students and to their teachers too, for the latter are just as unwilling to face the onus. There is the drumbeat of examinations that forces teachers to adopt the most unacademic, unliterary, uncritical and unaesthetic ways. There is the menace of the "guides," those products motivated only by lucre, beckoned by Mammon. There are the equally pernicious and ubiquitous private coaching classes, often times deceptively named "institutes," "academies" and even "colleges." The question paper is "predictable" and "easy," which points to yet another unstoppable slide in the claims of merit; that erosion continues. Then there is the hideously liberal marking of answer books and awarding of grades or marks, which is known in the USA as "grade deflation." It is catchy wording; but if the phenomenon is bad enough over there, it is worse here in its motivation and result, and shows no signs of abetting. Consider the exposure, a few years ago, in newspapers and on television news and discussion shows how in a nationally conducted examination examiners were brazenly instructed to be more and more liberal. Consider how extensive is the practice of allowing students in an examination hall to cheat most openly. There are the "external" (read: "political") pressures to let a candidate pass and, often enough, with a high rank or class. There are the totally anti-academic roles played by boards, college or university non-teaching staff, e. g., in violating confidentiality in numerous ways. There is the student unions' violent opposition should someone even suggest better textbooks, sensible questions and close scrutiny of a student's performance. Let us forthrightly admit that there is teachers' own complicity in all this. Such is the prevailing atmosphere with the academic spirit missing, while compromise and corruption are rampant. There are scores of other phenomena—all destructive to the

very notion of "higher" education.

Second: As a teacher what can I do to help my students in their pursuit of literature? How do I proceed, for example, if I am going to teach a twentieth-century novel from English literature? I have adopted a strategy for years, may I say rather effectively, in three separate universities in the USA and in IIT, Bombay. The exact, precise route has varied depending on the institution and the capability and the profile of the students. The novel in question has been E. M. Forster's *Howards End* (1910), most underrated in our own colleges and universities just as, incidentally, his *A Passage to India* (1924) is overrated.

What is *Howards End* about? It takes a degree of courage even to raise such a question these days surrounded as we are, but not submerged, not yet, by all the reverberations of the Theory Wars. I submit it is about "only connect," connect or join together three widely different segments of the English society at the time which Forster depicts, namely, the Schlegel siblings, presented as pursuers of culture and sophistication, literature, philosophic thought and classical music—almost as Matthew Arnold would have it, the two generations of the Wilcox clan, the movers and shakers, who will without a qualm exploit power and authority, men who pride on climbing in the scales of material acquisition, to whom a house is a house and nothing more, and the Basts, who are the dregs of society with little or no education, and consequently they cannot claim culture or sophistication; and money they have none. Therefore, for them any hankering after something better in life is an impossible dream. These three different and disparate parts must be, in Forster's vision, "connected." Only thus a disjointed society will no longer live in isolated fragments, small islands afloat in a vast sea of humanity. Forster was an uncompromising and unrepentant liberal humanist in the authentic and traditional English and European liberal humanism dating back to the Renaissance, and also in the tradition of the English Romanticism of the early nineteenth century. Forster

hopes that the Schlegels, the Wicoxes and the Basts may be conjoined. Do not live in isolation, the novel repeatedly asserts.

This is how I have been inclined to sum up the main theme, the argument, the substance or the thrust of *Howards End*. It is vital that students or readers comprehend this. Without it they cannot proceed to deal with the other elements in the novel like characterization, dialogue, the inter-relationships between the unravelling of the story and the development of the structure, style and symbolism. What techniques and strategies does Forster adopt? Characters, in classic fashion, are revealed through their actions, through what they say and what others say about them, along with the author's own comments and observations now and then. The inter-weaving or the evolution of the plot and the sub-plots runs parallel with the creation of characters. Dialogue fits a character and the situation, even as it flows naturally and spontaneously.

I used to introduce my students to these and other elements with reference to one novel, *Howards End*, in such a way that they could learn in time to read other novels on their own. I stressed all along that each and every novel may present different challenges that must be addressed. My classroom discussion extended also to other related matters. a) Often titles of novels assume significance: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Vanity Fair*, *Brave New World*, *Room at the Top* and *A Burnt-out Case* lead the reader straight to their themes or subject matter, whereas *David Copperfield*, *Kipps* and *Mrs. Dalloway* are bland, mere names, mere pegs to hang something on—with no indication whatsoever what the contents may be like. b) There are classic novels with most memorable opening words (as in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Great Expectations*) or concluding lines richly pregnant with meaning and significance (as in *A Tale of Two Cities*). c) There are novels that seemingly fall into two, nearly autonomous parts (as in *Gulliver's Travels*). d) There are quotations used as inscriptions just before the narrative

commences (as in *Point Counter Point* and *A Burnt-out Case*), and so forth. There are innumerable such questions raised by the vast corpus of novels, each and every novel presenting to the reader different queries. e) Besides, I have always informed my students of the importance of the element of conflict implicit in every piece of narrative literature, providing them with a formulaic statement: no conflict, no story; no story, no narrative literature at all. f) Finally, I gave my students a short, working definition of this form of literature, the novel.²

As a necessary postscript to the preceding, let me cite a few other novels in passing. If instead of *Howards End* it happened to be Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), I looked at the protagonist Tess caught between Alec d'Urberville and Angel Clare and how she is ultimately shaped by the fatalism of the village folk around her—the formidable, unforgiving social mores and the formidable, unforgiving gods. I emphasized that in the midst of all these harsh, unrelenting external circumstances, Hardy sides with Tess. He let be known where his sympathies were. The subtitle, "A Pure Woman," suggests that he isn't far from Tess; he is just hovering about, a parental or godly presence, as it were. I highlighted these elements. When I was dealing with D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (1913), I pointed out the equation in the plot with the young protagonist caught between two women described as "The Mother of Men" on the one hand and "A Lady of the Lake" on the other. I brought out the implication of these epithets fully. When it was Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), my exposition of it dealt with not only the passage of time between the pre-natal and the post-mortem stages in the new, new, nauseatingly new civilization of the brave new world but also with the central irony of the dystopia (or anti-utopia) that the one with some trace of civilization in the story is named John *Savage*! Huxley spares no opportunity in stressing how life in the story of *Brave New World* is not human at all; it is an exemplar of the ultimate horror of

applied science gone haywire.

To sum up this second part of my essay, what I am emphasizing here is that a teacher should play a practical and useful role in the classroom always cognizant that students should learn the basics of reading a novel without extraneous considerations, which in any case may be well beyond their ken, and not impeded by obscure jargon and other dispensable distractions of the latest theories. The focus must always be on the novel at hand, only on the novel: to read it with the utmost concentration, to comprehend it as thoroughly and holistically as possible and, the ultimate consideration, namely, allowing oneself one of the purest of joys a work of literature can give. That is all. After such a launching of a work of literature, interpretation and evaluation are not far. Similar approaches will have to be devised while teaching poetry or drama.

Of course, there is a broader but related question of the teacher's role and responsibility. Here, I must deal with a matter which is at once essential and intangible, namely, the teacher as an intellectual, moral and spiritual being. As a teacher, I have these responsibilities, almost thrust on me by the *raison d'être*, by the uniqueness of my calling. Often enough there are glib words about the teacher as a role model, as a shaper of the young minds, as one who must not fail society, etc. Ignoring the high pedestal on which a teacher is cleverly, conveniently and gratuitously placed, I should not fall off my own personal integrity that sustains me.

Before I entered the classroom, my own conscience was clear that I had read and understood what I was going to teach. I did not carry with me yellowed and frayed sheaves of papers, my notes, prepared seasons ago. Above all, I entered the class because I wanted to. This is a subject one can easily moralize on just as it can become merely wordy. I will not do it. So, let it be said that teachers should at least approximate Chaucer's exhortation in the words about

the Clerk of Oxenford, "...gladly would he learn and gladly teach." Those ancient words sound clichéd in this cynical age; but they are eternally precious, relevant and applicable.³

Third: Here is an altogether avoidable subject which has in the last five decades unfortunately intruded on the landscape of the Western literary, academic and professional world. Since Jacque Derrida's historic presentation at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA,⁴ there has been a tectonic shift, a sweep, at first slowly and gradually, as if testing new waters, then with the rage and fury of a wildfire. By the 1980s, new theories, the new boys on the block, believers in Derrida, were everywhere dotting the landscape of the American universities. These theories established their rule, their sovereignty, and their hegemony so well that they radically transformed and ruinously affected doctoral programmes, appointments to teaching posts, promotion and preferment and grants for travel and research, and publications.

The result was the way we looked at literature, what we expected of it and what it was supposed to do for us have changed in the West. A few observations. The blessed, blissful joy of reading became suspect—unless one did the reading in the officially sanctioned fashion, i. e., against the grain of the text, whatever that means. Everything now came to be seen at the expense of the writer. The catch phrase, "The Death of the Author" gained undeserved currency. Literature is no longer unique because cartoons, comic strips, advertisers' jingles, labels on cans of soup, pulp fiction, "soaps" (i. e., "serials," as we know them) on television, etc., will do just as well. None other than Anthony Easthope, after a lifetime in pursuit of language and literature, has said that, after all, it has not been "proved" that *Hamlet* is any better than a novel by Jeffrey Archer! After four centuries of Shakespeare's glorious legacy, does one need such proof? Instead, shouldn't a critic be a mediator between an author and a reader? Isn't a critic supposed to take a reader closer to the spirit of the writer, closer to the meaning or significance of the writing?

As a result of a critic's intervention, is a reader able to understand and, more importantly, enjoy *King Lear*, "The Solitary Reaper" or *Great Expectations* any better? Is the reader's perception sharpened? Does the reader feel Lear's agony more acutely? Does the reaper strike a deeper chord? Is Pip's predicament felt more keenly? On the other hand, if critics and criticism are wont to draw a wedge between the author and the reader, shouldn't one keep away from them? In some ways, one who teaches literature is a critic. He mediates between students and the great literary minds. He is a bridge, a link, a necessary intermediary, an agent and nothing more. Teachers cannot and should not supplant authors or relegate them to a lesser, secondary status. Perish the thought! What is implicit in the author is rendered explicit for the students, because the latter need it. If that modest goal is met a teacher should be content without any notions of ideological self-aggrandizement or self-promotion. Students need not be tormented with today's fashionable ideas of "aporia," "appropriation" (in practice it really means "misappropriation"), "cultural materialism" (the latest oxymoron!), "cultural poetics," "death of history," "death of literature," "decentering," "difference," "écriture," "exemplarity," "foregrounding," "homographesis," "imagologies," "jouissance," "literarity," "literature is politics," "poetical is political," "sub-version," "textualterity," "usurpation," etc., ad nauseum. In this there is a cult of the obscure. Clarity in discourse is passé, even bourgeois. There is a studied effort at concealing. Hint, don't state; state, don't explain; only appear to explain and muddy the waters. Within the charmed circle of Derrideans, de Manians and their camp followers there seems to be a dark, a subterranean nexus, which aims at "knowing" bereft of "enlightenment." It is annoying to have to put up with this obscene obsession with jargon. One could quote by the reams from their prose saddled with avoidable incoherence and mere sophistry. Why is this coterie so provoked to such hatred and determined rejection of humanism? Have great men and women of letters from Chaucer to Eliot, Shakespeare to Wesker, Swift

to Orwell, collectively thrust upon society inequities, injustices, material or moral crimes, imperial or ideological wars and holocausts and ethnic cleansing resulting in the loss of human lives by the millions, contributed to the degradation of the environment? Worse yet, how do we explain the acceptance of all this by scholars, critics, historians and academics in the West and in India too—with only a few bold exceptions? As a direct corollary, other ideas, values and approaches are looked down upon: you belong either to this “mafia” or...else. While the worth of some of the political, social and economic causes proclaimed by the new theories cannot be denied, classrooms must not be turned into battle grounds. The battles must be fought elsewhere—in the market place, in the corporate board-rooms, in the halls of justice, in legislative bodies.

We in India suffer from “Bandwagonism,” which in the context of our departments of literature translates into a supine acceptance of whatever comes from the West—regardless of whether it has any relevance for us. Some seventy years ago the American political and social firmament was dangerously clouded by the red-baiting pogrom of Senator Joseph McCarthy. But, a courageous American writer, Lillian Hellman (*Scoundrel Time*) faced the wrath of the American Congress, under the heinous rein of McCarthy and his infamous House Committee on Un-American Activities. But she stood resolute and declared in words of ringing sincerity: “I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year’s fashions.” Now too there is mendacity in the air which prevents the advocates of the new order from admitting that they are indulging in acts of political usurpation on the sacred ground of creative literature.

But have faith. In India, we don’t have to ape the West in this regard. We look upon our great poets and writers with reverence and awe. Kalidas and Bana are icons from the distant past and they are stars forever. We look upon Rabindranath Tagore as Gurudev. The best among

our regional literary men and women too (like Bendre and Karanth in Kannada, Gadkari and Khandekar in Marathi, Mahadevi Verma and Premchand in Hindi, T. S. Pillai and O. V. Vijayan in Malayalam and many more from other languages) are read with reverence. They are artists as well as moral and spiritual beacons. The contemporary reincarnation of McCarthyism will self-destruct once its jargon and cliché-ridden sophistry, its redundancy, its tendency to anarchic ideas, its silly puns, word games and similar effects will have become threadbare. When all is said, these often conflicting and contradictory theories cannot end the vital importance of comprehensive, critical and open-minded reading of a work of creative literature as an end in itself. In a word, creative literature cannot be made subservient. If the new theorists contend that the lessons of the last five decades cannot be set aside as if nothing has happened or nothing valuable has been said, there is a ready and valid rejoinder: a three thousand year old, hoary tradition from Homer and Kalidas is still harder to be set aside as if nothing has happened or nothing valuable has been said in these three millennia.

Something for your thought: a) During the 1960s and 1970s there were a number of literary, critical, pedagogical series of studies like *Twentieth Century Views*, *Twentieth Century Interpretations*, *Casebooks*, *Writers and Critics* and *Penguin Masterstudies*, and many more. They were invaluable aids to meet the requirements of students, teachers and general readers alike. Why have they dried up? b) Couldn't we think of reprinting of those publications? c) Also, it will not be beyond the resources of scholars and publishers in India to launch similar series.

I have written at length on the negative and unusable features of recent theories. On reflection it will be noticed that such discussion too tells us what will further or impede undergraduate studies in English. As a teacher for nearly fifty years I have endeavoured here to portray the predicament of an English teacher dealing with young minds

to whom he is nothing less than a secular priest. We are all in this and I pray that we shall all succeed.

NOTES

1. This essay is an abridged and edited version of the author's plenary talk at the Fifty-seventh All India English Teachers' Conference at the Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat, 22nd December, 2012.
2. Here is a useful statement on what a novel is remembered from my postgraduate days at Karnataka University, Dharwad. It is culled from Professor Armando Menezes' lectures on the modern novel in English. "What is a novel? A novel is: a) a complex narrative in prose; b) it is characterized by commensurate length and diversity; c) it is supported by a main plot and reinforced by subplots in order to bring out the central theme and to universalize it; d) it deals with credible (i.e., realistic) action and lifelike men and women; e) it portrays people and events in realistic dialogue and plausible surroundings; f) it has in it at least indirectly, metaphorically or symbolically suggested or assimilated message or philosophy or vision of life." (N. B. There are, as always, exceptions to every rule.)
3. Much more recently, Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), English novelist, satirist and mystic, a true Renaissance figure in the twentieth century who had an encyclopaedic mind and a range of interests to match, was, when he was already well into his fifties, asked what kept him busy. His reply in Italian: "Aun aprendo" (i. e., "I am still learning."). Chaucer's sagacious advice or Huxley's intellectually modest assertion will do for any member of the teaching fraternity.
4. Derrida delivered a lecture on, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" (1966).

Ruskin Bond's *Maharani*: A Story of Love, Friendship and Death

Suresh Dhoke*

Ruskin Bond is an incomparably pre-eminent raconteur in the firmament of Indian writing in English. He is an Anglo-Indian. He has stayed and merged with Indian surroundings at Landor and Mussoorie. His first novel is *The Room on the Roof*. After this literary creation, he disappeared from the literary scene. He returned to the literary scene and to his first vocation as a writer. He has penned many short stories, novels, articles, essays and children short stories. His literary career spans half a century. In an interview given to Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-Chief of *The Indian Express*, he said 'I am a writer without regrets.' 'I am a visual writer.' Hills and trains are the two threads that run through his stories. In his latest novel *Maharani*, *Maharani* is called 'her Highness of the hills.'

The novel *Maharani* is set in Mussoorie especially at the peculiar place called Hollow Oak. Maharani II, her Highness of the hills (H.H) and known as Neena among her close friends is the queen (Maharani) of Mastipur. The novel deals with love, friendship and death. Her Highness of the hills, Maharani II unfortunately becomes an early widow. After his Highness' death, she is addicted to heavy drinking and involved in the illicit love affairs with a diplomat (a cultural attaché) called Ricardo from Bolivia and the pianist Lobo. The various kinds of drinks are provided to her by her lovers or admirers. She loves to indulge in her past reminiscences.

Maharani's past bristles with amorous episodes. Ruskin

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has been one of her old friends since school days. She regards Ruskin as her close and intimate friend, certainly devoid of any amorous love for him yet she confides in him all her secrets. She is selfish and hurtful, and he accepts her as she is, as a mere friend. He is her only confidant. In his presence, she expresses her deep regrets to have effete sons. The names of her sons are Kartik and Karan. Both are inveterate drunks and wretches.

Though Ruskin is her intimate confidant, her Highness of the hills, the Maharani regards him as unromantic. She asks him what has brought him to India from England and comes to know that it was nothing but romance of India. As Ruskin Bond in his 'A Town Called Dehra' tells us how he reminisced about hills, valleys, sylvan beauty of the Himalayas especially of Dehra and Mussoorie and of his friends when he was in London. He becomes almost nostalgic in the above-quoted book of his memories. A flood of memories overcomes both of them – their reminiscences of the school days and how he was fascinated by her as she played the role of Portia in the play 'The Merchant of Venice'. Ruskin remembers a romantic scene at 'Social' – a sort of dance party at the girls' school.

Soon her small breasts were pressed against me, her lips and cheeks within kissing range – I gave her a quick peck on the cheek. I expected a slap in return, but instead I felt her salty lips (She'd been eating potato chips) pressed to mine. It was a sensation that sent a shiver down my spine (and elsewhere) and I wanted it to last forever. (P. 06)

Under the influence of liquor, the Maharani (known to him as Neena) confesses that the letters sent by Ruskin to her were romantic and very nice. At the age of sixteen and just out of school, she marries his Highness of Mastipur, the Maharaja who, after the demise of his first Maharani. The Maharaja is senior to her in age and hence this marriage becomes a moving tale. The Maharaja was immensely fond of hunting man-eaters. He had even snared a few of the cubs which he later kept them as his pets in his palace. He

also kept white rats as his pets. Ruskin narrates now the Maharaja sought help and guidance of Corbett specialized in hunting man-eaters. Because of Maharaja's old age, his long absence from the palace for hunting, and now being unromantic, Maharani I suffered from the starvation of sex and that's why she had a clandestine love affair with the Maharaja's driver Gafoor. "The driver Gafoor was the ideal employee, competent, courteous willing to please, an exuding sex appeal. He was a virile young driver." His liaison with Maharani I continued for many days until they were caught red-handed indulging in passionate sex beside a beautiful murmurous stream in the sylvan jungle. Before this amorous episode, while spending a night at a small hotel after their car had broken down, she complained of a headache and Gafoor applying the balm on her fevered brow.

It served only to make her more feverish. She sighed and moaned as his beautiful but rough fingers caressed her forehead, her temples, the lobes of her ears. His forehead, her temples, the lobes of her ears. His hands went to her breasts, his lips to her welcoming mouth. Five minutes of frantic kissing, and then they flung aside their garments, embraced, thrust at each other like gladiators lusting for love rather than blood. (P. 16)

The first Maharani loved to luxuriate in the presence of this man Gafoor, and to feel – almost as a sunbather feels the sun – that warm male glow that came out of him to her when they were alone together.

Their liaison no longer remained a secret and clandestine. A mysterious figure called Clarissa professionally so called nurse or sister reported it to the Maharaja. The Maharaja of the sadistic nature and intolerant of the Maharani's infidelity, hatched a plan to kill Gafoor. Both Maharani and Gafoor had discovered a shady place and an inviting bed of the soft ferns near the stream in the jungle. They were still immersed in making love furiously and vigorously when 'too late, the lovers were still entwined when a shadow fell across them. Someone held a 12-gauge shotgun to Gafoor's

head and pulled the trigger. The young man's blood and brain splattered over the shrieking Maharani". (P.19)

Later in a few months, Maharani I died of a broken heart. Some claimed that she was slow poisoned and because of the Maharaja's sadistic disposition, he wanted to see her die slowly and suffer a lot both mentally and physically. It is possible that one of his doctors must have administered slow poison to her, resulting in her eventual and painful death. Shortly after the death of Maharani I, the Maharaja wanted to marry a girl who herself was a huntress and who could shoot tigers, and it was at this time Neena (the second Maharani) comes in. This jungle princess is just out of school. She marries his Highness at sixteen. He is twenty years senior to her. It is astonishing that during one expedition in the jungle, she happens to cozy up herself to Jim Corbett, but he is immune to her sensual gestures of love and to the lures of beautiful women. Corbett has no sex life. Neena narrates the episode to Ruskin:

'no sex life of all. I think he was impotent. Instead of having sex, he shot tigers. Once, in camp, I had brushed against his trousers – quite inadvertently, of course – but there was nothing there! He pushed my hand away and gave me his gun to hold instead.' (P. 21)

Besides cubs as his pets, the Maharaja keeps white big rats as pets – the pets which bring about his death ultimately and untimely. The Maharaja meets a horrible death. The rats make a delicious meal of him. No one is around when this tragedy strikes. Neena is out overseeing the repairs of the palace at Mastipur. The boy in charge of the rats has his day off. The Maharaja completely drunk and intoxicated with his whisky and brandy enters the room of the rats where he entertains them with a toy train. As he is over drunk, he falls off his stool and the hungry and angry rats soon are all over him:

“- exploring his clothes, wriggling into his underwear, nibbling here and there. Nibble, nibble, snap! Word soon

got around. Their affectionate master was tasty. And he didn't seem to mind being nibbled, and bitten and chewed. Had he been conscious he would have struggled, cried out, attempted to crawl out of the room. But he was completely anaesthetized – paralysed – mercifully unaware of what was happening to him. The rats were delighted. This was better than biscuits and bread. Sweet, juicy steaks! A delicious rump! – Even his eyes were gouged out. They gnawed at his heart, burrowed into his brain. By morning the rats were satiated, most of them asleep, a few still looking for picklings. When the boy came in, he found a skeleton and a bundle of clothes – he recognized. His Highness' embroidered slippers – and woke up the rest of the household." (P. 28)

They cremate the Maharaja of whatever is left of him down in Rajpur; so is the gruesome end of the Maharaja. And what is more astonishing, frightful, horrifying and disgusting that by the end of the novel, the Maharani of Mastipur, popularly known among friends as Neena also meets with the same ghoulish and macabre end of her life in the same manner as her husband has. She is attacked and bitten by the rats, some of them residue left behind by her husband and the other from the nearby fields of Hollow Oak.

In the eyes of Ruskin, her friend Neena resembles the ravishing and beautiful Elizabeth Taylor. She is selfish and hurtful. He accepts her as she is. Neena's blunt and truthful allegations against some important men of the world and her comparison of them with her husband reveal her brusque, downright and straightforward philosophy of life.

'Most of the world's troubles are created by impotent men', she said, quite unexpectedly. 'Hitler, Napoleon, Julius Caesar – none of them were any good in bed – so they made up for it by imposing their will on the rest of mankind – making sure that everyone was under their thumbs since they couldn't be under their dicks! Do I shock you?'

'Not at all – I presume you include your husband, the

Maharaja, among the impotent elite'. 'Shut up. And come closer. You are not afraid of me, are you?' She said. (P. 36-37)

H.H. (Neena) and Ruskin are never lovers or inseparable friends but simply attracted and attached to each other – interesting they keep in touch with each other in a haphazard manner and never miss each other very much. Her excessive indulgence in the illicit love affair with Ricardo from Bolivia – cultural attaché in the Bolivia embassy continues for a long time. Ricardo provides her with various kinds of wine e.g. wines, brandy, cognac and scotch whisky. He is great in bed. He is a catch for her that she has no intention of relinquishing him not for some time anyway.

Ricardo is a married man. He has a wife called Montalban, a son Pablo and a daughter Ann. He moves in with his family nearby Hollow Oak in Mussoorie. Whenever he is on holidays, he is a regular visitor and guest of the Maharani. Ruskin gets acquainted with the family of Ricardo, especially he strikes an intimate friendship with Pablo – a movie – lover. Ruskin and Pablo become so close and intimate friends that they frequent to the cinema house called Rialto. Pablo is sensitive and emotional but considerate, sensible, sympathetic and understanding for his age that he is conscious of his mother's pangs of loneliness and painful occasional estrangement between her and his father not only during his absence from the house on the duty but also during his presence but at the house of the Maharani where he indulges in carnal knowledge. That's why Pablo immensely hates the Maharani. He knows that his father's liaison with the Maharani is a matter of disgust as well as anguish and that it discombobulates his mother. Pablo execrates not only the Maharani but the mysterious sister Clarissa too. He explodes with the indignation for the nun Clarissa. 'She – devil !' he hissed, as he spat upon the image. 'Witch woman! And picking up my paper knife he stabbed repeatedly at the face and figure of the crude representation of the nun (P. 73)'

Ruskin takes Pablo on tour of extensive cemetery – hundred of graves – the city of the dead. The following lines reveal his philosophy on the journey of life: 'The emptiness, the futility of it all. The yearning, the struggle, the desire, the loving, the hating. And it all ends here, or on the funeral! pyre. Dust or ashes'. 'Finit. Kaput' (P. 81)

Pablo's sticking drawing pins into various parts of the doll's anatomy is expressive and evocative of the resentment that he exudes against the Maharani. The doll is a present to Ann, his sister. It resembles the Maharani. The boy Pablo is aware of how his father has been dragged into the illicit love affair with the Maharani. He cannot endure and stomach the loneliness and sufferings of his mother that have been occasioned by the Maharani.

As usual, the story of his novel has a supernatural element. There appears an apparition of a little girl. It is usually seen by Ann. One evening at the gorgeous sunset Mrs. Montalban, Ruskin, Ann and Pablo happen to spot the ghost of the little girl against a wall that is bathed in 'the glowing sunshine as the sun is sinking. Mrs. Montalban remarks that the little girl probably belongs to the house rented by them. The old Mali reveals that most of the houses there are haunted by ghosts. Ruskin Bond is expert in telling the stories of ghosts as he did earlier in e.g. 'A Face in the Dark and other Hauntings', 'Wilson's Bridge', 'Night of the Millennium; etc. The picturesque description of a scene from, A Face in the Dark' would convince and reaffirm Ruskin Bond's skill in narrating the stories of spooks. "In that dim and flickering light Mr. Oliver, an Anglo – Indian teacher saw a boy who had held his head in hands, and he was crying. The teacher asked the boy why he was lingering behind and crying. The boy did not look up. But when the teacher persisted in enquiring about the boy and his staying back, he looked up' To the horror and astonishment what the teacher saw was quite incredible. He saw that the boy had a round smooth head with a school cap on top of it. The face had no eyes, no ears, no nose, no mouth. The teacher

was so frightened that he ran away blindly towards the school. His trouble did not end there. He bumped into a watchman who asked him why he was running with such a fright. When he told the watchman about the boy without a face, he raised the lantern to his face and asked the teacher if it was like his face. The watchman's face had also no eyes, no ears, no nose, no mouth, and no eyebrows." The old Mali tells them that the appearance of the little girl's apparition augurs bad omen for coming days.

Mr. Ricardo Montalban is a hot - blooded man and obsessive about his possessions. He never suspects his wife of any infidelity, even Ruskin's relationship with his mistress Neena. Though Neena and Ruskin have known each other since school days, he does not regard him as his potential rival in love. The Maharani cheats on Ricardo during his long absence and carries on with Mr. Lobo, a pianist. When, by accident, Ricardo comes to know his rival Lobo, he flares up and brandishes his revolver, and aims at him but misfires, hitting the bullet on the portrait of the Maharaja. Lobo is not hurt, but he is shocked and convulsed. He suffers a heart attack. He is hospitalized. After feeling better, she asks Ruskin to put Lobo on the Bombay Express. She dumps and ditches both Ricardo and Lobo as she does not want to drag herself into any controversy after she has been satiated herself sexually by them. After this exposure, Ricardo is transferred to Jakarta's embassy. Mrs. Montalban is ecstatic and blissful as an interlude of her husband's love affair has at last blown away. She never chids or takes her husband to task over his amour and liaison with the Maharani. She feels sure it will blow away in the course of time. This shows Mrs. Montalban's tolerance, submission, subordination and resignation to fate but at the same time her faith and devotion to her husband like any other Indian woman is laudable. She neither revolts against her adulterer husband nor becomes unfaithful to him. She neither dares to think to get rid of him. She can be contrasted with the character Maya in the novel 'Cry, The Peacock' by Anita Desai. Maya

not only revolts against her husband Gautama but also kills him by pushing him over the parapet resulting in his death. She is relieved. But later on she becomes hysterical and suffers from permanent delirium and meets her own violent death. Mrs. Moutalban is quite different from the character of Maya. In spite of Ruskin's frequent visits to her house, even during long absence of her husband Ricardo, she never develops an amorous relationship with him, when Mrs. Montalban, her son Pablo and daughter take leave of Ruskin, they feel immensely desolate. Ruskin and Pablo are aware that they will miss each other. Pablo has collected a number of cinema posters. He hands over all those posters to Ruskin as his souvenirs and mementos. After Pablo's departure to Jakarta, Ruskin spends a few years in Delhi making his living there by regularly contributing to some newspapers, but when he returns, he finds all the posters damaged and anyhow he salvages one and keeps it as a memento of his little intimate friend Pablo. Ruskin misses Pablo very much.

After he has returned from Delhi, he finds his favourite friend H.H. living alone with her pack of some ferocious dogs and retainers. Now and then, she calls Ruskin to accompany her on bouts of drinks. The palace has started looking worn out. It stands for the old age and worn out features of the Maharani. Yet she shouts as a queen or the Maharani, Ruskin comes to know that the Maharani is not at all disposed to bequeath her property and estate to her sons Kartik and Karan. To her both of them are effete. Kartik and Karan have gone astray. Kartik is always sulking, demanding money and making empty threats while Karan is addicted to drugs and his threats are more menacing. Kartik is an inveterate intoxicated. It is uncertain he would outlive his mother, He is too comatose to get up to go to the bathroom, his mattress and bed sheets are soaked in urine. Karan experiments with various drugs. He indulges in orgies of different kinds in the Mastipur palace. Women are brought to him, He takes shots at domestic animals, hens and inoffensive dogs and cats with his revolver. Neena by this

time has grown neurotic, selfish, and arrogant. She blames Clarissa, the sister for failing to bring up her two sons scrupulously. Clarissa was a German spy – an opponent of the British then. She was brought to India by H.H.'s husband's father. She was smuggled out of Europe dressed like a man. She was half a man – a hermaphrodite. Pablo's wish comes true when Clarissa trips and falls down the stairs. She is interred in the same grave that Pablo had indicated that the newly dug grave would be her resting place. He had expressed this wish when Ruskin had taken him round the cemetery. Clarissa was a mysterious and inextricable character in the lives of the both Maharani. She brings about a complete dissipation and degradation in the life of the first Maharani by informing the Maharaja her love affair with Gafoor and her miserable failure to bring up Kartik and Karan more scrupulously, also precipitates an indescribable misery in the life of Neena.

One day Ruskin is urgently called by Neena. She is lying very ill in her usual bed. She reveals to him that her kidneys have gone bad and she is passing blood with her urine. She looks haggard and her cheeks sunken, her lips dry and colorless. She has a number of stones, rubies, pearls, garnets, opals, an emerald, diamond bracelet. As she is distraught with her two sons, she does not bequeath any of the jewellery to them.

Neena is aware that the house Hollow Oak is infested with rats. On account of these rats, she gets hysterical. Hans calls Ruskin informing him that H.H has been bitten by one of the dogs and her favorite pet is missing. Again she is hysterical. On examining it is obvious that she is not bitten by a dog but by a huge rat about two feet long usually found in the fields and not in a town. She has a few bites on her body, so she is shocked and convulsive. By the time an ambulance arrives, she has already kicked the bucket.

A son from the first Maharani as well as Kartik and Karan claim their rights to the property of H.H. the matter

goes to the court and remains there for many years. Meanwhile Kartik is already on his last legs. Many enemies will catch up with Karan sooner or later because of his drug dealings and debauchery. Hans the faithful servant, her dogs, have started disappearing from Hollow Oak. The place is already in desolation and ruins. Whenever Ruskin passes by the house, it looks shabbier, no flower beds, no music drifting through the house, the windows and doors closed. The Maharaja's coat left behind by the Maharani for her lifelong friend Ruskin serves as a means of reminiscences about Neena, (H.H. Maharani), Ricardo, Mrs. Montalban, Pablo, and Ann etc.

Ruskin Bond has succeeded in weaving a tale of eccentric characters and within the limited scope of *Maharani*, he has proved once again that he can still delight and soothe even if he only seldom wows a reader. (Nandini Nair)

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R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*:
An Ecocritical Study

Susanta Kumar Bardhan*

Ecocriticism has emerged as a powerful branch of literary criticism/theory in the last two decades of the twentieth century, though its seed was sown sometime earlier. With the growing awareness about the impact of industrialization and urbanization on nature and environment and subsequent effect on human civilization literature and literary criticism have got affected. Ecocriticism is an offshoot of that awareness and, as the word suggests, is a field of study of literature with the help of the concepts, ideas and insights of ecology. An ecocritic attempts to track environmental as well as ecological ideas and representations wherever they appear, to 'see more clearly a debate which seems to be taking place often part-concealed, in a great many cultural spaces'. Mainly, ecocriticism seeks to 'evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their coherence and usefulness as responses to environmental crises'.

The present paper proposes to evaluate R. K. Narayan's famous novel *The Guide* from the perspective of ecocriticism. The novel was published in 1958 and won Sahitya Academy Award. It shows the transformation of Raju from a railway guide to a sage. The description of nature, and plight of the villagers due to drought and the frantic prayer of Raju along with the villagers for rain i.e., relief from drought can be analysed from the point of view of ecocriticism. It will look into how the novelist develops within the text an underlying discourse as well as argument for the development of the awareness about the environment in the 1950s. The proposed study is relevant in the backdrop of present-day concern of

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the people of the world relating to global warning.

Ecocriticism: A brief overview

In the first half of the 20th century the world experienced two devastating World Wars and subsequently the deplorable condition of the humanity at large due to the imbalance in the physical environment, economy, politics, international relationship, etc. In the post-War period the rapid development and expansion of industrial hubs and the consequent deforestation as well as the destruction of ecological systems started causing huge and alarming imbalance in the physical environment. The environmental experts, UNO, the governments of several countries and NGOs have raised this issue and tried to persuade the authorities concerned to take necessary steps for maintaining the ecological balance in the environment needed so that this Earth can be the abode of all its inhabitants at present and in future also.

In the field of literary criticism and theory, the 20th century saw the emergence of several theories such as new criticism, structuralism, post-structuralism, psycho-analytical criticism, postcolonialism, new historicism, feminism, etc. These theories attempt to study literary texts from the perspectives developed by their respective proponents. Side by side an awareness regarding the relationship between literature and environment and the impact of the imbalance caused by the industrial development on the environment started lurking in the minds of a section of intelligentsia devoted to creative writing and literary study. It gave a new direction in literary study or interpretation yielding a new branch of literary theory known as *ecocriticism* in the last quarter of the 20th century.

Though Ecocriticism as a full fledged literary theory as well as a movement emerged in the 1990s with the establishment of *Association for the Study of literature and Environment* (ASLE) in 1992 and the publication of the first volume of its own journal *Interdisciplinary Study of Literature and Environment* (ISLE) in 1993, this concept

arose in some literary studies in the late 1970s. Meeker (1972) in his seminal work *The Comedy Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* uses the term 'literary ecology' in order to study the biological themes and their interrelationships and at the same time attempts to 'discover what roles have been played by literature in the ecology of human species' (1972: 9). The term *Ecocriticism* was, so far as our knowledge goes, first used by prominent ecocritic Rueckert (1978) in his paper 'Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism'. Rueckert defines 'eco' in 'Ecocriticism' as 'the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature'. As a theory, it applies the ideas/concepts of ecology to the study of literature and his definition basically centres round the science of ecology and its rigorous attempt to explore the relationship between the physical world and literature. Notice that Rueckert's definition and analysis are mainly science/technicality based.

However, Ecocriticism got the status as a full-fledged literary theory with the publication of Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm's (1996) book *The Ecocriticism Reader, Landmarks in Literary Ecology* which maps the methods of ecocriticism. It is Glotfelty whose name is closely associated with ASLE formation and the development and popularization of this theory in the USA and other countries including the UK. She argues that 'all ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world affecting it and affected by it' and it is evidently the study of the 'relationship between literature and physical world'. The USA based ecocritical study in the 1990s centres round the works of three major 19th century American writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) and Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) which celebrate Nature, the life-force and the wilderness as manifested in America. Side by side, in the UK this literary study got momentum with the seminal work of Jonathan Bate's (1991) *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* which is

undoubtedly a classic and founding text on contemporary British ecocriticism. According to Love (2003), ecocriticism offers a way of criticism that 'encompasses nonhuman as well as human contexts and considerations'. And thereby it 'bases its challenges to much postmodern critical discourse as well as to critical systems of the past'

Though in the last two decades a large number of ecocritical studies have been done (e.g., Buell 1995, 1999 & 2005, Gifford 1995 & 1999, Murphy 1998, Cohen 2004, Philips 2003, Morton 2007, Tyler and Rossini 2009, etc.), there is debate regarding its nomenclature. It is found that some critics express the environment oriented criticism of a literary discourse without referring to the term *Ecocriticism*. In a word, they favour the term *environmental criticism*. On the other hand critics including Glotfelty opine that the term *Ecocriticism* has an analogy to the science of ecology and it studies the relationships between things (here between the physical world and human culture) existing in the ecological system of the region as well as the world. Moreover, the term *enviro-* connotatively is anthropocentric and dualistic, suggesting that 'we humans are at the centre; surrounded by everything that is not us, the environment' (Tewari and Chandra 2005: 615). On the contrary, the term *eco-* is precisely and perfectly related to the idea of the interdependence of communities, integrated system of human-nonhuman world and also the consolidated and durable connection among the 'constituent parts'. In the midst of prevailing controversy relating the appropriateness of the one of the competing terms the future will dictate which will prevail as lasting one encapsulating the ideas which this branch of literary theory deals with.

If studied, the works done within the framework of this theory, it is observed that it attempts to study in a literary piece/discourse

- the interrelationship between humans and the environment,

- the historical evolution of the relationship between human and nonhuman world,
- the present and future state of that relationship,
- the impact of environment/nature on the human mind,
- the effect of our culture/civilization on the nature at large,
- the concerns and anxieties of the literary artists conveyed through their respective works as understood and deciphered by the critics, and whatever comes under the purview of the idea relating to human world and environmental issues in a literary text.

Another interesting and striking point often raised by ecocritics is that Saussurean concept of meaning of linguistic signs is based on culture construct and there should be an attempt to come out of this and give meaning born out of nature.

An Ecocritical Study of *The Guide*

In the previous section an overview of Ecocriticism along with the basic tenets so far evolved has been discussed. This discussion will remain as the background for the present study of Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan's *The Guide*. R. K. Narayan born in Madras in 1906 is one the major 20th century innovators in the field of Anglo-Indian fiction. Apart from numerous short stories and essays, he has written about ten full-length novels set in the imaginary South Indian town he calls *Malgudi*. (It is assumed that the town Lalgudi which is located near Madras may have suggested the name *Malgudi*.) Narayan's *The Guide* is also a Malgudi novel published in 1958 and Sahitya Academy Award winning one (1961). It depicts the growth of Raju from a mere village boy and a successful tourist guide at Malgudi to a spiritual guide *guru*.

Raju gradually becomes well known more as tourist guide than as railway station shopkeeper. In the midst of this he comes in contact with Rosie and his association with her leads to the complexity of the plot. Her archaeologist husband, Marco discovers her relationship with Raju and subsequently abandons her. Inspired by Raju, she revives her dance and establishes herself as a famous dancer named Nalini. Being afraid of losing Rosie, Raju forges the signature of Rosie on the application for release of a box of jewellery left in safe custody of a bank and is sent to jail for two years. But by coincidence he is cast as a saint by simple Velan and the villagers of Mangal. At later period Mangal and the surrounding villages suffer a terrible drought and they happen to believe that the self sacrifice of Raju, now *Swami* by fasting for twelve days will bring water in that drought-hit area. In spite of being sceptical about the outcome of his sacrifice he embarks on a twelve day fast and the novel ends with the hint that Raju intuitively visualizes the coming of rain and then collapses, clearly to die, on the eleventh day.

In the novel, as it presents the love- triangle and subsequent transformation of Raju as *guru*, there seems to have no direct relation with Nature. But a thorough study of the text and discourse reveals that Narayan has underlyingly attempted to show how Nature and man-made culture interact in the evolution of human relationship. Raju, as evidenced by his own recollection, was brought up in a town which did not get the touch of urban civilization in the true sense of the term and later underwent change due to the introduction of railway service and emerged as a town full of commercial and industrial activities and transformation of the lifestyle of the people inhabiting in around the town. Raju's childhood days were spent in association with the unmixed innocent world and ancient Indian tradition. His association with the tamarind tree by the side of his father's shop is intense that as railway tracks were parked under that tree, he felt the loss of his freedom under that tree. And later he instead of playing with earthen

toys as village children do, began to collect 'sawn-off metal bits, nuts and bolts, and treasured them in my mother's big trunk, where a space was allotted to me amidst her ancient silk saris, - - -. (pp. 23-24)

On the day of the beginning of train service at Malgudi and afterward the economy of the area has changed drastically. It is clear from the change in the economic condition of Raju's father:

- - My father's shop had record sales that day.

By the time a stationmaster and a porter were installed in their little stone house at the back of the station, facing our house, my father had become so prosperous that he acquired a *jutka* and a horse in order to go to the town and do his shopping. (p. 38)

Later on, his father was given 'a privilege of running a shop at the railway station' (p. 41) and at the same time he tried to run his hut-shop. Along with the prosperity in business due to the regularization of train services and efficient management of shop Raju gradually developed himself as a well known tourist guide. Malgudi is, as evident from the description in the novel, the confluence of natural beautiful sites including Mempi Hills and commercially prominent zones and Raju becomes popular as guide. All these transformations in the career of Raju indicate how industry and commerce bring about the change in the individual and the society. The relationship between human beings and the natural world gets new dimension due to change in economy and nature or environment becomes a commodity for the human pleasure as well as exploitation. It loses its own significance in the maintenance of ecology for the healthy and peaceful life of all existing on earth.

Another aspect of this novel is Marco's research on the caves of South India. Though Marco's reluctance, rather indifference to fulfil the desire of his young wife Rosie, his stay at the Mempi Hill Peak in the midst of jungle and later publication of his book *The Cultural History of South India*

based on his study of the caves are indicative of Narayan's concern with the gradual deterioration of the man's relationship with environment or nature.

Cut off from the natural life and fully engaged in commercial life in the name *Railway Raju*, he becomes awfully busy throughout the day. He even does not hesitate to ignore his mother's advice and his engagement with Rosie completely blinds him towards the natural rules of life. Later events in his life rotating round Rosie and his imprisonment for forgery can be looked at as the consequence of his own conscious detachment from nature.

Raju's life in jail creates ground for the regaining of his association with Nature as reflected by the following passage depicting his regular work there:

I worked incessantly on a vegetable patch in the back-yard of the superintendent's home. I dug the earth and drew water from the well and tended it carefully. I put fence round, with bramble and thorns so that cattle did not destroy the plants. I grew huge brinjals and beans, cabbages. When appeared on their stalks as tiny buds, I was filled with excitement. I watched them develop, acquire shape, change colour, shed the early parts. When the harvest was ready, I plucked them off their stalks tenderly, washed them, wiped them clean to a polish with the end of my jail jacket, arranged them artistically on a tray of woven bamboo (I'd arranged to get one from weaving-shed), and carried them in ceremoniously. . . . (p. 227)

This close association with natural elements provides him with a hope of leading new spell of life with a soothing sensation:

I loved every piece of this work, blue sky and sunshine, and the shade of the house in which I sat and worked, the feel of cold water; it produced in me a luxurious sensation. Oh, it seemed to be so good to be alive and feeling all this; the smell of freshly turned earth and filled me with the greatest delight. (p. 227-8)

The above quoted speech of Raju suggests that through his narrative discourse depicting the hero's realization Narayan hints at the soothing and healing power of nature on man.

After the release from jail, Raju takes shelter in the lap of nature by the side of a river near the village Mangal. His attachment with Velan and other villagers is the revival of bond with nature as evidenced from the course of actions taking place in the days to come.

The boy grazing cows is also a product of Nature and is not touched by cultural complexities of urbanity. That is why; he is attracted by the call of Raju and 'soon came across the water' (p. 35). In reaction to Raju's advice: "Take off your turban and dry yourself, boy," the boy says: "I am not afraid of water." (p. 35)

We find the description of natural setting of the evening when Raju was waiting for Velan and his fellow villagers with great anxiety:

The sun was setting. Its tint touched the wall with pink. The tops of the coconut trees around were aflame. The bird-cries were up in a crescendo before dying down for the night. (p. 34)

Raju's bond with Velan and other fellow villagers intensifies day by day. They accept him as learned *swami* who can show them the path to spiritual life or redemption. After the elapse of certain years, comes a new challenge before Raju. He starts twelve days fasting for the purpose of rescuing villagers from drought. Mangal and surrounding area undergoes a severe drought causing the death of animals, the drying up of the earth. Historically speaking, a great part of India including Tamil Nadu got severely affected by drought in the year 1951. The description, as found in the present novel, aptly and elaborately projects the sufferings of both human and animal worlds:

-- Cattle were unable to yield milk; they lacked the energy to drag the plough through the furrows; flocks of sheep were

beginning to look scurvy and piebald, with their pelvic bones sticking on.

The wells in the villages were drying up. Huge concourses of women with pitchers arrived at the river, which was fast narrowing. . . . (p. 93)

The vivid description of the effect of drought on earth at large shows how Narayan who was moved by the sufferings of the living world due to drought in 1951 has attempted to utilize the experience in a literary discourse. This adds a new dimension to the novel as the depiction of contemporary events makes it authentically artistic. Moreover, through this Narayan seems to have aroused the consciousness among the readers about the natural calamity i.e., drought in general and that of 1951 in particular and thereby suggest that initiatives and measures should be taken to regain the ecological balance and sustain it at least for the well being of humanity.

The entire discourse and narration of the novel reveal and reestablish the very need for the maintenance of man-nature relation settled from the time immemorial. This has been proved by the concluding part of the novel depicting the hero's vision of the coming of rain and complete identification with nature through his sagging down.

The morning sun was out by now; a great shaft of light illuminated the surroundings. It was difficult to hold Raju on his feet, as he had a tendency to flop down. They held him as if he were a baby. Raju opened his eyes, looked about and said, 'Velan, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs -'. He sagged down. (p. 247)

Conclusion

It is, thus, evident that the background canvas portrayed with the projection of the environment/nature and the impact of man made culture on it and the helplessness of the humanity at large during drought—amply demonstrates the novel as an eco-critical study. Even today when the

whole world is having ecological imbalance and environmental hazards, Raju's oscillation between nature and culturally constructed world and his ultimate attachment with the former, directly or indirectly convey the crying need for revival of the relation between man and nature for survival.

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Thomas Hardy: A Transition Figure among the Victorians

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The Victorians were, undoubtedly, among the greatest novelists in English; but they were not the pioneers of the English novel. The seeds of the English novel sown much before had already sprouted in the eighteenth century. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* appeared in 1719 as a sequence of episodes. Samuel Richardson produced his famous epistolary novel *Pamela* in 1740; and two years later came Henry Fielding's comic novel *Joseph Andrews*. Walter Allen aptly remarks about the origin of the English novel: "The year 1800 is a date of first importance in the history of English fiction."¹

But the novel written in the year 1800 and beyond is not always confined to the life of London city. Only at times, it shows the novelist's attachment to his soil and depicts the atmosphere in which he lives, breathes and grows. Maria Edgeworth occupied a new territory and set her novel outside London and Bath. The region Miss Edgeworth discovered in her novel was Ireland, and with Ireland the Irish peasant. After her, Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott also gave regional colour, tone and spirit to the English novel. Scott was the northern novelist who found both poetic inspiration and poetic material in his native Scotland.

Miss Austen spent the restricted life of a provincial lady in and around Hampshire, the country of her birth. She wrote the pure novel, as Robert Liddell has it in his *A Treatise on the Novel*, and concentrated on human beings and their mental reaction. Subjected to all the snobberies

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that abound in provincial towns, Jane Austen never showed any trace of being affected by them. While she was a belated eighteenth-century novelist, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) was the last of the Victorians and the first of the Moderns—a transition figure standing between two worlds. He was born in Dorsetshire, the heart of south-west England known as Wessex in his novels, on June 2, 1840. His first novel, *Desperate Remedies*, was published in 1871 when he was thirty-one. His career as a novelist ended twenty-five years later with *Jude the Obscure* in 1896. He was an extremely fecund novelist, inventing new plots and writing an important book of fiction, novel or short story, every year. Though he earned a European reputation by virtue of his free views on sex and marriage, aired in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, he was a provincial, a countryman, a novelist of the country life of Dorsetshire. It is in his provincialism and naivety that the real strength of Thomas Hardy lies. Compton Rickett's remark in this context is really worth quoting: "Hardy's strength, as well as his inclination, lay in tracing the elemental things of life, and this is why, he has annexed Wessex as his province and left London and town society, for the most part, severely alone."²

Thomas Hardy reigned supreme among his contemporaries in creating the quiet atmosphere of the countryside and tracing the elemental things of human life. But when he abandoned the intensely local world and portrayed the fashionable life in *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), he utterly failed as a novelist. Hardy used the word Wessex to denote a region of south-west England. *Under the Greenwood Tree* was originally brought out in 1872 in two volumes. It is an idyllic tale of rustic life but the idyllic quality is not fully achieved either by abstraction or by suppression. The passions and egotism of young lovers are presented in a lively way. *Under the Greenwood Tree* is obviously a Shakespearean title taken from one of the songs of Amiens:

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,

And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither.³

The story of "The Mellstock Choir" and its old established west-gallery musicians, with some supplementary description of similar officials in *Two on a Tower* (1882) and other places, is intended to be a fairly true picture of the persons, ways and customs which were common among such orchestral bodies in villages in the early 19th century. This is thus a novel studying the displacement of the Choir or Orchestra, the ecclesiastical bandsmen, from the Church gallery in favour of a harmonium. Hardy laments the disappearance of an important orchestral union and its displacement by an isolated harmonium player or a typical barrel organ, usually played in the street.

The old established order is passing from agricultural life. The daily labour and the crafts and the music-making of the village people are bound up with traditional beliefs and customs. When the urban invader, Maybold, dismisses the choir, they are helpless and inarticulate before him. For a moment or two, the scene stirs the depths. Hardy has contrived a felicitous image for his feeling which he develops reticently. The old order passes and against the background of that passing, the tale of Fancy and her three lovers is narrated. In various ways, such as, by her social status, her organ-playing, and so on, Hardy embroils her in the conflict. Continually in the course of the narrative, she reminds us of it. Tempted to turn from the agricultural society and to rise in the world, she conquers the temptation, succumbs, and then conquers again. Hardy nowhere elaborates what is at stake while the girl delays, poised between Maybold and Dick. But we can sense in his narrative of her predicament the same deep, subdued feeling with which he regards the defeat of the choir.

Far from the Madding Crowd (1874) derives its title from Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard*. It is a true sequel to *Under the Greenwood Tree*, but it is a much

more considerable performance. Compared with *Fancy*, *Bathsheba* is more engrossing. Here, Hardy shows his greater skill in his analysis of human character and motive. He portrays the predicament of the sensitive, intelligent rural person insecurely poised between the country life and the city environment. *Bathsheba* belongs to the country life but the city milieu tantalizes her. Her voice is very compelling in its various roles: attempting fine manners with Boldwood, or patronage with Oak, or feminine authority with Liddy. Suddenly, it will break down into the voice of a country girl. With a keen eye, Hardy catches *Bathsheba's* movement and gesture. All these effects express his grasp of village psychology and show his strength as a painter of country life. In his domain, he delves deep into the heart of his character and makes his novel a lively work of art.

The Return of the Native (1878) set in the sombre scene of Egdon Heath is a tragic love story. The plot is extremely simple. Clym Yeobright, who has been a diamond merchant in Paris, comes back home to serve his fellow men as a teacher and preacher. He falls in love with and marries Eustacia Vye who has had a secret love affair with Damon Wildeve, the husband of Clym's cousin. Eustacia and Wildeve resume their affair and accidentally end their life by drowning. Thomasin marries Diggory Venn, the travelling Reddleman, who has brooded over the action throughout, like a guardian but not like an effectual angel. The significant characters, Clym Yeobright and Eustacia Vye, interact on a plane of idealism and realism. Clym Yeobright clings to tradition and profoundly laments the loss of completeness in life. Clym is all the time conscious of the misery of modernization. In some respects, Clym as an idealist represents Hardy's mental and spiritual value. In Clym Yeobright's face can dimly be seen the typical countenance of the future. If Clym is Hardy's modern man, Eustacia is not his modern woman. She is an archetypal woman, the typical flighty woman and in some respects like Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*. Egdon Heath is itself a character in *The*

Return of the Native. It is more than a scenic background: it enters into the very lives of characters. Hardy shrewdly comments: "Under the general name of Egdon Heath which has been given to the sombre scene of the story are united the typical heaths of various real names to the number of at least a dozen thereby convincingly one in character and aspect."⁴

Hardy is acutely aware of and deeply sensitive to certain topographical features resembling the part of the heath. The function of Egdon Heath in the novel is to describe the circumstances in which Wessex people live. Sometimes, it is antagonistic to human society and human ways. The storm, in its character of antagonism, of dour hostility, seems to be present throughout. The dualism, the dramatic conflict between the agricultural community and the heath is quite obvious. But Egdon Heath is also constructive in its function. It nourishes the community. It nourishes the vitality, the continuing mirth, which sustains and is sustained by the community's labour. Hardy gives such weight to the hostile element in order to make true appreciation of the agricultural reality, of the heath and the storm of the countryside.

The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886) is one of Hardy's most powerful pastoral tragedies. The story of this tragic novel refers to the corn trade on which so much of the action turns. It also describes the condition of the harvest of wheat, the weather affecting the product of wheat and thereby the adverse fate of Michael Henchard. While Henchard becomes a pauper, Farfrae is the kingpin of the corn trade. Hardy describes *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in its subtitle as *A Story of a Man of Character*. In this novel, he studies the character of a protagonist and holds it responsible for his disaster along with the will of the Almighty. He says that the story of the novel is basically the story of "one man's deeds and character." David Daiches subtly comments on the character of Michael Henchard: "Henchard himself is almost a natural force, at the mercy of his instincts and emotions, lacking

both in self-knowledge and in objective understanding of the external world.”⁵

Henchard's life is tragic: it is full of vicissitudes leading to his fall and disaster. He suffers because he has no restraint on himself and is also quite unable to understand situations. He can exert his will to almost any degree when his passion or pride requires it. He has something of the wilfulness of Oedipus and Lear, something of their dignity in his weakness and self-destruction. He suffers because of his inherent weakness and exemplifies Bradley's view: "character is destiny."⁶ Even though his sufferings are more than he deserves, he bears them with unusual courage and dignity. The tragic tale of Michael Henchard tells of Hardy's pessimism recorded powerfully in the following words: "Happiness is but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain."⁷

In his tragic flaw and fortitude, Michael Henchard acquires the stature of a Shakespearean tragic hero. He is honest and loving but at the same time he is also obstinate and impulsive. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Hardy constantly contrasts the southern obstinacy of Michael Henchard with the northern insight of Donald Farfrae. The tug-of-war between Henchard and Farfrae is the opposition between the southern doggedness and the northern intelligence and flexibility in the light of the circumstances of the time. Further, there is a contrast between Lucetta from the Island of Jersey and Elizabeth Jane from the natural world of the countryside. While Lucetta is an exotic flower of romantic habits, Elizabeth Jane is described as a primrose in the garden of Wessex. One is of foreign origin and the other is a native product of Dorsetshire in Hardy's idiom of Wessex culture. The local flavour of suburb Casterbridge, a half-town and a half-country, pervades the novel from beginning to end. The title is *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and Michael Henchard is elevated to the position of Mayor only in Casterbridge and nowhere else. *Far from the Madding Crowd* that derives its title from Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* stresses the value of country

atmosphere in the novel. Gabriel Oak is depicted as the simple and manly shepherd whereas charming Bathsheba is torn between Wessex rustic life and the urban culture. Like Michael Henchard, Farmer Boldwood represents the volcanic passions of the Wessex people. Sergeant Troy is a military officer with exotic background and culture.

Thomas Hardy is a Victorian novelist with a difference. The central theme of his fiction is the recurrent clash between the traditional Wessex regional culture and the aggressive urban exotic life. It would be customary to say that Hardy took a short cut way to tragedy by reducing life to a formula. He depicted in both his fiction and poetry the traditional, vanishing culture of the countryside of southern England, an imaginary country of Wessex. Indeed, Hardy creates his own world and adds a new country, a new region to the geography of imagination. It is the natural world that captivates Hardy's heart and stirs his creative imagination: "Most of the poems and novels reveal Hardy's love and observation of the natural world, often with strong symbolic effect."⁸

The Woodlanders (1887) is set in the woods of Dorsetshire and explores the theme of love and marriage. Hardy discusses the point of view of marriage as a distinct covenant or undertaking. An ideal marriage should be looked upon as a sacred covenant intended to afford the greatest happiness to the Units of Human Society. Hardy cites the views of Gibbon, the celebrated 18th-century historian, on the evidence for and against Christian miracles. Gibbon holds that the duty of a historian does not call upon him to interpose his private judgment in this nice and important country. The action of *The Woodlanders* takes place in the exact locality of hamlet Little Hintock with its true name. The commanding heights called High Story and Bible Down Hill overlook the landscape in which they are supposed to be hidden. In respect of the occupation of characters, the adoption of iron implements in agriculture and the discontinuation of thatched roofs for cottages have almost

extinguished the handicrafts, "the copse work," and the type of people engaged in them. A tangible sign of change brought about by the Industrial Revolution (1750-1850) in Britain is noticeable in Hardy's work.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891), the story of a beautiful and valiant woman named Tess, is definitely Hardy's most ambitious tragic novel. What is remarkable about this novel is that it is designed to contain the map of the Wessex of his fiction and poetry. This novel is indeed the triumph of regionalism like the Malgudi novels of R. K. Narayan. When Hardy completed this novel, he admitted, "I have put in it the best of me." He started writing this novel in December, 1888, after travelling widely in the Dorsetshire countryside and observing the decline of the regional culture, i.e. Wessex culture, with his historical imagination. The setting of the novel is in the village of Marlott in the adjoining vale of Blackmoor.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Thomas Hardy comes out to be a great tragic writer in English. Her innocent words from Chapter Two serve as an epitaph for Tess at her execution in Chapter Fifty-Nine when the President of the Immortals has ended his sport with her. In Chapter 59, Angel Clare walks away from his wife Tess, who is later hanged, along with another Marlott maiden. Tess's beauty and her descent from Norman nobility prove liabilities because of her parents' poverty and fecklessness. Donald Hall's views about the novel are really noteworthy. To him, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is not an ordinary tragedy: it is a social tragedy, even an industrial tragedy. The tragic tale of a "pure maiden" shows Hardy's acute perception of the changes going on in the countryside in the region of Wessex during his lifetime. Hardy was vividly aware of the industrialization and economic changes in society. In this awareness, he recalls William Blake, the great precursor of the Romantic Revival. If Blake was a precursor of the Romantic Revival, Hardy was a precursor of the Modern Age, of the age of mental and spiritual crisis. The Romantics

closed their world about the continuity and prolongation of the Age of Reason and the Age of Satire. But Thomas Hardy, like Matthew Arnold, was wandering between two worlds: one dead and the other waiting to be born. Compton Rickett does not fail to notice modernity in Hardy's outlook: "Hardy's great distinction lies in his putting on one side the romantic point of view, and adopting a deliberating and scientific observant method of treating the life of the countryside."⁹

Darwin's theory of evolution in his monumental work *On the Origin of Species* (1859), Marx's theory of political economy in the first volume of his treatise *Das Capital* (1867), the impact of the industrial revolution, economic disparity, and growing class tensions, all these factors worked together to arouse in Hardy the bitterness of feeling. This bitterness of feeling is splendidly contrasted with the sweetness of country life in Hardy's earlier novels. But in his later works, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, the bitterness of life finds prominence and the very gloom is intensified. These novels are expansion in prose of Arnold's deep melancholy expressed towards the close of *Dover Beach*:

And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.¹⁰

After the publication of *Jude the Obscure* (1896), Thomas Hardy gave up novel-writing and turned to poetry. His greatest achievement as a poet lies in *The Dynasts* (1903-8), a vast epic drama of the Napoleonic wars with hundreds of human characters, which was followed by his short lyrics like *Time's Laughingstocks* (1909), *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), *Late Lyrics* (1922) and *Human Shows* (1925). Their dominant note is still the note of doom signifying the futilities of life. Hardy's poetry is the final expression of disillusionment which had been at work ever since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It had started with Copernicus and Newton and the process was complete with

the appearance of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871). But despite the passages of power and beauty in *The Dynasts* and the haunting charm and freshness of the vagrant lyrics, Hardy's real genius is much better displayed in his novels. The novels provide him with the spacious background to show those qualities of rich comedy, characterization and description which obviously find little outlet in poetry.

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New Ethics and Human Values in
Criminal World: Shashi Deshpande's
If I Die Today

P.D. Nimsarkar*

"Humans, we don't think of them enough. Ideas, principles, ideology, ambitions, success- so many other things come first. And there's our own ego that heads the list of what matters to us. But it's wrong. It's people who matter most. Nothing should matter more than them" (IIDT, 117)

In the contemporary society and culture heavily influenced by materialistic anxiety and obsession, one finds erosion of ethical values and human concerns where crime, violence and corruption are more in practice as dominant features and people disown honesty, disregard presence of other and overlook responsibility for human co-existence. Shashi Deshpande is not a propagandist and she does not claim to be a social reformer through her writing as other novelists claim to be but delineates present-day reality in her novel in a most sensible and artistic way. *If I Die Today* is an altogether different type of a novel experimented by her, who is known for her obsessive concern with female identity and assertion of her freedom through rational approach in the critical context. This novel continues the trend but blends it with crime making it more interesting and contemporary. Like other novels of crime and suspense, it maintains the suspense but it is interlinked with domestic affairs and human errors. Deshpande is a major novelist and knows the contemporary social milieu very well and takes a chance to turn to crime fiction. This novel is a remoulded work but by reshaping it she has sensibly

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delineated the profession of crime made intentionally which is responsible for human loss and a world where every person strives to live for other. As discussed in ethical approach, all the ways that people perform the essentially important social and moral task of evaluating human beings' conduct as right and wrong, their own as well as others is highly applicable to this novel.

In recent time, ethics and values are investigated in literature to make it more society-oriented and to find relevance of literature in human life. Ethics is a conceptual base "neither as a organic drive nor as properly conceptual superstructure, but rather as unconscious or instinctual life and its cognitive and cultural transformation" (Harpham, 1992:17-18). In this new humanism the academic critics look for social and cultural values where the global world is full of crime, violence, terror, treachery, fundamentalism, religious sectarianism and revenge for petty nonsense deeds. Reading new novels provides ample platform to discuss new turn concentrating on development of human characters, as they are focused and issues and thematic mainstay are parsed in the plot. The events and situation offered in the plot provide traces of knowledge material in support of the events. It requires different reading on the part of the reader to develop ethical values. (Rosenblatt, 1978:23). In the moment of crisis, "[t]hrough the act of deliberation the participants would concoct a series of procedures germane to the circumstances of the issue and produce their ethical norms and truth". Denying otherness concept, Badiou proposes that "genuine ethical issues emerge in specific situation and under sets of circumstances that exist without regard for the nature of a person's differentiation or otherness" (Womack, 2007:118). Irigary advocates male and female must have "access to transcendence" (1993:217). The exteriority of alterity lies in the idea of other; it is the concept of the face as the concrete figure of alterity (Levinas, 1999: 23). Obligation and responsibility of every member of the society releases the tension that stand between self and

other in the society. In whatever way the issue of ethics is reinterpreted, Booth (1988:19) rejects the ignorance of ethics and asserts,

We can no longer pretend that ethical criticism is passé. It is practised everywhere, often surreptitiously, often guiltily and often badly, partly because it is most difficult of all critical modes, partly because we have so little serious talk about why it is so important, what purpose it serves, and how it might be done well.

Murders take place in a serial manner; one carrying effect on another or one is sequential result of another. In order to hide the real reasons of one's death another person who comes into the way is terminated. The focus turns from persons to the institution, S.D.M. Medical College and Hospital and both lines of concerns are maintained in parallel discussion of the issues. The noble thought and sense of sacrifice prompted Sethji to establish the institution of the hospital in the memory of his mother and to show that human beings are served; poor people are helped to maintain their precious lives and sense of commitments are achieved through the humble efforts. He is a visionary person who has translated his dream into a reality by using millions of money for charity as he realized that he owes to the society and returns back through health services.

The locale of S.D.M. Medical College and Hospital have turned into a platform for crime in the form of sequential murders. The peaceful atmosphere and busy and quiet lives of people on the campus are wrecked by the death of the person, Mr. Tambe. Tambe dies because of a silly mistake made by the doctor who operated upon him. As the Dean of the hospital, Dr. Ram Agrawal has asked his colleague Mr. Prem to fabricate the report so that the name and fame of the institution would not be put at stake. It is Guru who tries to unearth the person behind Mr. Tambe's untimely death and subsequent placement of his family in a crisis. The management has not given compensation and job to his

wife but also promised his daughter a good opportunity. It is 'reparation' and making things 'right' that is expected for the victims from the responsible agency. Human life is precious and that of a man on whom the whole family depends, it is beyond any measure. Mr. Guru is driven by the unfortunate death of Mr. Tambe. As the protagonist points out 'Tambe was a man, not merely a patient. We should have thought of him as a man who died when he needn't have not; just unfortunate mishap that happened in the operation theatre'.

"Guru was working on the Dean" (110) that lead Vidya to suspect about his role in the crime. It is a false and unethical assumption that leads Mr. Vidya to kill him. When Tony comes to know about the Tambe's accidental death and real culprit behind it and Guru's role in unmaking of the story which would have brought Dr. Agrawal to disgrace he is also removed from the scene; he is also murdered. Tony is murdered very callously and inhumanly. It is a story fabricated that he is drown in puddle with four feet water; in fact he is ghastly killed and thrown in the puddle after his demise because he had some important information about the big dose of 'Pethidine' nursed to Guru resulting in the latter's death. The protagonist's remark reminds of the moral responsibility: "Murder was not just a frightening word any more. It was hateful, a cruel rejection of a man's humanity, of right to live" (115).

The last criminal act deliberately performed by Vidya is due to pressure that Prem might accept the offer to become Dean of the college after Dr. Agrawal leaves it, admitting the inimical role played by him. When Manju suffers from the labour pain, Prem asks Vidya to carry them to the hospital. However, under the false pretext Vidya drives the car in the opposite direction, causes delay and raises a knife to kill her, creating a movement of panic. After a while, human emotions overpower her and Vidya herself serves Manju: "she put the coat under me and, as coolly and competently as if she was in the fully-equipped labour room

of the hospital, she set to her task of bringing any body into this world" (147). The woman in *Vidya* is a villain, the character that has been drawn by the novelist for the first time in her fictional writing but she has a reason to do it. She feels that her brother Dr. Agrawal would be held responsible for the death of Tambe, which was a mistake made by other. The hatred and wickedness in her attitude is suddenly lost; she understands the labour of Manju and helps as an honest professional person without any bias or prejudice in behaviour. This transformation in attitude and behavior is a result of understanding social responsibility, presence of others and sense of duty towards other. It is a new beginning in her life with compassion and assistance in the hour of crisis.

Woman figure is once again centralized in this novel. The protagonist Manju is the person, sensitive and caring, who suffers the agony of all the events that take place around. She is pregnant and is supposed to stay away from the mundane activities leading to crisis but she does not intend to isolate with woman's veil on her head. Where male surrogates, being doctors human lives but at least Manju is down to earth, maintains information of all persons and events.

Manju, the female protagonist, opens out her heart to her husband who is terribly callous in his behaviour towards her and he behaves in such a strange manner as if the relationship between them is very casual. She communicates desperately that there was a kind of relationship between Rajiv and her, which is not a reality. She had love-relationship with Rajiv but the latter had refused to marry her because of his parents opposition. He was not able to disobey their words. Her married life with Prem, her son 'Sonu' and the 'baby waiting to be born' (110) is her real life. Shashi Deshpande, has produced in Manju a traditional Indian woman who is faithful to her husband and family, caring and devoted. It is a praiseworthy action adopted by the protagonist to remove the misunderstanding between

husband and wife, instead of developing rift for one reason what-so- ever. She has overcome the feeling of loneliness, isolation and loss of personal existence.

Manju, the wife of a doctor, Prem and a teacher by profession is the major protagonist and narrator representing the world view of the novelist. She comments on the blissful and quiet life of the members of the staff living on the campus premises: " There we were in our neat, well-built, bright, comfortable houses, with enough money, scarcely any troublesome dependants and just one or two children....most of us intelligent, liberal and modern in our outlook"(4). In such environment a kind of blotless social network and culture of co-operation exists with all who try to understand other and adjust their position and attitudes without humiliating or doing any wrong to other. There is no disparity between ranks of high and low among them.

Guru has entered the campus recently but has become very popular and friendly among the doctors and their family members; rather he is a member of their families with great human ties. Dr. Agrawal's wife has arranged a party in his honour and he is the guest of honour" (28). Guru is a simple village person "a peculiar man", unmarried and lives like "a sadhu or a sanyasi", suffering from a dreadful cancer (6). His stay with Ashok's family is not well received initially; he is an 'occupational hazard' and certain to die. Guru has become sensitive, opened up and approaches even unknown as if he has known them since many year and have developed cordial relationship and lived with their happiness and sufferings. He is 'different from others' (8). He is the man who speaks "so easily of his own death in order to make other comfortable" in a sensible observation which is inclusive and finds narrowness in the approach adopted by others such as Mr. Ashok, and Mr. Prem towards him. But Guru is very straightforward, honest in the expression of his opinion on right and wrong deeds and persons, having something 'mischievous' 'quality' rarely seen in other people. Despite his grave grief he finds comfort in

other persons, tries to understand the other side of human affairs.

Guru's frankness and humanism to understand other on occasions "breaking all barriers, ignoring all formalities" takes him close to hearts of other people who sympathize him, love and respect. Like a saint...he gives himself, his time, his love, to anyone" who takes him,... A brave man who had risen above all human weaknesses and crossed that dreadful barrier"(10). When Manju learns about Guru's pathetic condition and death hovering over him she feels dejected and sympathetic. Moreover, he being a gentle person, there was a "special quality in Guru which made the doctors step down from the pedestals they usually occupy in their relationship with patients"(7). This is a great gesture the novelist has integrated in the characters which is otherwise is not observed in doctors. Without any prior background or relationship Manju and Guru become close friends; Manju confides most of the secret or feeling in her mind to him that she could not share with anyone. He points out that she wants to be 'in control' of things which is a feature of her personality.

Dr. Agrawal, the Dean of the college, is "an academic and social recluse"(22). He is a married man but most of the time his wife, Rani, stays away as both had "long agreed to go their separate ways"(22). His sister is a possessive woman, herself a medical professional and sensitive. If any damage or wrong is done to her brother she takes it seriously and plans to eradicate that danger from the way. She is unmarried and desires to be alone throughout her life. She is the real culprit and nuisance behind the whole drama in the novel but she also undergoes transformation in nature and behavior towards other.

The discussion between Manju and Guru on crime is a testimony to their mind and attitude towards human beings and person who has committed heinous mistake. The accused had killed more than forty people but is released free because he was declared as a person of 'unsound mind' by law (23).

In Guru's opinion it is a wrong verdict which may signal erroneous message in the society and Manju feels that he should have been hanged or made to suffer but it might have not been humane. Guru is quite upset over such considerations: "How can we talk of being humane to a man who showed no sign of humanity himself? Remember how he boasted of his crimes? Was there any sign of repentance or sorrow in him? What kind of a man is that? How can you talk of being human to him?" (29). Humanism is the principle that Guru follows in his short life and advocates for development of such attitudinal belief among the members of the community. Moreover, the victims must be supported and given ample opportunity to develop on their own after the loss of major support and compensation is awarded to recoup the loss.

This subject is further continued in the discussion. Other persons present at dinner express views on crime and punishment. Mr. Sham asserts : "A man is born with something lacking in him. Call it moral sense, a capacity to distinguish between right and wrong...."(29). This suggestion is based on the reason that it might happen because a chromosomal aberration and for this reason he should not be blamed. This is an escapist argument which is forcefully counter-attacked by another character, Mrs. Neeta who further asserts that "the man is a dangerous to society"(30). If a person has committed the crime of killing persons, gloats over his action and also remembers them should be punished severely. This is a sensible argument developed to create panic and apprehension so that other should not follow the same way of killing. Guru's comments on life and death are relevant to the society and human beings both for peaceful and co-operative existence.

Sense of responsibility, positive attitudes towards others, others' presence in the community, observation of right and wrong, communal harmony, etc are the certain values that all people should adopt in the community life. All the characters in the world of the novel participate openly in the

discussions on these issues; express their views and opinions candidly, in a natural ways, with genuine submission. No one is dominant or imposes her/his in opinion on other. It is through the discussion that resolution is achieved which is relevant to the context. Their final resolution is not a moral or ethical principle derived from the traditional considerations or cultural obsession but their participation evolves a culture which is righteous and virtuous for all in the changed context yielding new ethical guideline good for all.

Some sort of learning a lesson and enlightenment takes place in the end after arguments those proposed by other characters at the Dr. Aggrawal's house which results in new 'dynamics between ethics and literary experience'. "The rights and wrongs of everyday life", as Gregory points out, "have more to do with the quality of our lives than any other considerations." (<http://www.jltonline.de/index.php/article/view/287/879>).

He further argues "When we claim a genuine understanding of another person's feeling, thoughts, and characters we mean we have gone out of ourselves, deployed our capacity for vicarious imagining and have entered into a field of reference that was not our own. Assuming other person's field of reference, however, is an ethical activity centering this field of reference actually reconfigures our own." (<http://www.jltonline.de/index.php/article/view/287/879>). What we confront in the end are questions about justice, about well-being and social contribution, about moral realism and relativism, about the nature of rationality about the concept of the person, emotion, desire and the role of luck in human life (Nussbaum, 1990: 169-70). The novel articulates lesson, knowledge its strategy sans censorship or any kind of didactic statements. Deshpande attempts 'to create ethical life' in this novel if we accepts what William (1985, vii) argues for in his discussion of ethical values.

If I Die Today ends on a positive note and message to the people. After a long tumultuous period of uncertainty,

upheaval and suspicion and the characters involved in the strain of shocks and worries are absolved with a breadth of relief. Everyone has learned a lesson and acquired wisdom and have overcome some defects in her/ his personality or desired to improve upon their weaknesses. In fact, the horror or crime fiction does not end with this message but Deshpande has set up a new trend in this matter also and deserves appreciation. Shashi Deshpande has endorsed something new and absorbing in her *If I Die Today*. For this novel she has put together the personal experience of 'the milieu of the campus as a locale' for the development of its background. It is also a re-organization of the episodes those appeared in a serial with some changes. The novelist has also declared that it is a crime novel and focused the major concern of it. As discussed in ethical approach 'all the ways that people perform the essentially important social and moral task of evaluating human beings' conduct as right and wrong, their own as well as others' is highly applicable to this novel.

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Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine*:
A Study in Synthesis between Tradition
and Modernity

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Among the writers of Diaspora, Bharati Mukherjee has been regarded as one of the promising novelists. She, like many other postmodern writers, has taken up the problems and experiences faced by the Indian immigrants in the U.S. or the Western world. The diasporic experience of expatriate and immigrant writings of Bharati Mukherjee create a natural conflict of search for identity, the conflict of soul and mind, native land and alien land that her characters face and react which naturally make her a diaspora novelist. In almost all her novels in general and *Jasmine* in particular, the impact of expatriation and immigration on the complexities of gender relations has been taken up against divergent, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Her depiction of women and their different relationships portray the dominance of patriarchal practices in traditional society as well as the forms of liberation and empowerment which are available to women in their diasporic situation. Most of her novels reveal a kind of approach towards life where a protagonist has to work hard to establish her identity in the society. She wrote novels like *The Tiger's Daughter*, *Wife* and *Jasmine* in which her diasporic dream figures prominently.

Indeed, in her novel *Jasmine* the protagonist Jasmine remains perhaps the best example of fusion as Mukherjee points out, "Immigration was a two way process and both the whites and immigrants were growing into a third thing

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by this interchange and experience." (Interview in *Hindustan Times* 3).

The experience of immigration is somewhat different in the case of Tara and Dimple, the protagonists of *The Tiger's Daughter* and *Wife* who feel isolated due to their ambivalent attitude to their native tradition as well as the culture of the new world. Jasmine, on the contrary, enjoys with her previous experiences by a sheer will to tie herself to her adopted land.

The representation of the Indian woman in Bharati Mukherjee's fiction is manifold, conflicted and often anti-mimetic. The Indian woman's encounter with the West only strengthens her resolve to put an end to her subjugation. Like some of her 19th century male counterparts, Mukherjee sees the West as a vehicle for self definition. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said has argued that the Orientalists' treatment of Eastern Woman has always been integral to the very logic of their discourse,

Orientalism itself ... was an exclusively male province; ... This is especially evident in the writings of travelers and novelists: women are usually the creatures of male power-fantasy. They express unlimited sensuality, they are more or less stupid; and above all they are willing. (207)

The theme of *Jasmine* is an Indian immigrant's encounter with the New World and her gradual transformation as she thoroughly imbibes the new culture. The novel also brings into focus the protagonist's quest for identity-how a woman comes to terms with her own self. Sumita Roy has rightly pointed out,

Jasmine's search for self - recognition takes her in social and spiritual directions ... till she arrives at a time when she can view the future greedy with wants and reckless from hope. (IWN 203).

To Jasmine, the United States is her dreamworld and her strange mission is soon forgotten. She gives up her Indian name and dress and changes herself easily to every circumstance of life. In spite of remembering her own past

life in India, she is not perturbed by the clash of conventional Indian values and the American climate she faces. It is a general nature that the expatriate faces the dilemma of being unable to return home and yet not finding a home in the adopted land. He, however, believes that he will be able to merge into the culture of the new land. They change their names, appearances and even life partners. Jasmine, for example runs off with one man when she is pregnant with another man's child. She feels that she had been reborn. This concept of rebirth in the life is repeatedly used by Mukherjee in the novel. She firmly believes that the multi-cultural country America happily invites all immigrants, irrespective of colour, caste and race. Jasmine, a lady of her own temperament decides to settle in America and feels no discrimination after the initial brutal attack. She boldly utters, "I had landed and was getting rooted". (179).

From the very beginning, Bharati Mukherjee has delineated Jyoti of Hasanpur as a rebel against blind beliefs and superstitions. Early in the novel Jyoti tries to raise herself above such blind belief in Fate which is mentioned by the astrologer,

Fate is Fate when Beulah's bridegroom was fated to die of snake, bite on their wedding night, did building a still fortress prevent his death? A magic snake will penetrate solid walls when necessary. (2)

While scavenging for firewood, Jyoti gets a star-shaped wound on her forehead. That scar becomes her third eye and through an archetypal image (Shiva's Third Eye) Bharati Mukherjee shows that Jyoti was peering out into invisible worlds. The Third Eye gives her a wide and true perspective on life. With her third eye she learns to look into the future with pain and hope. When she embarks on her final journey in America she is "greedy with wants and reckless with hope". The other significant image that Bharati Mukherjee associates with Jasmine's rebellious spirit is the carcass of a small dog that she encounters as a child. She does not

want to become broken in body and spirit like the dog, "... I'm twenty four now. I live in Baden, Blsa Country, Iowa, but every time. I lift a glass of water to my lips, fleetingly I smell it. I know what I don't want to become."(5)

In the beginning of her life, born as Jyoti to a man, driven from his affluent house in Lahore to a life of utter poverty in the Punjab village, Hasanpur during the partition riots, Jasmine meets with the disappointed people uprooted from their homesteads. Jyoti has an uneventful childhood and accepts her inferior status in the society being born as a girl. She could not forget the prediction of the astrologer even after her arrival in the U.S.A. But her marriage with Prakash, a businessman, brought about a sudden change in her attitude. The changed name Jasmine and a new way of life in Jullundhar compelled her to realize that motherhood was not her sole aim. Very soon she came to know about Prakash's decision of settling into a much better life-style in America. But the untimely and sad demise of Prakash at the hands of the 'Khalsa lions' left her grief-stricken and frustrated with unfulfilled dreams. However, she did not like the idea of passing her life as a widow at Hasanpur. She decided to leave for America as a protest of a dejected girl's desperate bid to do something to express her anger at Fate's cruel thwarting of her husband's diasporal dreams.

Moreover, Indian atmosphere did not allow Jasmine to go ahead in her pursuit of new life-style. Her entrance into America was very fearful which began by her brutal rape by the deformed captain Half-face in whose ship she was smuggled into America. She was mentally perturbed by this rape and ultimately could not control herself and killed him. And as she did it she became 'Kali' personified, the deity of avenging fury — Death incarnate and the killing became so easy. And she enacted a kind of death for her too — the death of the old self through the symbolic burning of her dishonoured clothes and out of the ashes rose phoenix-like a new self. In order to show the death, Bharati Mukherjee invokes the archetypal image of the broken pitcher.

I said my prayers for the dead clutching my Ganpati. I thought. The pitcher is broken, Lord Yama, who had wanted me, who had courted me and whom I'd flirted with on the long trip over, had now deserted me ... My body was merely the shell, soon to be discarded. Then I could be reborn, debts and sins all paid for. (120-21)

This new identity of Jasmine, in reality expresses another aspect of the feminist – the one who has achieved a proper balance between tradition and modernity.

In the beginning, Jasmine in America lodges with Prakash's Professor Mr. Vadhera. But very soon she feels uncomfortable in his house. She, being a true feminist does not hold fast to a nostalgia that is dead but maintains certain basic traits of Indian culture even after imbibing American culture. After living in a hand-to-mouth situation, Jasmine got an opportunity to work as 'Caregiver' to Duff, the little baby of Wylie and Taylor. She felt satisfied with this employment but was soon shocked by the decision of Wylie to live with another man after having divorced Taylor she felt her traditional roots being broken through again and again. She was further shocked to know that Duff is an adopted child–non-genetic. She reacted sharply, "I could not imagine a non-genetic child. A child that was not my own or my husband's struck me as a monstrous idea. Adoption was as foreign to me as the idea of widow-remarriage." (170)

Moreover, Taylor started taking interest in Jasmine and soon a kind of intimacy developed between them. She, too, fell hopelessly in love with Taylor but the past came back to destroy her present when she saw Sukhi, her husband's murderer in the park and she leaves the house of Taylor, and reaches Iowa. There Budd Kipplemayer fell in love with her and she got a new identity of Jane Ripplemayer. Bud courts her because for him she is the very embodiment of Eastern mystery, "Bud courts me because I am alien, I am darkness, mystery, inscrutability. The East plugs me into instant vitality and wisdom. I rejuvenate him by being who I am."(200)

Moreover, at the end of the story, the sudden arrival of Taylor gives a sort of relief to Jane and she is ready to go with him again without any repentance. Her departure from the life of Bud is not an act of an immature mind but a kind of American dream in which she wants to dwindle. This is her independent decision due to which she struggles throughout her life to stand on her feet far away from Indian climate. The various changes in her life as Jyoti, Jasmine, Jase and Jane indicate the fact that she acted boldly to fulfil her dream at the prospect of adventure, risk and transformation.

The synthesis between tradition and modernity has given her a true perspective where she can see traditional Indian and contemporary American way of life. With infinite care the novelist sketches her protagonist's gradual transformation but sometimes there is a conflict between Jasmine's two selves, one still holding fast to traditional Indian values of life and the other an adventurer, in a capitalistic culture. Since Jasmine is still attached to Indian ethos, much more ancient than the birth of the New World the stories that she tells Duff were about gods and demons and mortals. She tells Duff the story of Nachiketa and Yama. She is not prepared to imbibe pseudo-modernity. So she is shocked when Wylie walks out on Taylor and she comments, "In America, nothing lasts, I can say that now and it doesn't shock me, but I think it was the hardest lesson of all to learn ... Nothing is forever, nothing is so terrible that it won't disintegrate." (181)

Indeed, the novel ends with the protagonist, the eternal caregiver, walking away with Taylor and Duff leaving Bud whose child she is carrying. For him she feels only pity and not love. She observes, "It isn't guilt that I feel, it's relief. I realize I have already stopped thinking of myself as Jane ... "(240)

Women characters in Mukherjee's fictions in general and *Jasmine* in particular are moored to their Indian origins

the same way the author is. Like her, they shed their external connections with India, but carry a core of beliefs in the interior of the self against which all new experience is measured. In *Jasmine* the protagonist is called Jyoti by her parents and acquires a new name from each 'husband'. She is Jasmine to Prakash, Jase to Taylor, Jane to Bud Ripplemayer. She has been 'caregiver' to them all, shading out whatever side of her personality might be distasteful to each. Her imagination draws sustenance from Hindu icons Kali, the destroyer of evil and Durga the giver of confidence. Though adaptive to her circumstances, she is in constant need of male supporters to boost her image as a 'useful' woman. She says, "I cry into Taylor's shoulder, cry through all the lives I've given birth to cry for all my dead." (241)

Thus, the novel *Jasmine* is a feminist novel in which the protagonist rebels not only against age-old superstitions and traditions, but also creates a proper balance between tradition and modernity. It is a celebration of the strength of woman, not her weakness. The novelist has articulated the many-sided pathos and a rebellion of contemporary Indian woman, not only in India but also in the New World. To conclude we can quote R.S. Pathak, "The novel *Jasmine* is an attempt to synthesise in the protagonist the essence of two cultures – Indian and American." (IIWE 45)

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A Comparative Study of R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* with its Film Adaptation

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Comparative study is an important area of research. Max Muller says, "All higher knowledge is gained by comparison and rests on comparison"¹ (Pathak: 25) Henry Gifford remarks in the same manner "A culture that ignores what is happening outside, very soon goes provincial and dies (Gifford: 81)."² Mathew Arnold supports the same view. He has also emphasized the necessity of comparative study in order to understand one's own literature better. These critics have more or less the similar opinion which supports the view that comparative study is essential to understand any literary work or culture. The topic of this research paper is in tune with the attitude expressed by these scholars and critics. It is of less or no significance if the literary work is limited to any one language or medium of expression. Matthew Arnold has correctly said that it is essential to compare our own literary works in order to understand one's own culture.

R. K. Narayan, the famous Indian novelist has written well-known novels like *Swamy and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts*, *The Dark Room*, *The English Teacher*, *Mr. Sampath*, *The Financial Expert*, *Waiting for the Mahatma*, *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, and *Vendor of Sweets*. These novels were followed by *The Guide* (1958). The film adaptation of the novel called 'Guide' appeared in the year 1965. Raju is supposedly the corrupt guide who forms the relationship with Rosie who was the wife of the archaeologist called Marco. Her husband does not seem to be particularly in love with her. Like any other typical husband he does not like Rosie's love for dancing.

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Rosie is supported by Raju and decides to make a career in dancing. Raju's mother forsakes him because of his living together with Rosie. Raju offers to be her personal relations officer and with his acute sense of marketing, she is established as a dancer soon. This leads to the development of Raju's character into a typical male and he starts to put control on her. Eventually he is involved in a case of forgery and gets a two-year sentence. After completing the sentence, when he passes through a village, he is mistaken by the ordinary people of the village to be a sadhu. He prefers to live in a ruined temple. He is forced to resort to all the tricks that the conventional sadhus perform to beguile people around them. He observes fast in order to make it rain when there is drought in the village. Media gives large publicity to his fast and a huge crowd gathers to watch him fasting. He goes to the riverside after this incident. It is not clear towards the ending of the novel whether he is dead or alive but we are told that he becomes a sage. The last line of the novel is that he felt the rain under his feet. It means that by now Raju has become a sage and his life ends as the drought ends. Narayan has beautifully written the last line which means Raju did not die but sagged down; meaning Raju had become a sage himself: "Raju opened his eyes, looked about and said, 'Velan, It's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs.' He sagged down." (*The Guide*, 247)

The end of the novel is too much shrouded in mystery. The relationship of Rosie and Raju and his so called 'sagging down' is beyond our easy perception as readers. The reason for their separation given in the plot is not quite convincing. Many critics including the eminent critic and the scholar of Indian Writing in English, Dr. C.D. Narasimhaiah have interpreted the end of the novel and the character of Raju in a different manner. They have shown him in a different light. Raju's moral decadence is amplified by all of them. This is quite significant so far as our times are concerned. Though the novel was written in the first part of the twentieth

century and almost all the critics share a view that it was Raju's moral debacle, we as the readers in the twenty-first century can pin him down to the basic aspect of the romantic novel and that is the relationship of Raju and Rosie. Those critics have put major thrust on the requirement of Raju's self-purification and how his sainthood was false or impossible. The development of any individual from the gullible individual to a sadhu who resorts to renunciation is ingrained in the Indian psyche, especially in the context of the critics who have been mentioned so far.

It does not naturally fit into the scheme of things what the novelist has portrayed so far as the relationship of Raju and Rosie is concerned. As I have said before, the readers in our time will not naturally accept the extrapolation of self-purification, redemption, renunciation per se. The romantic novel which has developed from the 18th century Bildungsroman, Victorian and Nineteenth Century has come a long way now and there is this deviation from its long tradition of plot, structure, and social milieu to the close analysis of the central characters. The manner of the meeting and the mode of arrival in each others' lives is a major concern so far as such close analysis of the characters is concerned. We have to look at the relationship of Raju and Rosie in that manner. It is most improbable and almost impossible relationship if we look at it as a miracle. When I have used the word 'miracle' here it is not in the religious context but in relation to something which happens all of a sudden. Moreover, even in the worldly sense it is obvious that a married woman cannot easily form a relationship with anyone, let alone the tourist guide. The dexterity in the portrayal of these characters is to the great credit of the novelist. He has brought these two intense and passionate individuals together irrespective of their marital status, social status or different family backgrounds. She looks in him a strong supporter to her hidden talent and he finds in her the 'never before dreamed of kind of a beloved. However, 'there lies the rub' of the later decadence and failure in their

relationship. She is quite intense and serious and retains that seriousness despite her professional success as an artiste whereas he cannot show equal strength of character in showing integrity of the relationship. She stays equally honest with her career as well as with her intense passion towards him. He gets embroiled in various decaying habits and vices like alcohol and gambling and detours down to the situation in which she losing her faith in him when he resorts to forgery. It is essential to understand this moral aberration on Raju's character in the contemporary context of twenty-first century. He falls prey to material success. We must look at him as a common man who happened to come across an opportunity to change the course of his life. In the course of the relationship he changes into a romantic hero because of her but it is not inherent in him to change. That is the reason for his failure to understand her commitment towards him. His journey into a sage or the sadhu is the deliberate attempt of the novelist to ascribe some significance to his character. However, the height which Rosie is able to reach in the relationship is impossible for him to reach because of the weak foundation of his personality and his inability to understand her.

Adapted from the novel *The Guide*, the film *Guide* (1965) was a great box-office hit. Directed by Vijay Anand (1935-2004) the movie was a great success. It is the story of a fast talking, clever, opportunistic tour guide Raju and it depicts two distinct phases in his life. The first phase involves his relationship with Rosie, a dancer with whom he forms a relationship. Rosie is frustrated because of her dull, inattentive, cold archaeologist husband. Raju helps Rosie to achieve her dream of becoming a successful dancer and manages to become wealthy by working as her manager. Their relationship ends when Raju is jailed for forging Rosie's signature. After two years when he is released from jail, instead of going to his city he wanders and circumstances make him to act as a holy man. He gains the trust of the villagers who have been providing him with food and respect

too. Raju has no choice left but to fast in difficult times of drought for arrival of rain. It rains after twelve days and his sage-hood is confirmed but he dies of starvation.

The film was a commercial success with major musical hits. The English version of this film was appropriately altered and directed by Tad Danielewski and co-scripted by Danielewski and Pearl S. Buck. It was a short two hour film released in the same year 1965; however, it did not become as popular as the Hindi version of it. Tejaswini Ganti in her book *Bollywood – A Guide Book to Popular Hindi Cinema* rightly says, "Songs are the main reason why popular Indian films are much longer than their western counterparts".⁴

The English version was shorter than the Hindi version of the film as there were no songs in it. Music plays a significant role in Indian cinema. Popular film and popular music are inextricably linked in India, as music has played an integral role in Indian cinema since the onset of sound in 1931. According to Tejaswini Ganti, "... the most defining and distinctive feature of popular cinema in India is the presence of music in the form of songs sung by characters in nearly every film."⁵

Music for the film was composed by S.D. Burman and the songs were written by Shailendra. The songs in this movie, namely 'aaj phir jine ki tamanna hai', 'tere mere sapne ab ek rang hai', 'Mo se chhal kiye jay, saiyan beiman' and the like are extremely popular with the masses even today. The songs are quintessential commercial element of a film's box office success and it's very true in this film as well.

As far as the acting is concerned one has to make mention of the goddess of sensuousness Waheeda Rehman. She is a trained dancer and took to acting as if she was born for it, instinctively. She looked very pretty and acted very naturally in 'Guide'. Dev Anand has also done a creditable job with all other team members like Lila Chitnis (Raju's Mother), Kishore Sahu (Marco) etc. who have done their jobs equally well.

The history of making of a cinema is full of untold stories of the small men without whose hard work the transient journey of celluloid images from studio to immortal silver screen would never been completed. The technicians of the movie 'Guide' have worked exceptionally well as far as the success of this movie is concerned.

One of the reasons behind the popularity of this movie is that it reflects the reality in the society. What Matthew Arnold or Lionel Trilling have said of Literature as the mirror of life is true in case of Hindi cinema also. The movie 'Guide' reflects the journey of Raju from a freelance guide to sage-hood. Anil Saari in his book *Hindi Cinema - An Insider's View* says, "Hindi films have always reflected the prevailing mood of the society in the sense that they have truly been entertainment for the masses. Hindi cinema continues to play a certain socio-political role, showing the world as it is by the light of its convictions and conventions."⁶

At the outset of comparison of the novel *The Guide* (1958) with its film adaptation *Guide* (1965) one can refer to the most well-known book on films by the world famous Indian film director Satyajit Ray. In his book *Our Films, Their Films*, Ray has elaborated his film adaptations of the Bengali classics of himself. He has pointed out the difference between the literary text and film adaptation which is largely on the ground of the picturesque shots in the films.

He says, "It's not possible to get the same intensity of effect in the novel as in the film 'Pather Panchali' for example, when we read in the novel how the protagonist enjoys sounds around him like when he puts his ears to the pole and listens to the sound of the blowing wind broken by passing train, this effect is achieved more successfully. The train coming from a long distance and crossing a particular electric pole to which the protagonist boy has stuck his ears and listens clearly the sound of the wind. Ray says that it's difficult to describe the scene and the sound in the novel as effectively as in the film *Pather Panchali*. "⁷

In view of Satyajit Ray's comments one can look at the manner and method of comparison and contrast of the literary text and the film adaptation of the novel. The plot, characterization, locale of the novels will be given in detail. The plot, action and the settings of the stage of the play are given in detail in literary texts; the film adaptations naturally discuss the special effects, background music, lights, camera, acting, screen play and other such technical parts.

The well-known Marathi writer Vishwas Patil in his book *Not Gone With The Wind* speaks quite well about great literary classics and their film adaptations. The English rendering of his quotation is as follows:

In the opinion of Vishwas Patil it is more effective to make a play into a movie while maintaining the message of the original play than to make a movie based on classic novel. Novel is like a large river. That is why it is difficult to take enough material from it and show it in the canvas of a movie. But the movies like 'Gone With The Wind', 'All Quiet On The Western Front' and 'The Guide' and 'Pather Panchali' are exceptionally successful.

The movie 'The Guide' is the natural extension of the fictitious Malgudi world created by R.K. Narayan. The guide Raju is just one more memorable character in Malgudi however in the film adaptation it ceases to be the Malgudi world. And it acquires pan- Indian outlook most importantly the song sequences in the Guide as film are the milestones in Indian Cinema which completed its 100 years recently. The illustrious programme that celebrated this centenary year which was a part of 'Film Fare Awards' made a special mention of the songs from 'The Guide. The songs 'Piya tose naina lage re' and 'Mose chal kiye jaay... are the supreme example of Waheeda Rehman's beautifully intricate dancing which is remembered till today.

The snake dance by Rosie (Waheeda Rehman) is outstanding and it is considered as epitome of dancing in Indian films. The cave scene has given the effect of archeology to the viewers. It has already been said in the beginning

of this work that there is a major shift from the ending of the novel 'The Guide' and ending of its film adaptation. The novel has a typical R.K. Narayan ending whereas 'The Guide' as a film has a mysterious and romantic ending made so by Devanand, who played the lead role. In the novel on the last day of his fast in the ending when Raju says, "Velan, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs' He sagged down".

It is nothing but his optimistic approach and wishful thinking but in the movie it rains in the ending and this makes the movie effective. Anil Saari says, "To its lovers, cinema provides recurring moments of love, joy, happiness to others a splendid opportunity to vent their spleen against balderdash."⁸

By default, a novel cannot have the elements which can be displayed or heard. The film has such elements as characters, locales, dialogues which can be audio-visually felt. The difference in time can be shown by changing locales in the movie. In the novel one has to write so many paragraphs to show the changeover in time or flashback but in movie one can easily group it with a critical eye and eye gives you the joy and happiness. Acting, music and script are the forte of the movie while in novel it is only the script. The scenes like Raju's release from jail, his visit to a barber's shop, or his simple wisdom of becoming a sadhu and giving an authentic verdict of a sadhu are wonderfully presented. Actually, good writing is the basis of good cinema. Producers and financiers do not seem to quite understand this fact. Anil Saari says, "A film-maker alone cannot adopt cinematic material available to him. This is the task of a writer. Occasionally well-written film script therefore continues to be an exception rather than a rule."⁹

The novel provides the perfect and the best script for the movie and it becomes the major reason behind its popularity. In its pursuit of novelty the Hindi film has become one of the most sensitive mediums to the opinions, attitudes and

perspectives of the common man. Hindi films suffer from only one compulsion and that is to establish a rapport with a large section of the common people. The arrival of rain which is showed only in the movie and not in the novel in the end is this sign of believing in miracles, a common 'herd mentality' which is easily accepted by viewers. As the goal of the Hindi film is to make a superhit film which appeals to everyone there are some significant changes as afore mentioned in the movie 'Guide' while adapting novel's script. Since a film has to appeal widely, ending is made quite clear and understandable. What has been done with Guide can be summed up aptly in the words of Derek Bose, "Members of the film industry frequently feel a need to negotiate the extremes of taste and find a middle path which would increase the potential of audience for any film."¹⁰

While we agree with Mr. Bose, we cannot wish away the immense popularity of film as the medium. A conscientious student of literature has to admit that the film reached the novel to good many readers who came to novel through watching the film or after listening to the songs. Anything that is popular cannot be neglected only because it is not a classic. Actually, being popular could be a journey towards making a particular work a classic. Therefore, we can say with a certain confidence that both the novel and the film Guide have contributed to the world of Indian Literature in their own way.

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Translation Forges Sensibilities for Homogenizing Literatures

*Bhagabat Nayak**

Translation is both a linguistic performance and creative practice that breaks through the linguistic and geographical boundary and establishes a negotiation between two languages and two cultures by retelling the literary genres either in abridged or simplified manner. It promotes inter-cultural understanding and welcomes the opportunity to utilize cultures of two different origins. Translating intention is possible and feasible but translating emotion in literature is a creative practice in the comparable experience of the translator. While translating a literary text the translator negotiates and combines the best of the sensibilities between two languages. Like a *rasika* of two languages, cultures and literary sensibilities, he forges them in the acquired or desired language with intellectual grace, linguistic perfectibility, and critical involvement. As an unintrusive critic, modest scholar, and enabling friend of the author he transfers the tenor and tone of the original text 'nearly equal' to the original. By translating a literary work he undertakes several pragmatic issues of language, culture and tradition as material productions and presents them for the holistic and highminded academic discussions. In the practice of translation he takes it as an activity and "as a genial host entertains his quests, laying out delicious verbal fare" (Trivedi 2009:15) and earns the brilliant innings of the original by transferring or forging the literary sensibilities for the homogenization of literatures in the global context.

Like every work of art a translated text is recognized for its perfectibility with the transfer of emotion and sensibility

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from the source language to the target language. The translator tries his best not only to negotiate but also to recreate the embedded feelings, emotions and sensibilities celebrating the beauty of the work in another language. While the translator has his evolution in his inherited language he evaluates the same in his acquired language (un)consciously promoting its culture, social values, human sensitivity, tradition, custom and reason to suit the readers' literary taste buds. The creative magnitude of a literary text is based on the longitude and latitude of a society's realities that further enables it for the emergence of an identity. Language of an author can celebrate the beauty of snow drops and the comfort of the fireside of a locality but the translator can create a new taste by corroborating and cerebralising them in the occasions and incidents of life in target language. Translation without proper transfer of the culture of the original becomes partial. A good translator is a literary critic who can not act superior to the subject and the context of the text but performs and professes as if he knows better than the author. The translator skilfully and faithfully rewrites the original, adding or subtracting whatever he feels it (un)necessary in the acquired language. It is observed that unless one is particularly interested in the original and fairly acquainted with the acquired language the accuracy and quality of translation will be doubtful.

Translation not only forges two sensibilities but also two consciousnesses of two different language groups. Both sensibilities and consciousness are instinctually and empirically inherited and language becomes the medium of their expression in a text. The quality of translation of a text depends on the quality of transference of these elements. Accordingly the merit of the original and translated one is rated high or low as per the ability of the translator. While translating the original in an acquired language the translator involves himself in a critical and comparative activity through the habit of reading, reviewing, editing and publishing. The author's text is autonomous and independent

but in translator's version it becomes an imitation, recreation and embellishment of the original. One reads a translation because he cannot read the original or he has no access to the original. But often the flow of linguistic and cultural transferability becomes so accurate and spontaneous that it conveys the feeling and satisfies the sensibility which the readers fails to distinguish, detect and demarcate the differences between the author and the translator. Any attempt to forge the literary sensibility between two languages unimaginatively and without proper renderings will make the translation unsuitable and it conveys a bad message. This may be one of the causes that the popularity of Indian literature has been limited long enough because of the absence of translations and whatever available is by and large poorly translated.

The translator performs his translatorial skill in a conscious and motivated choice of words suitable as substitutes for the original. By getting involved in this difficult job he often finds himself in a dilemma while addressing to a double and divided audience. The act of translation becomes an academic involvement while responding to the original work on the one hand, and becomes a pitch for enjoyment and discourse analysis on the other. The translator acts like a literary critic and performs an honoured job of homogenizing the sentiment of two groups of literary consumers. In the job of a good critic he aims at improving the original keeping the content, style, mood and texture intact and improvises the same by defending the accusation that a translator is an "unsuccessful creative writer in hiding" (Mukherjee 30). Most of the language groups have puritanical attitude and they guard their language texts zealously not to be translated, and refuse to acknowledge the fact that an alien text if translated into a particular language becomes an acquisition of the literature of that language. By translation, a work not only gains recognition but also becomes a shared property among the educated people of that language and gains national and international readership

in various languages. Every competent translator explores and exploits the conveyed and would be conveyed literary sensibilities in the original. He makes a tie-up between empowering and analyzing a country's literature. Translation of a literary text needs careful handling of language and its cultural nuances for a common, impartial and secular transfer of sensibility. The translator needs a direct access to the cultural surrounding of the original as well as the target language.

Translating a literary text needs the close understanding at the highest level for restructuring it in another language with the maximization of its interpretation. Any attempt of the translator to subtract the original carelessly can cause a great peril and any addition to it can situate the text differently in another language. In the process of subtraction and addition, he not only enjoys the original in a discovery but also interprets it with adequate experience and remarkable effort. The discovery of the finer sensibilities in the original helps him to search for the right substitutes in the target language. As a practitioner critic he translates the original with adequate experience and remarkable effort to make his translation a very useful apparatus for operating the moods and sensibilities in acquired language. Through the transference of language the translator consciously and carefully searches for the right kind of culture based words which uphold the thinking capacity of the author. In translator's critical and creative endeavour, he not only correlates the sensibilities in between two languages but also corroborates them by making a serious attempt to modernize the text. With an aim to maintain fidelity to the original, he never separates himself from it and favours the acquired language by becoming an evaluator of the two languages and cultures. He never separates him from the realized feelings and revealed sensibilities of the author that helps his work to be enjoyed by the readers in other languages. The translator knows that his critical endeavour is tantamount to the enjoyment of the original in another language.

In post-colonial situation many countries in the world have become multi-lingual and multi-cultural due to their complex socio-political condition. A linguistic group and cultural community have nostalgia for their native language but in socio-political heteroglossia they feel the necessity of their one time ruler's language. In a multilingual country where a language has large number of users that continues to be the dominant one for its majoritarian use in government, education and business gaining a 'critical mass'. In this context it can be said that too much importance on regional languages may be called a linguistic jingoism that establishes a cultural chauvinism, too much importance on national language may affect the values in regional languages and too much of importance on an international language may foreignise the indigenous culture by starting a language imperialism. In order to counter and compromise with these problems, there is the need of frequent translations of literary works for coherence among the nations, societies and linguistic groups. A definite language may get the privileged status as link language but a work of art gains the wider recognition and becomes a shared property among the people of different linguistic groups. On the other hand, this opens the prospect to discover the outside literary possibilities. This can also help the readers of acquired language to explore and exploit the literatures of the world by learning and enjoying the finer sensibilities of life.

Each translation produces a new version of the original work. But the translator faces some methodological problems in his renewed interpretation of the text for its linguistic and stylistic particularities and ungraspable nature. Since every creative work is the translation of mind and a creative writing survives through translation, interpretation, assimilation and adaptation in another language; the translator needs to do a correct interpretation determining its meaning and artistic values. Literary translation forms a new version of the original work. The translator as a narrator-propagandist comprehends the ungraspable nature

of the text in his interpretative possibilities analyzing the authorial intention, and literary sensibilities of the original. In negotiation between the two linguistic polarities there continues a cultural discourse failing which the cultural transference and valorization of culture will be ceased. Although in linguistic hegemonic tensions the translator thinks of the proliferation of sensibility that affects the pleasures and profits of the linguistic proletariats and 'bhasa subalterns' he deliberately remains involved in translation to empower the readers in the acquired language by elevating their awareness.

Translation is necessary not for the hegemonization of culture but for the homogenization of literary perspectives and cultural sensibilities. In translation practice there is the need of discovering interpretative possibility for a seamless aesthetic integrity of literary sensibilities with the original. The practice of translation involves in the large measures of interpretation to modernize a text. This is the reason why in every age attempts have been made to translate the classics in literature. Through the methods of reflection (refers to the individuality of the act of translation), refraction (refers to the negotiation between systems, texts and culture involving misunderstanding and misconceptions) and transformation (that opens the possibility of translation) the translator accomplishes the inherited literary sensibilities in the acquired one. For degrees of correspondence between the source language and target language he attempts his best to diminish the distance. As the collateral reader of the original and first narrator in the acquired language he makes the readers aware of its literariness.

Translation is necessary for developing a literary culture. Secondly, a language becomes powerful for its official use, implications in public life, viability for education and economic status of the people. A language may not be the language of the land but for its wider use either through imposition or essentialization in another land it appears almost bestowed upon the native language in its reincarnated form. The

translation of a literary text forms a separate identity for its literary sensibility in comparativeness. The practice of translation mingles with large measures of interpretations in translator's critical and creative practice in order to modernise a text. Since every literary work is culture-based and they express the finer sensibilities of life it is natural that the author reveals them in a text with his utmost ability and fidelity. When this literary sensibility is transferred to another language it is found as if the

... translator who is not the author of the original is likely to be much more respectful of the original and strive to produce the closest approximation he can in translation, while the author who translates his own work is likely to take undue liberties with the original ... he tempts the reader to the uncharitable thought that perhaps nobody else cares enough about this author's work to undertake to translate it (Mukherjee 27).

In his effort to translate the text he provides some internal checks and balances that narrow down the gaps between the revealed and reflected sensibilities through alteration, interpretation, interpolation and complement by recognizing some special merits in the original work. In other words, by a negotiation of linguistic and cultural likes, merits and thoughts he overcomes the shortcomings and establishes author's recognition and his identity in another language.

The text may have its universality but the author needs to present it through his versatility with impartiality and undertake the job of a literary and cultural messenger for wider readership. The translator never claims that the text is his own nor he violates the copyright claim of the writer but as a selfless promoter of literary taste he takes it to a logical and interpretational extreme. Providing an emotional hospitality to many alien readers in his incarnated text he fancifully transfers the 'approved and recommended' cultural materials as the treasures and taste. A competent and professional translator can not translate like the transcreator (author-translator) because of some limitations for which he

does some omissions, alterations and interpellations. The author lives in the ivory tower of his imagination but that translator in his difficult job thinks it a forbidden pleasure. The translator practically usurps the text in a purposeful fancy and by undressing and re-dressing author's imagination with the use of his 'scissor and hacksaw', and recreates it for an improvement of the original. While the author-translator takes full liberty to alter and enlarge the original, the translator does for its deficiency or compensates it in a compliment for its wider recognition. In this context Sujit Mukherjee rightly remarks, "If we take this view to its logical extreme, and author ought to submit his work to a chosen translator even before letting it be published in the original, so that the editing and the improvement could take place in the original itself" (28). The transference of literary sensibility to the approximation of the original promotes maximum readability enabling the author to wait for his recognition from the remote corner of the world.

Translation involves a dialogue between two cultures and two languages. In performing his job the translator discovers various realms of interpretation of the text and promotes awareness for different situations in real life. A translator is a linguistic secularist who does his job for the diffusion and dissemination of literary sensibilities in the text. For the homogenization of literature he cannot act like a linguistic jingoist rather performs his role like a cultural acculturalist for the literary empowerment and homogenization of the literatures of the world. In a multilingual country like India the majoritarian language like Hindi is used for its advantages. In its use and encounter with other *bhasas* it never establishes hegemony on others. But in the post-colonial context English has its hegemony for its majoritarian acceptance and wider use in the national and international levels. Since English becomes the greatest beneficiary to study, diplomacy, science, technology and commerce translation of *bhasa* literary classics into English helps the Indian literature in English for incorporating

India's literary tradition and literary sensibilities. Translating a text from a *bhasa* literature into another *bhasa* is a process of nativizing or domesticating literature but translating a foreign language text into native language foreignises the native culture and sensibility. In this context a translator cannot be exonerated of literary crimes as he often deviates from his dialogic involvement with the languages and cultures. He tries his best to find and focus the highest common factor for readers rather than the highest common multiple factor for literary appreciation in his translation.

For the homogenization of literature translation is highly necessary. Any distinction in translation makes a work of art and its writer prominent internationally. The poor understanding of the original work and bad translation with poor language lowers the status of a literary text. Similarly translating the text of a living author becomes accessible to the translator for consulting and clarifying his doubts and confusions. On the other hand the translator takes precaution in case of a dead author's text where he often feels a vacuum for his doubts. Some authors also exhort, sponsor or gladly give permission for translating their literary works for wider popularity but many do not like such practice in apprehension of the careless attitude of the translators that devalues the texts without proper renderings and acceptable literary composition. The translator's practice can only become successful when he transfers the literary sensibility properly by invoking the author and introduces the readers by enabling them to enjoy the brilliant innings of the text.

In translation there are linguistic and cultural tensions for maximizing reliability on its literary sensibility. In the distinctiveness of both the languages the translator needs to nourish the phonic, graphic and cultural dimensions to evoke sufficient feelings and emotions. In necessity, essentialization and appropriation of the text he makes every attempt to valorize the reasons, reality, feelings, emotions and sentiments of a literary text in another language. Apart from understanding the target language he needs to

understand author's logical, ideological and psychological aspects in the original and tries to liberate them from geographical and cultural bonds. He does translation as an aid "in the development of ... a consciousness of 'national' identity in its enunciative function, constituting the translation as the speaking subject within the discourse of an emerging literature" (Godard 180). It can be taken as a negotiation between the two languages and cultures allowing the realm of discourse to enter into them. Translators claim that translation is 'faithful in the thought content' but they only change its form to retain the literary flavour of the original when it is written in an alien idiom. The invaders and colonizers have always started to impose their language on the natives to promote their culture in the practice of trade and commerce, law, education and administration. But the translators do not have such intention although they intend to homogenize the literary sensibilities through their preferred texts.

A translator is a literary crusader who tries to defend a proletariat text by enabling it to win over the confidence of the readers. In his translatorial practice he tries his best to convey the ideas and thought contents of the author to nourish them in the other language. The acquired language always promotes 'anubadsambavyata' in the process of linguistic interpretations. In linguistic interchange, cultural and intellectual approach to both the languages he tries to maximize the reliability of the text. In a multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment it is found that "The English language has thus become the clearing house for various Indian literature(s) of India" (Trivedi 1996:52). Indian readership of translations is of two types—one reads the materials from a foreign to an Indian language, and the other from one Indian language into another. Indian readers those who can not read and understand many of the leading languages like English, French, and Russian read their classics only in translation. Similarly the western readers are interested to read the translated Indian classics in

translations either from Sanskrit or other regional languages.

A good literary work of art not only supplements but also sustains the finer sensibilities of human life. Its brand value as a classic depends on the projection of human sentiments, consciousness and sensibility. Although a literary artist's sensibilities are nurtured in his socio-cultural environment and day to day affairs of life, he gives them a shape in his narration. Sensibility provides a genuine learning capacity to understand feelings, emotions and sentiments in a language. But when this is transferred from the original language to the acquired language it is doubtful whether the same will remain constant in the acquired one or the translated one will surpass the original with some rejoinders to relish the text. While transferring this sensibility into another the translator faces a lot of difficulties to maintain the commonality between the two. But in his translatorial practice mere transfer of literary material is not sufficient as there is the need of transferring sensibility to a different socio-cultural environment. In myth Ekalavya or Draupadi is a name but when this name is used as a literary metaphor mere cultural and intellectual approach is assumed for a disciple's 'atmasudhi' or a woman's 'subalternity' in the gender and cultural matrix of society. As the culture based words are difficult to translate so on also translation of literary sensibility is difficult to sustain and empower the text in another language. The translatability of cultural sensibility as literary sensibility can only make a translation successful by making it useful and meaningful.

A translator is a whistleblower and messenger of culture. He lets the readers of an alien language to know about another culture through his translation. Although there are other methods of expressing culture the translator not only translates the language but also the culture which is remote to the readers of target languages. In his translatorial practice he becomes a messenger of culture broken between the two. The translator is not an invader of culture but an initiator into the other. When culture is imposed on foreign masses

there is revolt or resistance to it but when it impresses there is a glorification and hybridization of it. While the invaders impose, the translators impress it by their critical and complex endeavour of practicing translation. Through their translations they become successful to erase the vertical difference between the original and the acquired one. One is obliged to learn the original language but translating it in another language needs variety and subtlety of experience.

Every human sensibility is the product of individual's instinct, environment, cultural materials, social elements, psychological reactions, beliefs, feelings, sentiment, logic and reasons, morals and civic knowledge. The literary sensibility in England and America or in other English speaking nations is different from Indian literary sensibility. While translating Indian literary text into western languages it is difficult to naturalize India's eco materials, cultural materials, socio-psychological elements, feelings and sentiments in them. But when we translate a *bhasa* text into another *bhasa* we easily domesticate them in pan-Indian literary sensibility. When the same is translated into a western or an alien language the translator foreignizes the text by drawing a wider readership for its context in an alien socio-psychological environment. In an attempt to naturalize and cosmopolitanise a text the translator tries his best to convince the literary sensibility first by naturalising the context. Translation practice is very old and ancient in history but in the recent times the translators like A.K. Ramanujan, Purushottam Lal and Nissim Ezekiel have become successful to translate the Indian texts into English. The success of these translators depends on the successful infusion of Indian sensibility into another language. When the foreign translators like H.H. Ingalls and Barbara Stoler Miller translate an Indian text into their native tongue their work of translation involves rendering, exploring and editing the aspects of literary sensibilities. Indian readers of translations are of two types— one reads the foreign language texts in Indian languages, and the other reads from one *bhasa* texts in another *bhasa*

due to its linguistic fragmentation. Transferring of literary sensibility becomes easy in translation when it is translated from one regional language to another but when the same is translated into English, French, Russian and other foreign languages the choice of proper equivalence to render the purpose become difficult. In translatorial practice the translator never dictates the taste of the text rather determines the taste through his choicest linguistic proper. The transfer of proper sensibility helps to unfold, uphold and upbring the richness of a literature in a complementary process.

The translation of literary genres is different from one to another. It is commonly assumed that in literary translation prose fiction is easier than drama and poetry. Translating the prose fiction like *Gulliver's Travels*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *David Copperfield*, *Don Quixote* and *Three Musteteers* and the works of Flaubert, Dostoevsky, and Thomas Mann have become successful in Indian languages. Similarly in Bhasa literatures Thakazhi Sivasankara Pilai's *Chemmeen*, *The Scavenger's Son* and Chandu Menon's *Indulekha* (from Malayalam), Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's *Anandmath*, Jorasandha's *The Prisoners*, Manik Bandopadhyay's *The Puppet's Tale*, Tarashankar Bandopadhyay's *The Temple Pavilion* (from Bangla), Premchand's *Godan*, and Krishna Baldev Vaid's *Steps in Darkness* (from Hindi), Fakir Mohan's *Chhamana Atha Guntha*, Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja*, and Kalindicharan Panigrahi's *A House Undivided* (from Odia), Sripad Narayan Pandse's *The Wild Bapu of Grambi*, Harinarayan Apte's *Ushakal*, and Jayawant Dalvi's *Chakra* (from Marathi), Rajendra Singh Bedi's *I take this Woman* (from Urdu), K.S. Karanth's *The Whispering Earth* and U.R. Anantha Murthy's *Samskara* (from Kannada), T. Janakiraman's *The Sins of Apu's Mother* (from Tamil) have been translated into English for pedagogical objectives determining requirements for Indian sensibility. A successful translator of fiction translates preserving the complexity of themes, universalising and maintaining the power of

language to transfer the sensibility. The application of foreign language on home grown texts have unprecedented success for corroborating Indian sensibility and values. When these works are translated into other Indian languages their medium changes only but message and sensibility remain constant because their authors and translators are grown in an equal socio-cultural environment. But the foreign translators comparably face some problems in adjustment of their sentiment and sensibility which is grown in an alien socio-cultural environment.

Translation of drama does not face much difficulty for its dialogues in different situations and emotions. Dramatic prose expressions are different from prose fiction. In prose fiction the translator uses his maximum liberty, shunts the portions without affecting the coherence of the context in the text. Be it prose or poetry the dialogues in drama can be translated for expression of dramatic sensibility. Many of Shakespeare's plays are translated into Bengali and other Asian languages. The translation of Arthur Miller's and Herik Ibsen's plays has become possible for expressing the modern Western situation and sensibility in prose. Translation of Kalidas's *Shakuntala* had become possible by Willian Jones in English in 1789 that proclaimed that Sanskrit belonged to the Indo-European family of languages from which many European languages were born. Translation of Michael Madhusudan Datta's *Ratnavali* in 1858 and *Sarmista* in 1859 into English by the author himself donot have much difference. Translation of Mohan Rakesh's *Aghadh ka ek din* by Sarah K. Ensley, Badal Sircar's *Sesh nei* by Kironmoy Raha and *Evam Indrajit* by Girish Karnad (from Bangla), Karnad's translation of his own plays like *Hayavadana*, *Naga Mandala*, *Agni Matu Male* (from Kannada), Priya Adarkar's translation of Vijay Tendulkar's plays like *Shantata! Kort Chalu Ahey* (from Kannada) and translation of Habib Tanvir's plays like *Chanandas Chor* are very successful in English than in their original versions and more appealing on the stage.

The purpose of Indian translators in nineteenth century was to unfold the richness of Indian heritage and Indian literature to the foreign readers. The first translation of the *Mahabharata* in English by Kisari Mohan Ganguli (often referred to P.C. Ray) from 1888 to 1896 and then by C. Rajgopalchari and P. Lal have served many complementary processes for its 'Sanskritised' version into English version. The vernacular versions of *Mahabharata* are also found in Kannada by Pampa in tenth century, by Kashiram Das in Bangala in fifteenth century, by Harihara Vipra and Kaviratna Sarasvati in Asamiya in fourteenth Century, and by Sarala Das in Odia in fourteenth century. Similarly the Tamil version of *Valmiki Ramayana* was there by Kamban in the eleventh centuy, in Odia as *Vilanka Ramayana* by Sarala Das in fourteenth Century, and in Bangla by Krittibas Ojha in fifteenth Century. Similarly both *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* were translated into Telugu by Viswanath Satyanarayan. In the medieval age the great poetry in the *Bhagvatgita*, *Arthasastra* and *Brahmand Purana* were translated with much sincerity and explicitly. Apart from this *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* episodes are also found in translations in folk versions in South India. During the Mughal period Persian became the official language but never become the ruling language for which Akbar had engaged Badauni to translate the *Ramayan* into Persian and Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan got the *Upnishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Yogavashishtha* and *Ramayana* translated into Persian by a team of translators. With the advent of English in India Persian was replaced by the gracious and useful translations in English. During Warren Hastings' time when Persian ceased to be an official language in 1837 many of the Indian literary classics were translated into English by the British Scholars of Indology.

Great poetry has great sensibility and that present the complexity and universality of life. Through the ages translators have tried their best to render this through their translations. In the literary context of modern India the

state of translation of poetry is miserable as they do not corroborate the poetic sensibility and values determining the expectations of readers' requirement. Presumably after Tagor's successful translation of the *Gitanjali* many translators are still struggling a lot to make the translations of poetry successful. Among the Indian poets Rabindranath Tagore is extensively translated in English like other great European poets, Pushkin, Baudelaire, and Rilke. Sometimes a text of poetry in translation appears as if rewritten rather than merely rendered. Generally a poetry text is abridged or modified in translation. The translator almost expresses a tone of apology while making fresh acquaintance to a superior sentiment or melodic quality. In the great poetry like Jayadev's *Gita Govinda* and Rubait's *Omar Khayam* it is very difficult to translate the blend of spiritual and erotic elements. The translator faces this awkward situation while sensitizing the readers in another language with the essentials to 'recapture' and 'receive anew'. The translation of poetry and transfer of poetic sensibility is a creative and critical trajectory for the upbringing of emotion and intention. The poet can write for emotion to express his sensibility but the translator only needs to sensitize poet's emotion. In this context Sujit Mukherjee rightly comments, "Some poems are born great; others achieve greatness; a few have greatness thrust upon them by translations – or perhaps it is the outstanding merit of some poems that gets them translated more than once" (2004: 83)

The intended and implied impression on translation is that it is meant to homogenize literary sensibilities of the readers in the world. This can establish and promote a linguistic and cultural mix by the process of *bhasantar* and *bhabantor*. Although the "Translated version of books no doubt circulates the writer's work world wide, but it loses out on other features like inventiveness and originality" (Shree 2) the translators in their translatorial skill follow the nuances of translation like the volunteers of literature and promote its sensibilities across the cultures and linguistic

communities. Translation not only homogenizes literary sensibilities across the climes and cultures but also compensates the paucity of literary sensibility in the other. Translation is not a secondary activity rather a primary task of a lover of literature to promote it for tremendous enrichment. This conveys a message encouraging to absorb the literary merit of other languages in the world that promote humanism, and values in life. The translators may not have a motive hunting purpose to dominate a literature but treading into this difficult job they homogenize literary sensibilities of the world. They do it (un)consciously for the greater cause of the mankind on a broader literary canvas. Since all writers are not great and all writers do not write with equal spirit, inspiration, sentiment and power of realization the translators but by doing their job successfully discover their areas of evolution of thoughts, feelings and perceptions in translations. It is hopefully assumed that the new generation translators will explore the best of the literatures by changing the old into new or the contemporary into complementary through the translations for their future works.

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A Comparative Study of *Pygmalion* and *My Fair Lady*

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Entertaining literature entralls us with suspense, humour and the intense action of an engaging plot. Superior literature transcends mere action. It presents to the reader the author's insights into human character and reveals the complex ways in which character and action interrelate to generate chains of consequences and results. "Still finer literature reveals the complex interactions between action, individual character and the evolving character of the society in which the action takes place. The greatest literature goes still further. It reveals not only insights of individual and social character but of the character of life itself." ¹

However, the relationship between word and image continues to evolve as we enter into new and varied relationships with our multiple, intertwined and increasingly interdependent media. The paper will try to offer a comparative look at *Pygmalion* as a literary work and "My Fair Lady" as the film in order to examine how the two have continued to influence the cultural sphere in the past century. "Literature is driven by the written word. The power of images during the twentieth century (particularly in film), has seemingly supplanted the power of the written word."²

Among all of them, is probably cinema where more cultural connections come together. Riccioto Canudo made a responsible statement in 1911 that the cinema which should be considered as the Seventh Art (*Manifesto of Seven Arts*) or that it should be considered as the synthesis of the arts. This definition, dangerous by its own, must not be

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interpreted as an artistic impurity but as the integrative capacity of the cinema, in all its possible diversity and largeness, defines and it is inherent to the proper cinema, going beyond its artistic nature.

You can see and hear on it, and its capacity of remembering makes you spell-bound. You can smell it, taste it, and finally you also feel it. "Cinema agglutinates space and time, image and word, reality and fiction, knowledge and feelings. Besides this, cinema is also an authentic "empire of senses".³

The paper will study the play *Pygmalion* and the film "My Fair Lady" and draw some points of comparison and contrast. Born in Dublin in 1856 to a middle-class Protestant family bearing pretensions to nobility (Shaw's embarrassing alcoholic father claimed to be descended from Macduff, the slayer of Macbeth), George Bernard Shaw grew to become what some consider the second greatest English playwright, only after Shakespeare. He was an international playwright who lived in England. "...he was without racial prejudices and looked on all nations with a cool and impartial eye".⁴ Others most certainly disagree with such an assessment, but few question Shaw's immense talent or the plays that talent produced. Shaw died at the age of 94, a hypochondriac, socialist, anti-vaccinationist, semi-feminist, vegetarian who believed in the Life Force and only wore wool. He left behind him a truly massive corpus of work including about 60 plays, 5 novels, 3 volumes of music criticism, 4 volumes of dance and theatrical criticism, and heaps of social commentary, political theory, and voluminous correspondence. And this list does not include the opinions that Shaw could always be counted on to hold about any topic, and which this flamboyant public figure was always most willing to share. One of Shaw's greatest contributions as a modern dramatist is in establishing drama as serious literature, negotiating publication deals for his highly popular plays so as to convince the public that the play was no less important than the novel. "Until Bernard Shaw began to write for the theatre,

there had been no modern British dramatist who took current social, political, and religious problems as subjects for plays."⁵

Of all the plays to Shaw's name, *Pygmalion* is without doubt the most beloved and popularly received, if not the most significant in literary terms. Though he called the play as a romance it was not actually one. "With intentional irony Shaw called it *Pygmalion: A Romance*."⁶ That Higgins was a representation of Pygmalion, the character from the famous story of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* who is the very embodiment of male love for the female form, makes Higgins sexual disinterestedness all the more compelling.

Shaw is too consummate a performer and too smooth in his self-presentation for us to neatly dissect his sexual background; these lean biographical facts, however, do support the belief that Shaw would have an interest in exploding the typical structures of standard fairy tales. When the play opens it is a rainy night outside the theatre. The show has got over just now it is almost midnight and there is no cab available and people are taking shelter under the portico of the church. Eliza Doolittle, the poor girl is a flower-seller, the other is Prof. Higgins who is standing there and noting the peculiarities of different London dialects spoken by the people there. There is also a military looking gentleman. He is also interested in the study of phonetics and has come from all over India to meet Prof. Higgins, the celebrated scholar of phonetics.

When an elderly man comes into the shelter, the flower-girl tries to convince him to take the flowers. The gentleman, Colonel Pickering refuses to buy the flowers but, instead he gives her some money. Members of the group tell the girl not to take the money because there is someone taking notes of everything she says. She tells the Professor that she is a good girl and not like other cheap girls. He tells the poor girl that he can teach her to talk and behave like a Dutchess in three months. The elder gentleman identifies himself as Colonial Pickering, the author of a book on Sanskrit, who has come to meet the Professor and has interest in phonetics.

The two go off to discuss their mutual interest in phonetics.

She starts going to the professor's place to learn and remembers whatever Higgins made her learn. She was able to grasp and follow manners of speaking and behaving like a Duchess. She has come to take lessons so that she gets a position in the flower shop. The professor overcomes all of Eliza's objections. And Eliza is taken away. At this time, Eliza's father appears to blackmail Professor Higgins but, he is so intimidated by him that he ends up asking for five pounds because he is one of the undeserving poor. Higgins gives him five pounds and he is rid of.

Sometimes Eliza is brought to the Professor's mother's house during her training days and all the family members are present. None of the guests recognizes her that she was the flower girl that night. Everyone is amused by the courage of her speech. After the departure of Eliza, Higgins announces that the girl is too far away and is not ready to be presented in the public. After working hard, they had a great day that day after bringing the girl into a Duchess' form. They are extremely proud that they totally ignore her and her contribution.

Finally, she throws a slipper at Higgins and informs that she is being unreasonable. Eliza has disappeared. They all try to convince Eliza to return to house. He maintains that he treats everyone with equality. Eliza is determined to have respect and independence, and thus she refuses to return to house. Higgins admits that she likes Eliza and misses her a lot and admires her new-born independence. Shaw added a supplement to his play in which he mentions that she gets married to Freddy, a young man who had fallen in love with her. And they start up with a florist shop.

We can narrate the story in a little different way also. Two old gentlemen meet in the rain one night at Covent Garden. Professor Higgins is a scientist of phonetics, and Colonel Pickering is a linguist of Indian dialects. The first bets the other that he can, with his knowledge of phonetics:

convince high London society that, in a matter of months, he will be able to transform the cockney speaking Covent Garden flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, into a woman as poised and well-spoken as a duchess. The next morning, the girl appears at his laboratory on Wimpole Street to ask for speech lessons, offering to pay a shilling, so that she may speak properly enough to work in a flower shop. Higgins makes merciless fun of her, but is seduced by the idea of working his magic on her. Pickering goads him on by agreeing to cover the costs of the experiment if Higgins can pass Eliza off as a duchess at an ambassador's garden party. The challenge is taken, and Higgins starts by having his housekeeper bathe Eliza and give her new clothes. Then Eliza's father Alfred Doolittle comes to demand the return of his daughter, though his real intention is to hit Higgins up for some money. The professor, amused by Doolittle's unusual rhetoric, gives him five pounds. On his way out, the dustman fails to recognize the now clean, pretty flower girl as his daughter.

For a number of months, Higgins trains Eliza to speak properly. Two trials for Eliza follow. The first occurs at Higgins' mother's home, where Eliza is introduced to the Eynsford Hills, a trio of mother, daughter, and son. The son Freddy is attracted to her, and further taken with what he thinks is her affected "small talk" when she slips into cockney.

Mrs. Higgins worries that the experiment will lead to problems once it is ended, but Higgins and Pickering are too absorbed in their game to take heed. A second trial, which takes place some months later at an ambassador's party (and which is not actually staged), is a resounding success. The wager is definitely won, but Higgins and Pickering are now bored with the project, which causes Eliza to be hurt. She throws Higgins' slippers at him in a rage because she does not know what is to become of her, thereby bewildering him. He suggests that she should marry somebody. She returns him the hired jewelry, and he accuses her of ingratitude.

The following morning, Higgins rushes to his mother, in a panic because Eliza has run away. On his trail is Eliza's father, now unhappily rich from the trust of a deceased millionaire who took to heart Higgins' recommendation that Doolittle was England's "most original moralist." Mrs. Higgins, who has been hiding Eliza upstairs all along, chides the two of them for playing with the girl's affections. When she enters, Eliza thanks Pickering for always treating her like a lady, but threatens Higgins that she will go to work with his rival phonetician, Nepommuck. The outraged Higgins cannot help but starts admiring her. "As Eliza leaves for her father's wedding, Higgins shouts out a few errands for her to run, assuming that she will return to him at Wimpole Street. Eliza, who has a lovelorn sweetheart in Freddy, and the wherewithal to pass as a duchess, never makes it clear whether she will or not."

About My Fair Lady, the movie (1940), Warner Brothers Pictures

Pygmalion (1912) has been one of the most successful and popular plays on the stage. The most notable characteristic of its stage success is that it is a great literary classic and a successful play at the same time. We can say that in the context of some very well known playwrights in Shaw's period, whose plays were meant only for reading in the drawing room, e.g. Oscar Wild's plays like *The Ideal Husband* was never performed on the stage.

At one time the longest-running Broadway musical, 'My Fair Lady' was adapted by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe from George Bernard Shaw's comedy *Pygmalion*. On a summer evening in London Convent garden a group of assorted people are gathered together under the phonetics of St. Paul's church for the protection from the rain. Among the group are Mrs. Eynsford Hill and her daughter Clara who are waiting for the son, Freddy to return with a cab. As he leaves he collides with a flower girl and he refines many of her flowers.

The film bears all similarities except some. Let's look at the cast of the film. Outside Covent Garden on a rainy evening in 1912, disheveled cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle is Audrey Hepburn. The linguistic expert Henry Higgins is Rex Harrison. After delivering a musical tirade against "verbal class distinction," Higgins tells his companion Colonel Pickering who is Wilfred Hyde-White that, within six months, he could transform Eliza into a proper lady, simply by teaching her proper English. The next morning, face and hands freshly scrubbed, Eliza presents herself on Higgins' doorstep, offering to pay him to teach her to be a lady. "It's almost irresistible," clucks Higgins. "She's so deliciously low. So horribly dirty."⁷ He turns his mission into a sporting proposition, making a bet with Pickering that he can accomplish his six-month miracle to turn Eliza into a lady.

This is one of the all-time great movie musicals, featuring classic songs and the legendary performances of Harrison, repeating his stage role after Cary Grant wisely turned down the movie job, and Stanley Holloway as Eliza's dustman father. In the words of Hal Erickson "Julie Andrews originated the role of Eliza on Broadway but producer Jack Warner felt that Andrews, at the time unknown beyond Broadway, wasn't bankable; Hepburn's singing was dubbed by Marni Nixon, who also dubbed Natalie Wood in *West Side Story* (1961). Andrews, instead, made *Mary Poppins*, for which she was given the Best Actress Oscar, beating out Hepburn. The movie, however, won Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor for Harrison, and five other Oscars, and it remains one of the all-time best movie musicals."⁸

The stage version of 'My Fair Lady' was first presented in England at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on Wednesday 30 April 1958 with Julie Andrews as Eliza Doolittle, Rex Harrison as Higgins, and Stanley Holloway as Alfred Doolittle.

The director of the movie was George Cukor and the roles of the character were as under:

Eliza- Audrey Hepburn
Professor Higgins- Rex Harrison
Alfred Doolittle- Stanley Holloway
Colonel Pickering- Wilfrid Hyde White
Mrs Higgins- Gladys Cooper
Freddie- Jeremy Brett
ZoltanKarpathy- Theodore Bikel
MrsEynsford-Hill- Isobel Elsom
Butler- John Holland

Settings in the Movie:

The movie opens near Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London. From there it shifts for a moment to Drury Lane and Lesion Grove, a London slum. Act 2 takes us to Wimpole Street and Act 3 happens in Chelsea Embankment.

Music:

Music plays an important role in the movie. It brings life to the movie. The music composed in the movie brings interest in watching various significant scenes and it creates a different ambience in the movie.

Comparison:

Pygmalion is necessarily the 'drama of ideas' for which Shaw is known for. The end of the play is very serious. It is not only the inversion or ironic twist peculiar to Shaw that while he called the play 'Romance' and ended it with no romance at all but he suggests a totally different message there. As A.C. Ward has rightly pointed out— Shaw says that Education means 'giving' and the receiver's life changes totally and invariably once he or she receives education. Trouble is the part of this change in life. Therefore, one cannot complain against this change. Eliza cannot complain against Higgins in this light:

"To educate is to give (or at least to offer) new life to those who receive the education, and that new life produces discontent with existing circumstances and creates the desire for a different kind of world. In places where the

spread of education has led to personal and social unrest, any teacher might be told, as Eliza tells Higgins, 'You never thought of the trouble it would make for me,' to which Higgins replies: 'Would the world ever have been made if its maker had been afraid of making trouble? Making life means making trouble'.⁹

This universal problem is presented in the play *Pygmalion* in discrete manner while on the surface it is a romantic comedy as Shaw himself has called it. This gives the play a significantly important positing in the history of the British Drama in general and the World Drama in particular. The appeal of the play even today can be testified on this ground that exposure to new ideas in any given phase in the world necessarily creates trouble. We can take the example of Information and Technology or Globalisation today. We admit that we are facing lots of trouble due to the misuse of technology but can we say like Eliza said that we have unnecessarily invited trouble by embracing technology? We cannot.

Shaw has communicated this difficult intellectual problem through his brilliant command on the language, his sensitivity to the sounds in English and the warm wit and sarcasm in the ironic twist in the plot. The movie, however, is a great entertainer and there is no ambiguity as such. There are elements like splendid music, melodious songs, memorable dance sequences which are the most significant strong points of the movie. The end of the movie is obviously totally different than the original ending of the play.

Basically, Shaw has, in his tongue-in-cheek style, deviated from the original myth of *Pygmalion*. Prof. Higgins does not fall in love with the statue with life in it like original *Pygmalion* does. The movie ends in a totally different way. Prof. Higgins who has least interest in Eliza once she proves his point in the play tells Eliza in the movie that she cannot marry Freddy because he is too lowly a match for her: "Higgins: Freddy!! That poor devil who couldn't get a job as an errand boy even if he had the guts to try for it!"

Woman, do you not understand? I have made you a consort for a king!"¹⁰

In the play, Eliza throws slippers on the face of Higgins and leaves him forever. In the movie he asks her about his slippers which she 'understands'¹¹. These different contrasting ends of the play and the movie prove that cinema cannot easily take up the challenge that the playwright can afford to take in the play. The thought-provoking end of the play, the striking deviation from making the play a romance and other such things are next to impossible in the movie. As students of literature, our faith in Shaw and his great play *Pygmalion* cannot waver but the splendid romance of the rustic beauty of Eliza and the intellectual Higgins in the movie 'My Fair Lady' will keep on attracting our minds in all ages to come.

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Dualism in Bibhu Padhi's *Migratory Days*

Binod Mishra*

Bibhu Padhi's seventh opus *Migratory Days* (2011) records a travel diary of three places, namely Hyderabad, Trivandrum and Calcutta. While the book makes a mention of three journeys, it records the poet's conflict between the mind and matter and between the material and spiritual. The poet makes a metaphoric use of travel to unravel the mystery of life. The travel is presented not only as a linguistic trope of schematic and symbolic representation of reality but it also becomes the reality itself. The first section entitled 'Hyderabad' describes the poet's experiences of seven days in company with some like-minded people. While being in company with fellow poets, the poet feels the pangs of separation and relates it to humans' infatuation with their surroundings that they develop over the years and generate a feeling of being distanced, depressed and detached. The poet makes us realize that displacement brings humans closer to their bonds and enables us to become stronger since we experience a state of equanimity when nothing except our memory comes to our aid. In fact, the poet echoes the Platonic philosophy of absence which both triggers the desire of the humans and further controls the formation of human relationship.

Padhi's poetry has a distinct quality of delineating the harsh realities of life in a simple manner. What distinguishes his poetry from other contemporary poets is his rebellion in a silent and subtle manner against the prevailing futility and anarchy of the contemporary reality. The poet in Padhi most often enters a different world, different from the one that he lives in. But this hibernation allows him to show his

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disagreement with the prosaic reality of the world. The life led by ordinary mortals appears to the poet a borrowed one and makes him look inwards 'where to think is to be too full of sorrow.' As readers of his poetry, people may observe the poet's world to be a phantasmagoria, but the poet feels a world of delight and profit in his self-designed world where 'speechlessness' has its own voice and annexes him to a communication that only a lover and a lunatic is eager to know.

The world of material prosperity, excessive consumerism, and unsurmounting capitalism brings humans to a state of no return and hence the scope for happiness is often diminished. Padhi avidly uses travel as metaphor of life and shows the various stages in human life through this state. While the earthly abode provides us chances to be with fellow human beings, we are most often oblivious of our real self that resides within our frail body. There is always another self within us and that self is neglected. Man is often in a condition of living and dying and in this sojourn, the real self, which struggles to attain a state of sublimity feels chained. It is this struggling self which feels strained because of the so-called responsibilities most often impeding us from happiness and satisfaction.

Our earthly stay is only a preparation for a pilgrimage. Our bodies, because of their need and requirements, most often, seem to vitiate us. But the poet does not dissuade us to ignore the earthly responsibilities, under the impression that they hinder our progress and block our ways to attain spiritual bliss. The poet is rather of the belief that since our bodies comprise the five substances, namely earth, water, fire, air and sky, the urge for the fulfilment of all the elemental passions cannot be ignored. While the significance of life lies in living, the sublimity of spiritual happiness is tantamount to our sincere discharge of earthly duties. The present discourse brings the earthly and the ethereal together. The poet approves of the change of place and changing places, according to him, are not dislocations rather they are

explorations of new worlds. Movement is a positive force and it allows humans to delve deeper at times and to peep within in order to explore the one that lives within. The poet becomes suggestive at times and in a very subtle and chiding manner says:

The feeling of being far away
from home for so long in forty years
of growing up into this day

is being gradually replaced by
the first Hyderabad sun
sailing in through

spent his seven outgoing days. (*The Seventh Day*)

Life is a continuous possibility of forward and backward movement and it further connotes the condition of constant flux and it must invigorate humans. Henry Vaughan, one of the poets in metaphysical vein, too in one of his poems considers 'backward steps' as the state of childhood and purity, which can allow reconciliation. This movement involves all the big and small moments which add value to our education and learning. It provides relaxation from 'languidness'. The poet suggests us that we can also unveil our own presence which is likely to be felt in an 'emptiness of presence'. Emptiness or void in life should be taken as positive since it can help us anticipate new beginnings and room for further possibilities. Great things alone are not as important as small things. The search for great things distances us from so many small things, which cannot be gathered again. The poet quotes Van Gogh who says: "the best way/to know life is to love many things." (27)

The poet may seem philosophical while delineating the Cartesian dualism, i.e. the conflict between the body and the mind; he doesn't believe 'philosophy to clip an angel's wings'. He touches upon reality that we as ordinary mortals most often ignore. He tries to draw inspiration from his own act of ordering for two plates and his answer to Joseph; "The

one I'm leaving behind" (27) shows the dualistic condition of the poet's mind. In truth too, we can realize that we are never alone. Isolation or companionship is a state of mind. The poet reflects the fair play that we often undergo as individuals— between consciousness and unconsciousness. Both these states of mind cannot be segregated from each other. While our conscious mind makes us look at the ways of the world and blind us at times, the true voice can come from the unconscious. Our unconscious state allows us to judge and hence we may be philosophic at times. But such a philosophy is not far from truth, hence what the poet says is not bragging but reality deeply drenched in despair: 'if anyone/could have been anywhere at all.' Past appears to be a great healer and brings the poet close to his worldly ties. The poet further says:

Slowly, I move towards
the contingent familiarity of

brothers and sisters, parents
and friends, places and people,
our children of this day

and tomorrow, of the life
that is still trying to float towards
the womb's archaic night or

emerge into the day's clear light.
I lean towards my past now
and the present and the feeling
of loss, while the future
is there already, somehow, looking
Straight into my eyes: (30)

Padhi through his travel diary in verse allows his meandering self to take occasional leaps to offer mankind the unalterable truths. Our own lives, like literature, mirror everything provided one looks at the images seriously. Human companionship, which seems to wane with the advances of technology, in modern world, in fact, is getting strengthened

day by day. People may appear to be alone and completely cut off yet they cannot obliterate their acquaintances from their memory. The warmth that companionship provides us with often pesters us. Memory takes different routes to reach our intimate ones even though temporarily. The experience of living alone becomes a junction where remembrance and forgetting become one with each other. Memory is a state of harmony, which can be attained in the aloneness of living'. The poet rightly says:

I want to wish away everyone
except the two of us, sharing
the aloneness of living among

the scriptural commitments,
ancestral friendships.

I allow time its own generosity
of response and forgetting, its
gentle deviations, parenthesis. (29)

The poet wants fellow mortals to discourage the notion of dualism between the present and the past. Rather he wants them to enjoy the pinch of past. Present, which appears so charming, in fact, is flippant and its speedy wings are avid enough to seek shelter in past. Present is always at a loss and humans are most often worried about the time to come, i.e. future. Like an elusive bird, present seems flapping its wings just to allow mankind to wait for somebody, and something much beyond human control. He says:

Padhi's world doesn't offer a hollow optimism rather it sensitizes readers to understand the eternal truth of uncertainty. It is this urge for uncertainty which impels man to put all his efforts to clasp the present. But in truth, all of us traversing through joy and sorrow are moving towards another uncertainty. Both present and future are uncertain, miasmic and it is only the past which soothes and attenuates all our bruises. Past cannot be changed, nor can it be re-written. The poet says:

All eyes waiting, this moment,
For a future time, all eyes caring for
Life's little moments, another cup of bed tea. (34)

Past is always present in the poetry of Padhi in some form or the other as a pleasant experience. It has a soothing effect to the wounds of today. Past is vibrant and makes the poet long for sensations. The idea to look back shouldn't be taken as escapism but as a philosophic method to cheer all our todays. (Mishra, *Kavya Bharti*)

The poet feels obliged to all the people he came in contact with and cannot forget them because of the warmth they provided him with. Memory once again provides the poet with the desired relief and the long line of acquaintances who leave their earthly sojourn still continue to provide him pleasure. While the frail body diminishes, their remembrances are still intact in memory. The poet considers physical death as mere accidents or happenings.

Leaving is dying, if
Dying is what we are told it is.
And hence, I couldn't just leave.

"I am leaving. Let us be happy
though, for we all are leaving
anyway, for a better place,

But shall be here again
and sooner than you think." (38)

If death is certain, then there shouldn't be any hullabaloo over it. All of us have to leave this mundane world sooner or later. Since it is destined and unalterable, we shouldn't be sad, rather be optimistic enough and wait for our turn. All of us are waiting to embrace the icy hands of Death. This realization should generate in us a sort of reconciliation, which alone can give us happiness. Padhi doesn't believe in the Buddhist philosophy of escape and negation, rather he allows himself to be Dionysian and longs for:

a happiness
 of reconciliation with all that
 the world ignores is not its
 privileged own, a dig
 at the very centre of grief
 and fury, a furtherance and a ripening. (39)

The poet wonders why people cling to a world where atrocities of all sorts have become an everyday affair. His heart bleeds for man's discriminatory attitude towards his fellow beings. It is man's greed for power and authority that creates gaps of all sorts and the poets and artists get enough food for thought arising out of these gaps. Most often these gaps are realized in terms of silences that lend meaning and the noises that man to despair. Padhi in poem after poem talks of absence and it is no wonder to call him a poet of 'absence'. This absence appears in the form of some longings not fulfilled, some dreams not materialized. The poet often is haunted by a regret of not having a girl child. While this appears in one of his collections entitled *Games The Heart Must Play*, the same guilt appears in yet another poem named *Staying with Strangers* in the collection *Migratory Days*.

The poet seems to show his ire with people who do not want to own a girl child. Moreover, he also showers his pity on girls who often become the victims of maltreatment not only of their parents but also of the ravenous eyes of the society that bears all sorts of atrocities. We can find the poet lashing out at those parents who disown their girl child before their appearance on this earth. The untimely exit of a beautiful creature, according to the poet, is a loss of civilization and also of a coming generation. While the poet sympathizes with such losses, he laments at the short-sightedness of parents who often rack and ruin their own world that could have brought them cornucopia of happiness. In a pensive mood, the poet says;

My absent daughter,
 who would by now

grown into a beautiful woman
of this beautiful earth
sat close by, leaning on
my frail shoulders. (Staying with Strangers)

The poet is pained to understand why we are not able to provide the same treatment to both boys and girls. While many girls bear the wear and tear of time because of the materialistic attitude of the society, the role of parents too cannot be condoned for such a calamity. The poet himself owns the neglect of such children and with a heavy heart says:

"What could I do for you? I think
I know what you have gone through,
I know why you are mine, mine only." (57)

The poet, in general, shows his concern about the loss of girl child who not only bears the malign treatment but is exploited both body and soul before being killed. The so-called civilized society remains mute to the merciless murders, despicable demeanor and the unpardonable acts of shame perpetrated on girl child in general. The poet despises the lot of parents who never show any regret over such maltreatment of daughters who could be future mothers of generations after generations. The poet seems to be haunted by the deteriorating values and mercenary attitude of society deaf towards daughters. While one can find the longing for a lost child in the form of the poet's bemoaning, the communication of the poet with the dead child may go a long way in understanding the intimate relationship between father and daughter. The poet feels guilty on the part of irresponsible parents in general but at the same time he feels a sort of satisfaction in a daughter who could not come to the earth and make her father apprehensive of the impending dangers that girls in general most often have to encounter. While the poet takes a dig at scriptural commandments as fathers, brothers and husbands being protectors of women kind, his longing for a lost relationship cannot be ignored.

To sum up, Padhi's poetry presents the entire detour of the semiotics of poetics in which the *Vates* creates the *poein* and the *poesis* with an inextricable amalgamation of the mathematical and dynamic sublime which further with its cathartic sublations propel the interlocutors. The gamut of Bibhu Padhi's poetics addresses the chiasmus of dialectics with regard to the ubiquitously present Cartesian Dualism between the substance and the form, physical and spiritual, and mind and body. The poetic corpus in the context exemplifies the fact that there is an evident psychomachia between the world of *Gloria mundi* and the world of transcendental and metaphysical realities. Moreover, his poetry addresses the gaps that generate meaning and carry readers to a world of resignation and reconciliation amid contrary pulls and pressures of pulchritude in a mundane world. Finally, the present paper traces the body-mind sojourn that every human being often undergoes in his earthly abode. While Bibhu's world offers simplicity of words, it also unleashes the profundity of sublime thoughts through structures.

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Resurrecting the Author (A Case for Authorial Intention)

*Bhavesh Chandra Pandey**

Interpretation during the last few decades has centred on placing the locus of meaning in readers. Ronald Barthes conclusively remarked that 'the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author'. He considers the text as incapable of signifying the whole meaning. He argues that the text does not possess an embedded meaning. It does not have a single teleological meaning (the message of the author, God). It is a multi-dimensional speech in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. He argued that to give an author to a text limits its semantic scope. He denied the role of the author in determining the meaning of the text. According to him, it was language that spoke, not the author. In the midst of these arguments Wimsatt and Birsley wrote in their essay "The Intentional Fallacy" that the design or intention of the author was neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of the work of literary art. They suggested that the unity of the text lay not in its origin but in its destination. The role of the interpreter is not to 'decipher' a meaning but to 'disentangle' it.

The overall assumption of the discourse pertaining to the locus of meaning has been that the essential meaning of a text depends on the impressions of the reader rather than the passions or tastes of the author. The intention of the author has been totally discarded as it is regarded as inaccessible. Stanley Fish says that it is the 'interpretative community' rather than the text or the reader that produces meaning. He outrightly rejects the claim that the work itself

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contains the meaning that can be delivered by a study of its formal features.

Now that the interpretive community has almost unanimously rendered the author as an institution null and void and his death has been unequivocally pronounced, it is time we tried to find out whether the author as a semantic entity had any relevance and whether there was a possibility of his resurrection.

If we trace back the various stages through which the locus of meaning has shifted, we find that it has gone from the author to the text and finally to the reader. In the historical criticism, the author was believed to control the meaning of the text. The author was supposed to write the text with either normative or aesthetic purpose. So, Horace believed that poetry must be 'dulce ET utile' (sweet and useful). Similarly, Longinus said that poetry must be divinely inspired utterance of the poet's impassioned soul. Philip Sydney maintained that poetry must engage and uplift the emotions of the audience with 'heart ravishing' knowledge. In the eighteenth century, criticism focused on the biographical details trying as if to discern meaning of texts from the personality of the poets. In the nineteenth century, Wordsworth declared that poetry was emotions recollected in tranquillity. Shelley announced that the poets were the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

Before twentieth century, a text was considered inseparably associated with the author and the meaning was supposed to be embedded in the text. A text was therefore regarded as an impression of the author's personality. With developments in the field of Linguistics and the advent of close-reading as a method of interpretation, a text started to be distanced from the author. Close-reading replaced the historical and biographical concerns and popularized the notion of the text as an autonomous entity. According to this notion, the language spoke to us rather than the author. Even a poet-critic, Eliot brought forward his theory of

impersonality, which suggested the separation of the man who suffered and the man who created. According to him, poetry is not an expression of personality but an escape from personality. It was a proposal for distancing the creator from the creation, the author from the text.

When language was given the authority of speaking to the reader and the text was regarded as an auto-telic entity, meaning was supposed to be centred in the text itself. It was suggested that criticism must shed its concern with the genetic cause of the poem and focus on the poem itself. "It is about time," says Michel Foucault "that criticism and philosophy acknowledged the disappearance or death of author". Ronald Barthes most emphatically pronounced, "As institution the author is dead, his civil status, his biographical person has disappeared".

The textual reading was a kind of synchronic study of the text denying any historical and biographical connections of the text with the author. The post-structural critics refused validity to authorial intention on the ground that it put a limit to the meaning of the text. The meaning of the text was inaccessible as the author got disconnected with the text the very moment he produced it. The text belonged not to the author but to the public. It was semantically self-reliant and it meant at once and now.

The rise of Pragmatism popularized the view that meaning was not signified by what the speaker said or the writer wrote, but an utterance or a text received its meaning from the context. This theory of Pragmatism seems to be in the root of Reader-response criticism, which underlines the supremacy of the reader. The theory of Stanley Fish and others suggests that a text does not mean singularly. It means differently to different readers. Pragmatics rejects the notion that all meaning comes from signs existing purely in the abstract space of language. It suggests that meaning is contributed by the context.

New criticism tends to emphasize the text as an auto-

telic artifact, something complete within itself, written for its own sake, unified in its form and non-dependent on its relation to the author's intent, history or anything else. It emphasized the technical aspects of the work of art. It is uninterested in the human meaning, social function and effect of literature. In this approach the words on the page mattered, importation of meaning from outside the text was considered irrelevant, and potentially distracting. According to this approach there is nothing outside the text and authorial intention is neither available nor desirable. The work of art was believed to function as a self-contained, self-referential, aesthetic object.

The overall survey shows that interpretation has shifted its focus from the author to the text and finally to the reader. The author as an institution has been declared dead and a text as an entity has been rendered unable to mean singularly. M.H. Abrams pointed out in the *Mirror and the Lamp* (1953) that all criticism, no matter what its forms, type or provenance, emphasizes one of the four relationships: the Mimetic, work's connection to reality; Pragmatic, its effect on the audience; the Expressive, its connection to the author; and Objective, the work as an independent, self-sufficient creation. By far the cycle of interpretation has gone from mimetic to expressive to objective and finally to pragmatic interpretation

The survey of the interpretive practice shows that now a stage has come where talking about authorial intention almost amounts to blasphemy. Nevertheless, as the interpretive practice always leaves scope for further investigation, the possibility of the resurrection of author can be taken into consideration. As a part of that consideration, some questions regarding the vocation of the author need to be discussed:

- a. What is a text?
- b. Why does an author create a text?
- c. Why does a text mean differently to different people?

A text is not a randomly chopped slice of reality but a carefully carved design thereof. There is an author behind it. There is a text essentially because there is an author. A text is like a bucket of water that the author takes out from the ocean of truth or reality. The bucket determines the shape and size of the truth. The shape and size of the bucket are author's choice. A text is seldom a creative accident, even though it has been defined as a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. It has a preconceived form and design and above all a purpose. It involves a lot of critical exercise before it is created. It is a creative response by the author to the stimulus generated by the context of the author. An author does not create because he has nothing to mean. He is essentially a 'meaner' and the text is the 'meant'. The author is a by product of the spatio-temporal context and a psycho-chemical reality. He carefully selects a form and encodes his response in his text. Every text becomes the metaphor of reality perceived by the author. It is the product of the race, milieu and moment. The New Historicism critic Stephen Greenblatt suggests that every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices. It is genetically related to the author by the filial bond. It has an embedded purpose which is sometimes aesthetic, sometimes normative. Sometimes the author creates a text merely for the purpose of creation.

In spite of this encoded meaning, the text means differently to different people. There are different factors responsible for it. The first factor is perhaps the nature of meaning itself. There are two orientations of meaning:

- (A) **The descending order of meaning:** the text partially expresses the author and the author partially understands the text, and
- (B) **The ascending order of meaning:** the text becomes a larger code of meaning than intended by the author and the critic explores diverse shades of meaning than the literal meaning of the text.

The text mediates between the author and the reader. It creates the veil of partial visibility between the reader and the author. The nature of language is endowed with potential ambiguity. When the authorial intention is blurred by the text, interpretation becomes the 'free-play' of the readers. It becomes a subjective exercise of the reader. He imposes a context-generated meaning on it. He becomes an autonomous entity assuming authorial status.

However, the author as an institution is not dead. He can never die. He is merely invisible. His invisibility is a matter of linguistic opacity. The reader needs to peer through the veil in order to have a look of the author. The text belongs to the public only because the author donates it to them. His intention is inaccessible because the very nature of language is phantasmagoric. It is the language that makes the text a metaphor of reality encoded by the author. The reader finds his meaning apropos to his critical acumen and his semantic span. The text becomes amorphous and defies limitation. It ceases to remain a determinate signified. It becomes like what the *Brihadarnyak Upanishad* says about God-'neti, neti' (not this, not this).

This is where the search of the 'Holy Grail' begins. Interpretation, among other suggested meanings, needs to look for the authorial intention because creation is essentially an act of communication. Here, the author is the addresser, the reader is the addressee, and the text is the message. The message is often lost due to communication barriers and ambiguities of the language. The text carries the meaning from the mind of the author to the mind of the reader. By virtue of the cultural parameters of the linguistic community, it sets broad limits of meaning. According to Aristotle, real discourse is possible only when the text has one meaning that is common between the listener and the speaker. It is therefore, that when the interpretive community was writing the obituary of the author, text was being declared as an auto telic entity, and supremacy was being ascribed to the reader, writers like E.D. Hirsch came out to stand in the

favor of the author. Hirsch earnestly appeals: "Unless there is a powerful overriding value in disregarding an author's intention (i.e. origin of meaning) we who interpret as vocation should not disregard it". In his essays 'Value of Interpretation' (1967) and 'Aims of Interpretation' (1976), he argues that the author's intention must be the ultimate determiner of meaning.

The whole creative and critical practice involves two births of meaning: meaning born from the mind of the author and the meaning born from the mind of the reader. Therefore, the meaning derived from interpretation is 'twice born'. Hirsch also talks about two types of meaning: one he calls 'meaning', and the other 'significance'. They can also be termed as the *encoded meaning* and the *derived meaning*. The first is the by-product of the psychology and the value system of the author whereas the second is the by-product of the psychology and the value system of the reader. It is, therefore, that the text means differently to different people. The author as an institution is not dead, he is merely unintelligible because of the psycho-cultural distance and the ambiguities involved in the language.

The modest proposal, therefore, is that it is time we evolved a hermeneutic forensics in order to exhume the author. The reader should take trouble to search for the Holy Grail of authorial intention rather than co-author the text

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Apocalypse and Explication: Analysing Female Phase in Elaine Showalter's *Towards Feminist Poetics* from An Indian Point of View

P. Rajendra Karmarkar*

Although man and woman are declared by the constitution as equal and eligible for equal rights and privileges, in practice, men appear more equal and enjoy more privileges than women. Constitution may impose equality but Nature separates them. They are biologically, physically and psychologically different. Man is general, worldly and universal but woman is special, private and introspective. Comparatively, woman is more sensitive than man. She is noted for frailty as Shakespeare says, "Frailty, thy name is woman". But woman is glorified for patience and compassion.

Virginia Woolf distinguishes woman from man in values. Woolf says "It is probable, however, that both in life and in art, the values of a woman are not the values of a 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". (Quoted by R.S. Sharma in *Anita Desai*, 19).

Further, while man is noted for thoughts, action, achievement and fame and for his sacrifice of his pleasures for power and fame, woman is well-known for her feelings, moods, thoughts and experiences. Anita Desai in an interview affirms, "Whereas a man is concerned with action, experience, and achievement; a woman writer is more concerned with

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thought, emotion, and sensation... feminine sensibilities." (Anita Desai - 17)

In the history of literature, women's writings are clearly specified by themes and the way they narrate or describe the stories or the type of the language they choose for writing. Their themes are simple and humble like Toru Dutt's or show delightful clarity as evident in the essay, "Towards Feminist Poetics" of Elaine Showalter or woman's outpouring of poignant feelings as in Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* or woman's Psyche as in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* or Anita Desai's *Fire on the Mountain* or Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* or as in Kamala Das's anti-traditional or outspoken (confessional) writing or Namita Gokhale's description of negative and extreme (to the male tradition) attitude in woman.

Woman as a girl receives her instruction for her future life from the point of male tradition. As a result, she looks at every thing with the influence of the father or male tradition. Elaine Showalter discusses woman as a reader of male-oriented literature in which woman is portrayed as secondary, suppressed or oppressed and treated as a thing of luxury. This is the analysis which Showalter calls as feminist criticism which is concerned with "Woman as a reader" with woman as a consumer of male-produced literature, and with the way in which the hypothesis of a female reader changes our apprehension of a given text, awakening us to the significance of its sexual codes. I shall call this kind of analysis the 'feminist critique'... "Its subjects include the images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions and misconceptions about women in criticism, and the fissures in male-constructed literary history". (Showalter 403)

Elaine Showalter delineates woman as a writer-producer of her own text, in her own language, by her own thoughts which are combined by her own feelings and reactions. She uses the term gynocritics which is derived from the French

word 'la gynocritique'. She applies it to mean woman as a writer and critic '... woman as a writer' - with woman as a producer of textual meaning, with the history, themes, genres and the structures of literature by women. Its subjects include the psychodynamics of female creativity, linguistics and the problem of a female language... No term exists in English for such a specialized discourse, and so I have adapted the French term 'la gynocritique': gynocritics". (ES - 403-404)

Showalter maintains that Feministic criticism acquires political overtones as it is often mixed with Socialism or Marxism, and men happened to spearhead the Feminist movement. Feminist criticism tends to follow the male-oriented tradition and writing. As a result, the cause of woman has never received its due attention and justice and described as it is. There is a self-deception on the part of women writers following Feminist criticism, when they choose the subjects to suit male-oriented society.

Elaine Showalter treats gynocritics as the genuine, original and independent writing through which she comes out with herself. Showalter says "The Feminist Critic is essentially political and polemical with theoretical affiliations to Marxist Sociology and aesthetics; gynocritics is more self-contained and experimental with connections to other modes of new Feminist research ... Gynocritics begin at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary history, stop trying to fit women between the lines of the male tradition, and focus instead on the nearly visible world of female culture..." (E.S , 404)

In her work *A Literature of Their Own*, Elaine Showalter divides women's writing into three phases. The first one is the Feminine phase beginning from 1840 to 1880. This period is associated with Bronte Sisters, George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell. These writers imitated the contemporary male writers and tried to write like male writers or in the pseudonym of male for fear of the male-dominated society

that discourages a woman to become a writer. The women writers wrote "... to equal the intellectual achievements of the male culture, and internalized its assumptions about female culture. The distinguishing sign of this period is the male pseudonym, introduced in England in 1840's, and a national characteristic of Women Writers..." (ES- 405)

Nevertheless, women write in the name of men or imitated male writers; their writings invariably indicated the tone, tenor, structure and subjects with incendiary and anti-traditional ideas characteristic of woman. "The Feminist content of feminine art is typically oblique, displaced, ironic and subversive; one has to read it between the lines, in the missed possibilities of the text". (ES -405)

The Second Phase (1880-1920) which comes under Feminist movement characterises Woman as a Writer of protest against male Chauvinistic Canons and male values. Elizabeth Robins, Francis Trollope and others represent the phase. Feminists including male writers championing the cause of woman rejected the text that depicts a woman as a stereotype and opposed the traditional injustice done to woman. "In the Feminist phase, from about 1880 to 1920, or the writing of the vote, women are historically enabled to reflect the accommodating postures of femininity and to use literature to dramatise the ordeals of wronged womanhood...." (ES - 405)

The third period which spans from 1920 onwards is called Female Phase in which the woman writers stopped both imitation and protest against inequal depiction of woman in male writing. Female writing is a kind of self-discovery of woman as herself and about her own experience of her own feelings, inhibitions and undercurrents and as a female observer. Rebecca West, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and Kamala Das for instance represented female writings. "In the Female Phase ongoing since 1920, women reject both imitation and protest - two forms of dependency - and turn instead to female experience

as the source of an autonomous art." (405).

Having been inspired by the deliberated view of John Stuart Mill who said in 1869 "Women's literature should emancipate itself from the influences of accepted models, and guide itself by its own impulses" (406), Elaine Showalter convinced herself in a rational and humanistic way and recommends Female (phase) writing as the genuine and original in the strictest sense for the woman writer to reveal her feelings and thoughts and inhibitions real and true. Both Feminine and Feminist writings are unreal and impractical from the point of limitations in imitation of men's writing and the way or extent to which sometimes it is inaccessible for women to write like men as in the Feminine writing. Feminist writing that expresses outrage at the unequal and unfair treatment meted out to women in men's writing achieves marginal progress in replacing the male traditions, customs and values. It appears that equality between the Dalits and the other castes or between the blacks and whites is more likely possible than between the two opposite sexes.

Apparently, authenticity has been sanctioned to such words of common gender such as poet, author, governor, chairperson, fire fighter, actor to avoid sexism instead of poetess, authoress, woman governor, chairman/ chairwoman, fireman/ woman, actress. But such peripheral and ornamental innovation does not metamorphose the basic traits of woman. Women at higher levels receive salaries on par with men, but at lower levels especially labourer or farmer class; receive the wages with variation from men. Even organisations expect more output from men and many organisations have their heads as men. Even women employees as a whole like to see a man as their head. Reports indicate that woman is deficient in making quick decisions. "Her mind, with its greater facility with it which connects the elements to be considered makes the decision altogether more complex than it is for the man, who relies more on calculated formulaic deductive processes". (Anne Moir and David Jessel, 168).

Undoubtedly, there are women who are superior to men in intelligence, in intellect, in muscle power; they rule with an iron rod like Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, Marie Curie Mayabati, Jayalalitha, etc. "No one would deny that some women are more intelligent than most men, nor their superiority, verbal ability which could make them better doctors, priests, legislators and judges than men." (Anne Moir and David Jessel - 163)

Whether daughters, or mothers or wives of the fathers, they all follow the fathers' tradition, set up, etiquette, education and constitution. "We are both the daughters of the male tradition, of our teachers, our professors, our dissertation advisers and our publishers - a tradition which asks us to be rational, marginal and grateful". (ES, 407)

Male tradition treats a woman as rational when she behaves normal. "Normal" in the sense that she must be submissive and subservient to men. She must be loyal to male tradition because it provides her protection and peace. It helps her realize her dreams. Significantly, it is gladdening and exhilarating, if a woman being a rational in the male tradition, acts as a champion of the cause of man like Mother Teresa who served the destitute irrespective of men or women, a Naxalite who fights for the suppressed and deprived classes, a politician who is committed actively to public service, an intellectual who surprises the society with her enlightenment.

Some women movements advocate independent life that rejects male dominated tradition and culture. Such life is considered deviation, aberration and affront on the traditional and moral society"...Sisters in a new women's movement, which engenders another kind of the Pseudo-success of token womanhood, and the ironic masks of academic debate." (ES, 407)

Harry Blamires raises two queries combined with answers furnished by the women writers in general about whether a woman writer can write like male writer with distinctive aspect of literature? Or whether can the woman writer merge

her writing in the mainstream of writing? To the first question, women writers accept the sexual / biological variation and to the second, they demand that their kind of literature must be part of the male oriented literature which has been enjoying social prestige from the time immemorial. "Do women writers achieve equality by producing a literature clearly distinguishable in its own right, or do they achieve it by merging their work indistinguishably in the literary mainstream? In the former case they accept a sexist differentiation. In the latter case they yield to assimilation". (Harry Blamires, *A History of Literary Criticism*, 377).

Further, men are not only dynamic and aggressive but innovative, artful, schematic inventing new theories sometimes obscure ones to entrench their position as masculine and sometimes superhuman; they mystify the reader with such first time used technical terms which need special definition and explication by the author himself or by their close associates. Men give such impression that they create theories of the higher level which only men of intellect deserve to explicate while women and lower men are ordained to study literature which is deemed as of inferior or mediocre category. Elaine Showalter maintains, "The new sciences of the text based on linguistics, computers, genetic structuralism, deconstructionism, neo-formalism and deformatism, affective stylistics and psycho-aesthetics have offered literary critics" the opportunity to demonstrate that the work they do is as manly and aggressive as Nuclear Physics - not intuitive, expressive and feminine, but strenuous, rigorous, impersonal and write.... Literary science, in its manic generation of difficult terminology ... Creates an elite corpus of specialists who spend more and more time mastering the theory... we are moving towards a two-tiered system of 'higher' and 'lower' criticism, the higher concerned with the scientific problems of form and structure, the 'lower' concerned with the 'humanistic' problems of content and interpretation". (ES, 406).

From the point of female values as affirmed by Virginia

Woolf, the role of woman character can be taken from the early novels of Anita Desai who portrays woman as a sensitive, sometimes, hypersensitive, apolitical, private and credulous, and un-hypocritical. In her novels, the protagonist demands a dream world of her own and finds the man irreconcilable and obstructive force. Compromise with her innate nature is a suicide. Anita Desai describes in her novel, *Fire on the Mountain*, a couple living in a house built on the hill at Carignano being happy for sometime in the house which was constructed and occupied earlier in 1843 by Anglo-Indians, Colonel Macdongall and his wife, Alec. The wife, Mavis, stabs into her husband's eye for he asks her to prepare jam for him. He lives with one eye while she hurls herself from the cliff to her death. "His joy would have been complete if his wife had made him apricot jam. But she would not, she hated him too much to cook jam for him. The longer their marriage the more she hated him and almost daily she made an attempt to murder him. But he survived. When, she had her back turned he would pour out the tea she had brewed for him into a pot of geraniums beside his chair and silently watch them droop and die. He woke to see her the second before she plunged the kitchen knife into him and learnt to sleep with one eye open till he went blind - but that was after Mavis died: slipping on her way to the outdoor kitchen, she plunged down the cliff and split her head open on a rock, and so he lived on safely and died 'peacefully' as they say" (FOM -7)

The Protagonist, Nanda Kaul, in *Fire on the Mountain*, settles at Carignano to lead solitary life in order to create peace after having been bored and disgusted with her active social life as a wife of a Vice-Chancellor who later dies. But, the peace she achieves is disrupted with the arrival of her great grand daughter, Raka, who aged about 12 is an infant terrible for she is taciturn by nature and does show the signs of adult. To Nanda Kaul she was still an intruder, an outsider, a mosquito flown up from the plains to tease and worry". (FOM - 40)

Both Nanda Kaul and Raka evince that they are sick at soul; one is by leading a life of long drawn social obligation; another by birth itself. They appear carrying the predicament and the absurdity of human existence though the writer maintains that they are victims of their own and known reasons. "If Nanda Kaul was a recluse out of vengeance for a long life of duty and obligation, her great - grand- daughter was a recluse by nature, by instinct. He had not arrived at this condition by a long route of rejection and sacrifice - she was born to it, simply." (FOM - 48).

Nanda Kaul receives a mortal blow with the sudden and sad death of her childhood bosom friend Ms. Illa Das who had been raped and strangulated by Preeti Singh when she tried to prevent him from marrying his daughter to an old man. The title *Fire on the Mountain* signifies that mountain on which forest is set on fire, represents that unless world is destroyed, woman cannot enjoy innocence, happiness, love and peace with a sense of divinity.

If a woman believes in something or somebody she lays faith in it blindly forever. She refuses either to rethink or shed what irrationally believed. Further, she is more superstitious and more religiously gullible than man. Havelock Ellis says "Women disliked the essentially intellectual process of analysis - "They have the instructive feeling that analysis may possibly destroy the emotional complexes by which they are largely moved and which appeal to them." (Quoted by Anne Moir & David Jessel - 13).

When the astrologer tells the prophesy in Anita Desai's *Cry The Peacock* (1963) that one of the couple, Maya and Gautam will die in the fourth year of their marriage, Maya gets shocked. The idea of death becomes obsession in her mind. Later, she does not lead normal life. When she informs her husband, Gautam of the prophesy, he slights it and he hints like Buddha that one must be prepared for any eventuality. She enrages at his callous attitude towards the prophesy. In Anita Desai's novels, most of the women are

introverts and they hasten the fate to devour them rather than to allow it to take its own course.

Maya becomes a neurotic and questions herself who is to die between herself and Gautam? Since he does not show any concern about the prophesy and about her mental agony that she suffers from her obsession about the forecast, he must die. She leads him to the terrace and throws him to his death. "And then Gautama made a mistake - his last, decisive one. In talking, gesturing, he moved in front of me ... "Gautama". I screamed in fury, and thrust out my arms towards him, out at him, into him and past him, saw him fall. Then, pass through an immensity of air, down to the very bottom." (*Cry, The Peacock*, 208).

The narrator, Jaya, who is also the protagonist in Shashi Deshpande's novel, *That Long Silence* (1988), leads a comfortable life as a housewife with two children until the arrest and suspension of her husband from service for his corrupt practices. When her faith upon her husband's character is shattered, she is forced to practise 'the repetitiveness and boredom of woman's life' and subjects herself to "That Long Silence" with a stream of consciousness.

Namita Gokhale in her first novel *Paro: Dreams of Passion* (1984), presents female phase as model theme. She creates a protagonist, Paro who has been violated by luring and lascivious men since her school days. She commits sins for a better or permanent relationship or wedlock but she finds only the end of the relationship or wedlock. Broken relationship or wedlocks finally drive her to become frenzy and to commit suicide. Both Paro and the narrator, Priya Sharma show the female qualities such as "Possessiveness, Passion, Jealousy and Pride".

An attempt has been made to bring out the aspects of Feminist and Feminine Phases that help us evaluate the distinctive traits between the three stages. Some of Shashi Deshpande's novels indicate invariably the Feminist mode of protest and imitation. In her novel, especially, *The Dark*

Holds No Terror (1980), the woman protagonist defies the male tradition entrenching herself an exemplary character. She surpasses the traditional impasse and psychological conflicts which are ensued in the wake of opposing the established institutional decree and power. Sarita, the protagonist, proves that the birth of girl child is no longer a curse and studies medicine and becomes a successful doctor and gets married to a man of her own choice.

In Feminine writing, women writers imitate not only the male writing but also use male model themes or problems. In *the God of Small Things* (1997), Arundhati Roy deals with three themes - Communism, Syrian Christianity and Casteism. She points out that Indian Communists wage war against class barriers on economic status, when the caste system, casteism and untouchability prevail, depriving the Dalits of their fundamental rights. Both Communists and the Syrian Christians practise casteism as they are upper caste converts ideologically and religiously. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai presents the theme of struggle for separate state. It is the question of Bodos and Bodoland which comprise Kalimpong and Darjeeling. Bengalis who are settled in Darjeeling and Kalimpong have been plundered and threatened of their existence. They are thrown into constant fear, alienation and estrangement.

Elaine Showalter says that Feminist Criticism, which is otherwise called "gynocritics", treats woman as a reader who is to interpret the text in an autonomous way and as a creator of her own text with her own language with independent style that reveal her aspirations, susceptibilities, vicissitudes, felicity and travails and foresight. What is essentially necessitated that the problem of woman should get due attention, honour and justice? It is man who is expected to champion the cause of woman in order to read and write on her behalf calling for considerate mind to focus on the quintessential and unique status of woman in the universe. "The task of feminist critics is to find a new language, a new way of reading that can integrate our

intelligence and our experience, our reason and our suffering, our scepticism and our vision. This enterprise should not be confined to women; I invite Criticus, Poeticus and Plutarchus to share it with us." (ES,407)

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Cultural Interface and Postcolonial Insights in Amitav Ghosh's *In An Antique Land*

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Amitav Ghosh's third novel *In An Antique Land* (1992) is a demi-Oriental tale and epistology fiction on the one hand, and on the other, a contemporary novel, delineating some ordinary characters, in their daily encounters, with religious rites and social customs, personal whims and eccentricities. Ghosh in this novel makes a comparative study of the two oldest cultures and civilizations of two most important continents – Asia and Africa, that of India and Egypt. He has depicted the scenario of global jobs and problems of Third World countries citizens. The text of Amitav Ghosh's novel yields new insights into the study of post-colonial politicality of the situation and evolves a new political paradigm to re-interpret the contemporary socio-political history. The proposed paper is an attempt to unveil the multiple strata of the interrelationships between Egypt and India over a period of time and impact of growing trends of consumerism on developing world in post colonial scenario.

In An Antique Land, in which the emphasis seems to be mostly on Subalterns, magical realism and history, Ghosh creates an extraordinary world where the past and present merge effortlessly into each other. The novel demonstrates most powerfully how an excursion into the past is no escape from the present, but a coming to grips with the present realities of living. By juxtaposing the medieval and the modern worlds of the 12th and 20th centuries in the two different civilizations of India and Egypt with their diverse

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cultures of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, Ghosh magnificently illustrates through his fictional discourse the need for human understanding and religious tolerance.

Ghosh's third novel blends fact and fiction and coalesces different areas of human knowledge -history, anthropology, philology, sociology and religion. It bears testimony to his interaction with at least four languages and cultures spread over three continents and across several countries. His canvas keeps on conquering new images, giving expressions to new ideas and themes. In an interview, Ghosh talks about the book's theme and form:

'No, this time I am not writing a novel. Not even sociology, history or belles-letters based on historical research. My new book cannot be described as any one of these. It's a strange sort of work within the parameters of history, I have tried to capture a story, a narrative, without attempting to write a historical novel." You may say, as a writer, I have ventured on a technical innovation.'

The novel is divided in four parts: *Lataifa*, *Nashawy*, *Mangalore and Going Back*, beginning with a *Prologue* and rounded off with an *Eplilogue*. It is almost a circular journey, and expansion of time, place and person. The narrative is based on history. The first person narrative, the 'I' is not simply a narrator but witness and participant as well. Characters and events are viewed from the perspective of historical research. Amitav Ghosh has minutely unveiled the multiple strata of the inter-relationships between the Indian, Egyptian, Jewish and Islamic cultures.

During his research Amitav Ghosh travelled a lot and is thrilled to meet people and visit places. He could also get genuine picture of traditional Egypt by living among the villagers. He could get to know about their aspirations and setbacks, their sense of belongingness to their soil and also the young generations' uprootedness because of their search for new pastures. As a social anthropologist, he introduces us not only to the twelfth century Aden and Mangalore but

he also points out that Egypt and India unquestionably belong to a socio-cultural tradition based on the religion of hospitality. This remains a constantly operative factor in the novel, as it could be seen and felt during Ghosh's stay in Lataifa and Nashawy. It could also be seen during Ben Yiju's stay in Mangalore and Bomma's stay in Aden seven hundred years ago.

Persistently, Ghosh's active and inquisitive mind searches for the relevance of Egypt-India relations over the period of time. Through one of the characters, Ustaz Sabry, a school, teacher and scholar, the writer voices his own opinion:

'Our countries were very similar for India, like Egypt, was largely an agricultural nation... our countries were poor, for they had both been ransacked by imperialists and now they were both trying in very similar ways to cope with poverty... Our two countries had always supported each other in the past: Mahatma Gandhi had come to Egypt to consult Sa'ad Zaghout Pasha, the leader of the Egyptian Nationalist movement and later Nehru and Nasir had forged a close alliance.'

The novel mainly focuses on the two journeys of two Indians in Egypt and of Abraham Ben Yiju, a Jewish merchant originally from Tunisia, who came to India via Egypt and Aden in 1132 A.D. He lived in India for over 17 years and had a slave Bomma, a fisherman, a native of Tulunad in South India. Bomma went to Egypt on business trips on numerous occasions as his master's representative and family returned to Egypt with his master. The other Indian is Amitav Ghosh himself who went to Egypt in 1980 and his search for the slave of MSH. 6 lasted for more than ten years from 1978 to 1990. And the result of these two journeys is an excursion into the postcolonial insights and encounter between two civilizations-the Egyptian and the Indian-divided by a span of over eight centuries. Ghosh, the social anthropologist, delves into all the available records that were originally found in Geniza-a storehouse old records-of the Synagogue of Ben Ezra in Babylon. This held the

greatest single collection of medieval documents ever discovered. They were later taken out of Egypt and were found in libraries in Cambridge, Princeton, Oxford and Leningrad. Ghosh assiduously begins his work of locating Ben Yiju documents, which were written in an unusual, hybrid language, Judaeo-Arabic, a colloquial dialect of medieval Arabic written in Hebrew script. Ghosh's familiarity with the Arabic dialects spoken in Lataifa and Nashawy endours him with an invaluable skill and he is able to decipher all the documents and unravel the story of Ben Yiju and his slave Bomma.

The narrative mode that Amitav Ghosh employs, results in the novel moving between the present and the past and we have an extraordinary insight into the interface between two civilizations. In the course of the narrative, the worlds of Egypt (be it Cairo, Lataifa and Nashawy), and India (through the Southern Coast of Malabar, notably Mangalore) are presented in great detail made possible by Ghosh's prodigious scholarship in anthropology, history, philology and other allied branches of knowledge.

The details of Ben Yiju's life in Mangalore are reconstructed with the help of letters between him and three of his business partners- Madmun Ibn al-Hasan-ibn Bandar, Yusuf ibn Abraham and Khalaf ibn Ishaq, possibly Ben Yiju's closest friend. Ben Yiju who came to Mangalore in 1132 A.D., married a slave girl by name Ashu, a Nair. The search for the slave MS H. 6 turns out to be truly fascinating. The three characters of the slave's name B-M-A which professor Goitein had explained as 'Bama', derived from 'Brahma' was like a puzzle and is finally solved by Professor Vivek Rai of Mangalore University who tells Ghosh that the slave's name is Bomma, one who was born into one of the several matrilineal communities of Tulunad and who practised the worship of certain spirit-deities known as Bhutas. Bomma, though a slave with a meagre salary of 2 dinars per month, was entrusted with goods worth hundreds of dinars sent to Aden and Egypt by his master. He was a

trusted slave and the bond between Ben Yiju and Bomma offers us a clue to the nature of their relationship, which was not a master-slave relationship but of patron and client. Theirs was not a demeaning bond and their links were in some small way ennobling-human connections, pledges of commitment.

Ghosh infers that Bomma's acquaintance with "some of the great range of popular traditions and folk beliefs which upturn and invert categories of Sanskritic Hinduism" and Ben Yiju's sharing "the beliefs and practices that have always formed the hidden and subversive counter image of the orthodox religions of the Middle-East: the exorcism cults, the magical rites, the custom of visiting saints' graves and such like" became the meeting ground for them: "the matrilineally-descended Tule and the patriarchal Jew who would otherwise seem to stand on different sides of an unbridgeable chasm".³

Ben Yiju's business networks were "wholly indifferent to many of the boundaries that are today thought to mark social, religious and geographical divisions"⁴

For instance, Madmun had joint ventures with a Muslim, a Gujarati bania and a member of the landowning caste of Tulunad (possibly a bunt). A binding understanding existed between them despite their cultural, religious and linguistic differences and the fact that no legal redress was available. Ben Yiju and his associates used a language of northern derivation and did not seem to possess any fluency in Tulu.

Amitav Ghosh speculates that they perhaps used a specialized trade language to communicate with their fellow merchants. It is a stunning reminder that two individuals of different races from far off countries with diverse traditions, backgrounds and religions could indeed have had such a meaningful relationship. But the unarmed character of the Indian Ocean trade came to an end with the landing of Vasco-da-Gama in India on 17 May 1498. Amitav Ghosh points thus-

"Within a few years of that day the knell had been struck for the world that had brought Bomma, Ben Yiju and Ashu together, and another age had begun in which the crossing of their paths would seem so unlikely that its very possibility would all but disappear from human memory".⁵

And once the Portuguese resorted to the use of military force to take control over trade in the Indian Ocean, a new era had begun in world history. Ghosh's anger is evident when he states:

"Soon, the remains of the civilization that had brought Ben Yiju to Mangalore were devoured by that unquenchable, demonic thirst that had raged ever since, for almost five hundred years, over the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf."⁶

Ghosh had been to Egypt in 1980-and nearly two-thirds of the narrative is about his two visits in 1980 and 1988 and the novel ends with his brief third visit in 1990. In the novel, there is a splendidly evocative picture of Egypt and its history, a very unusual one at that since Ghosh's impact of Egypt is the product of an intelligence, which combines in it the perceptions of a philologist, a historian, an archaeologist and a social anthropologist. In his encounters with people and their lives, Ghosh attempts to see them as human beings without any prejudice. Nor is there an attempt to look upon them as exotic beings.

Ghosh learns the language of the villagers-a form of colloquial Arabic-and this helps him establish bonds of friendship with them. He is a familiar figure as the *Hinduki-Doctor* in these villages. He becomes almost a member of Abu-Ali's household in Lataîfa and Shaikh Musa's in Nashâwy- That he is accepted as one among them in a tribute both to the villagers and his own ability to be at ease in alien surroundings. During stay in Egypt he discovers striking parallels between the two civilizations-Indian and Egyptian in their belief in miracles.

Ghosh learns how a canal under construction had to

take a deviation to avoid the grave of *Sidi Abu Kanaka* of Nashâwy, known for his miracles and acts of grace and who is regarded as the Protector of the people of Nashâwy. While in Mangalore, he gathers from a taxi-driver how similarly a road under construction had to take a deviation to avoid a *Bhuta Shrine*. In both cases, the construction work comes to a halt, when the grave turns rock without yielding to the spades of the workers or when the bulldozers are immobilized. There are worlds which are still unaffected by the West, a world where people seem to be fairly content to live with in their means and without either excessive aspirations or desires.

During his stay at Lataifa and Nashawy, Amitav Ghosh confronts some problems regarding the perceptions of Hindus and their cultures. They have a certain perception of India as a land of cow worshippers, where there is a lot of chilli in the food and where when the man dies; his wife is dragged away and burnt alive (about Sati Pratha). This is the land where, during emergency, Sanjay Gandhi sterilized the Muslims. This is the land where people burn their dead and men and women are not circumcised; that is to say, they are not 'purified'. What is interesting is, that these queries are addressed to Ghosh by individuals of diverse background like the University educated Ustaz Mustafa, the old mother of Ustaz Sabry.

This view of India strikingly reminds us of the West's view of India such as described in A.L. Basham's *The Wonder that was India*. Even while the provocation is extreme, as for instance, when he is alleged to have fallen on his knees in front of a cow out in the fields in front of everyone, he manages to keep his cool. However, he is honest enough to confess that such an attitude had often unsettled him. Interestingly, there are individuals like Nabeel who understand his predicament and comfort him thus:

"They were only asking questions just like you do; they did not mean any harm. Why do you let this task of cows and burning and circumcision worry you so much? These are

just customs; it's natural that people should be curious. These are not things to be upset about".⁷

But such voices of sanity are rare. We may read the encounter between Ghosh and the old Imam Ibrahim to see the culmination of the confrontation between the two civilizations. It is one of the most crucial situations where we see the insular and antediluvian viewpoints come out into the open. But it has a shattering impact on him and he confesses:

"I was crushed, as I walked away; it seemed to me that the Imam and I had participated in our own final defeat, in the dissolution of the centuries of dialogue that has linked us... we had acknowledged that it was no longer possible to speak as Ben Yiju or his slave, or as one of the thousands of travelers who had crossed the Indian ocean in the Middle Ages might have done: of things that were right, or good, or willed by God."⁸

Ghosh in *In An Antique Land* Amitav comments on the growing trends of consumerism and its impact on the developing world with the help of his second visit. He returns to Egypt after seven years and finds extraordinary changes in the two villages. The young men have gone to Iraq, Jordon, Saudi- Arabia and other Gulf countries and sent home sums of money. When he visits Abu-Ali in Lataifa with Shaikh Musa, he is witness to a procession of: "a T.V. set, a food processor, a handful of calculators, a transistor radio, a couple of cassette players, a pen that was also a flashlight, a watch that would play tunes, a Kye-ring that answered to a handclap and several other such objects."⁹ Ghosh also observes:

'Even the dilapidated house of Abu-Ali has vanished and in its place there is now a brightly painted three storied mansion. In place of the spindly old moped, there is now a gleaming new Toyota pick-up truck. Ghosh confesses that he "was assaulted by a sudden sense of dislocation, as though (he) had vaulted between different epochs."¹⁰

Ghosh's novel attains new heights because of his eye on the immanent and contemporary challenges. He doesn't fail to depict the scenario of global jobs and problems of immigrants searching for jobs. The fruits of immigrant labour have opened up a new world of consumerism and the once familiar world of Lataîfa and Nashâwy has changed beyond recognition in less than a more decade. It is not just a superficial external change, for it has affected the relations between different kinds of people to the extent that it has been "upturned and rearranged". Herein lies the contemporary relevance of Ghosh. Such happenings as seen in these villages in Egypt have taken place, in India too. Ghosh, while exploring this progress of Lataîfa and Nashawy, gives us an insight into the paradigmatic situation prevalent in all developing countries and the third world crushed by the of imperialism.

Thus, *In An Antique Land*, is a grand novel in respect interface between two civilizations and post colonial insights. On the one hand, there is a sketch of the antique civilization of the 12th century; on the other, there is an account of the fast changing 20th century world. But the accounts of these two completely different worlds reflect kindred attitudes and behavioural patterns which are identical. Based on history, they reveal the human relationship that affect the middle age and modern times.

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A Critical Study of Positivism in Kalam's *Wings of Fire*

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"We will meet again on the great judgement day, My mother"

-APJ Abdul Kalam

Let's begin by considering what positivism is. In its broadest sense, positivism is a rejection of metaphysics. It is a position that holds that the goal of knowledge is simply to describe the phenomena which we experience. The purpose of science is simply to stick to what we can observe and measure. Knowledge of anything beyond that, a positivist would hold, is impossible.

In a positivist view of the world, science was seen as the way to get at truth, to understand the world well enough so that we might predict and control it. The world and the universe were deterministic — they operated by laws of cause and effect that we could discern if we applied the unique approach of the scientific method. Science was largely a mechanistic or mechanical affair. We use deductive reasoning to postulate theories that we can test. Based on the results of our studies, we may learn that our theory doesn't fit the facts well and so we need to revise our theory to better predict reality. The positivist believed in *empiricism* — the idea that observation and measurement was the core of the scientific endeavor. The key approach of the scientific method is the experiment, the attempt to discern natural laws through direct manipulation and observation.

The idea is that we can never understand each other because we come from different experiences and cultures.

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Most post-positivists are *constructivists* who believe that we each construct our view of the world based on our perceptions of it. Because perception and observation are fallible, our constructions must be imperfect. So what is meant by *objectivity* in a post-positivist world? Positivists believed that objectivity was a characteristic that resided in the individual scientist. Scientists are responsible for putting aside their biases and beliefs and seeing the world as it 'really' is.

It is what multiple individuals are trying to achieve when they criticize each other's work. We never achieve objectivity perfectly, but we can approach it. The best way for us to improve the objectivity of what we do is to do it within the context of a broader contentious community of truth-seekers (including other scientists) who criticize each other's work. The theories that survive such intense scrutiny are a bit like the species that survive in the evolutionary struggle.

Similarly, as per Dr. Kalam, Flow is a sensation we experience when we act with total involvement. During flow, action follows action according to an internal logic that seems to need no conscious intervention on the part of the worker. There is no hurry; there are no distracting demands on one's attention. The past and the future disappear. So does the distinction between self and the activity. We had all come under the current of the SLV flow. Although we were working very hard we were very relaxed, energetic and fresh. How did it happen? Who had created this flow?

Perhaps it was the meaningful organisation of the purposes we sought to achieve. We would identify the broadest possible purpose level and then work towards developing a feasible target solution from a variety of alternatives. It was this working backwards to develop a creative change in the problem solution that used to put us in 'flow'.

Comte believed that we have no knowledge of anything but Phenomena; and our knowledge of phenomena is relative.

not absolute. We know neither the essence, nor the real mode of production, of any fact, but only its relations to other facts in the way of succession or of similitude. These relations are constant; that is, always the same in the same circumstances. The constant resemblances which link phenomena together, and the constant sequences which unite them as antecedent and consequent, are termed their laws. The laws of phenomena are all we know respecting them. Their essential natures, and their ultimate causes, either efficient or final, are unknown and inscrutable to us.

Coming back to Dr.Kalam and his positivity we see: Naturally major opportunities are accompanied by equally major challenges. "We should not give up and we should not allow the problem to defeat us. The country doesn't deserve anything less than success from us. Let us aim for success".I have almost completed my address, when, I found myself telling my people, "I promise you, we will be back after successfully launching *Agni* before the end of this month."

"Real joy of living is in one's communion with an eternal source of hidden knowledge within oneself- which each individual is bidden to seek and find for himself or herself", is the belief of Dr.Kalam. This communion with the eternal sources is possible through physical, spiritual and divine wings. No one can straightway get the third and final wing of divinity; it has to be obtained through three stages- Theological, Metaphysical and Positivity.

Rightly Mills points out in Auguste Comte's uniqueness lay not in originating "Positivism" but in placing it within a theory of history that claims human culture developed and will continue to develop in three stages:

1. Theological: In this stage human beings rely on supernatural agencies to explain what they can't explain otherwise. The Theological, which is the original and spontaneous form of thought, regards the facts of the universe as governed not by invariable laws of sequence, but by single and direct volitions of beings, real or imaginary,

possessed of life and intelligence. In the infantile state of reason and experience, individual objects are looked upon as animated. The next step is the conception of invisible beings, each of whom superintends and governs an entire class of objects or events. The last merges this multitude of divinities in a single God, who made the whole universe in the beginning, and guides and carries on its phenomena by his continued action, or, as others think, only modifies them from time to time by special interferences. [Mill's summary]

As Kalam believed "Each individual creature on this beautiful planet is created by God to fulfil a particular role. God showered His grace on him through some outstanding teachers and colleagues, and he felt, when he paid his tributes to those fine persons, he was merely praising God's glory."

2. **Metaphysical:** In this stage, human beings attribute effects to abstract but poorly understood causes. Metaphysical accounts for phenomena by ascribing them, not to volitions either sublunary or celestial, but to realized abstractions. In this stage it is no longer a god that causes and directs each of the various agencies of nature: it is a power, or a force, or an occult quality, considered as real existences, inherent in but distinct from the concrete bodies in which they reside, and which they in a manner animate. Instead of Dryads presiding over trees, producing and regulating their phenomena, every plant or animal has now a Vegetative Soul. [Mill's summary]

Dr. Kalam further states with his metaphysical understanding – "We are all born with a divine fire in us. Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with the glow of its goodness"

3. **Positive:** Human beings now understand the scientific laws that control the world. In explaining his ideas and contributions, Mill admits that Comte's choice of terminology might confuse a British audience: "Instead of the Theological we should prefer to speak of the Personal, or Volitional

explanation of nature; instead of Metaphysical, the Abstractional or Ontological; and the meaning of Positive would be less ambiguously expressed in the objective aspect by Phenomenal, in the subjective by Experiential." The positivism Philosophy became the inseparable part life and career of Dr.Kalam. He states:

India can most certainly achieve state-of-the-art technology through a combined effort of the scientific laboratories and the academic institutions. To do this we adopted a threefold strategy multi-institutional participation, the consortium approach and the empowering technology. These were the stones rubbed together to create *Agni*.

Through these three stages Dr.Kalam learnt the magic of science.

Comte also founded the social sciences, and it is important to remember in our more cynical times the ideals to which they aspired. Comte and other early social scientists assumed that human behaviour must obey laws just as strict as Newton's laws of motion, and that if we could discover them, we could eliminate moral evils — in exactly the same way that medical scientists were then discovering how diseases worked and were eliminating much of the physical suffering which had always been an inevitable part of the human condition. In his earlier, less systematic works he influenced such figures as J.S. Mill, T.H. Huxley, George Henry Lewes, and George Eliot; all gradually fell away as his philosophy became more rigidly systematic.

Positivism, the word, which we use in our daily life, leads to the same philosophy and meaning which Comte referred to. Our belief, thought and imagination cannot go beyond the science and reality. For instance, our thirst for water proves the existence of water. Similarly, our desire for immortality proves that someone is immortal.

Everything other than water feels the thirst for it. Everyone other than God desires immortality. This phenomenon is the key of positivism. Likewise, our desire

to dive into the helm of activities proves that everything is possible provided the steps and direction are right. Dr.Kalam had the potential and drive both in abundance.

In fact, scientific reasoning and common sense reasoning are essentially the same process. There is no difference in kind between the two, only a difference in degree. Scientists for example, follow specific procedure to assure that observations are verifiable, accurate and consistent. In everyday reasoning, we don't always proceed so carefully.

To conclude, we can say that *Wings of Fire*, the autobiography of Dr.Kalam portrays him to be a true positivist who could see through failures. To quote him:

Failures contained within themselves the seeds of further learning which could lead to better technology, and eventually, to a high level of success. These people were great dreamers and their dreams finally culminated in spectacular achievements.

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Investigating Relationship between Class Hierarchy and Power Politics in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

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The present paper aims at investigating the complex relationship between the class hierarchies and the power politics in Aravind Adiga's awarded novel, *The White Tiger* (2008). The novel describes the reality of economic disparity existing in contemporary society. Balram Halwai, the protagonist of the novel, who represents the downtrodden section of society, has been represented as helpless and who is controlled by the complex system of power structure. He has been controlled by his master because his master controls the means of production which shapes the reality of our society. It is the means of production which controls the life pattern and social existence. It ultimately appears to be woven into the complex system of power structure. The complex rubric of power propels him to advance further in his journey to attain power. His unflinching desire of power attainment propels him to kill his master and further to exercise the same demonic form of power on his workers in the same form and pattern as his master has been exercising upon him. The narrative of the novel makes it amply clear that the novel does not only provide a clear critique of power struggle and power dominance but it gradually gets strangulated in its own web of power crisis. If Balram goes against his master the way his master suppresses him with all political, economic and cultural complexity, he in the process also manifests the politics of power itself. Thus, the study may light upon the dialectical nature of power politics and class struggle.

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The history of the world is the telling document of an irresolvable pharmakon of dominance and subordination. The apposite document of the dominance and subordination begins from the cusp of German idealism which explains the complex machinery of power politics which civilization has not only suffered but has also moved ahead. History with its all complicity and explicitness explains the quizzical reality of master and slave dialectics in which the slave indeed struggles against the dominant and hegemonic order of his master but at the same time the slave also moves gradually towards the *terra firma* of his master's position and this dialectics may continue as long as society maintains the mechanism of oppressor and oppressed master and slave, capitalist and labour, center and margin and finally have and have-nots. History is not a coherent, single and total account of the human kind rather it is an explicit story of power politics which involves the binary opposition of the oppressor and oppressed, master and slave.

The politics of dominance and subordination is a connived consequence of the unknowable, irreducible, irrefutable, and immutable machinery of power politics. The power which is not a concrete entity but a pervasive abstraction, which comes from every possible direction and controls everyone who comes under the preview of its exercise as it is absolutely immanent and genealogical in nature. Now it is evident that the phenomenological reality of power is immanent and it is precisely so because it is supported by certain coterminous forms of agency and apparatuses, which are based upon Marxist philosophy of labour, labour surplus, and alienation. Louis Althusser in his *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (1971) articulates the mechanics of power formation through his remarkable essay entitled "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses". The essay encapsulates the fact that ideology and consciousness, which construct the human being is the result of two remarkable apparatuses namely ideological and repressive. The ideological apparatus is constituted by religious institution, educational and

familial. These all replicates, reciprocates, and reinforces, and reinstates the ideology and consciousness of the power. It is commonly known that the religious institution not only instills the dominant voice of the dominant ideology but it also subjugates and subjectivizes the individual of society. Similarly, the educational institutions along with familial realities perpetuate the messy and massive system of power politics.

In addition, the oppressive apparatuses like Judiciary, Armed Forces, and Police Force etc. impose the dominant order of the power in social realities.

Aravind Adiga won the Man Booker Prize for fiction in 2008 for his debut novel *The White Tiger* and emerged significantly on the Indian literary scene. An Ex-USA Today book critic, Deirdre Donahue considers the novel one of the most powerful books she has read in decades with, "No hyperbole.....an amazing and angry novel about injustice and power" (complete-review.com).

In the opening pages of the novel, Aravind Adiga portrays the first of the ideological apparatus, of Althusser, the religious institution, as the mechanics of power formation, which is in Adiga's very own narration:

It is an ancient and venerated custom of people in my country to start a story by praying to a Higher Power.

I guess, Your Excellency, that I too should start off by kissing some god's arse.

Which god's arse, though? There are so many choices.

See, the Muslims have one god.

The Christians have three gods.

And we Hindus have 36,000,004 divine arses to choose from.

(8)

In *The White Tiger*, Aravind Adiga portrays how human beings find themselves tied in the 'rooster coop'. How the power politics is inextricably intertwined in Indian system

and how the alienation of labors carry the burden of the typical system of apparatuses. It represents the crisis of history which becomes amply clear when he avers "... [T]he greatest thing to come out of this country in the ten thousand years of history is the Rooster Coop" (173). Further, Aravind tries to answer the dialectical question of honesty and dishonesty. He shows why a servant never touches a single penny from his master "[B]ecause Indians are the world's most honest people, like the prime minister's booklet will inform you? No. It is because 99.9 per cent (like pure gold) of us are caught in the Rooster Coop just like those poor guys in the poultry market" (174-5). Aravind Adiga depicts how Indian workers are honest and find themselves coagulated into that typical channel. Here in India, Masters trust their servants with diamonds in cars, taxis, at home places and a poor man, comes on cycle-cart, bringing the bed, table, and chairs, a poor man who may make five hundred rupees a month.

"[H]e unloads all furniture for a person, and that person gives him the money in cash. He puts it into his pocket, or in his shirt, or into his underwear, and cycles back to his boss and hands it over without touching a single rupee of it? A year's salary, two years' salary, in his hands, and he never take a rupee of it."

The Rooster Coop doesn't always work with miniature money. If a master tests his servant with a rupee coin or two – he may well steal that much. But thousands of rupee left behind in the back seat of a car, he won't touch even a single penny of it. But unfortunately this money is for the bribe for getting a tender order for his master, in that car he drives, and alone in it. It is to save his master for giving this black money to bribe as an offence, in the cost of his life. Same is done in the case of diamonds' suitcase and he travels lonely from Surat and to give someone secretary in Mumbai or other part of India. "... [W]hy doesn't that servant take the suitcase full of diamonds? He's no Gandhi, he's human, he's you and me. But he's in Rooster Coop. The

trustworthiness of servants is the basis of the entire Indian economy" (175).

Aravind Adiga elaborates further, what really the Rooster Coop is! While in Delhi, Balram experiences the two kinds of India with those who are eaten, and those who eat, prey and predators. Balram decides that he wants to be an eater, someone with a big belly, and the novel tracks the way in which this ambition plays out. The key metaphor in the novel is of the Rooster Coop. Balram is caged like the chickens in this rooster_coop.

He, being a White Tiger, has to break out of the cage to freedom. Here, He narrates a scene from Old Delhi, Jama Masjid area; in the way to market there are hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured roosters, stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages. There is even no proper breathing space and even they are shitting on each other's. He further illustrated with perfect arguments, that the 'coop'. With a coating of dark blood, a butcher is sitting on the wooden desk to chop them off:

The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they're next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop.

The very same thing is done with human beings in this country. (173-74)

Aravind Adiga further makes clear these concepts of the coop, and why we have the coop. He portrays that everyday millions of people wake up at dawn, travelling in dirty trains, crowded buses and coop like wagons' too. It is just for the sake of their master's posh houses to clean the floors, to wash the dishes and dirty cloths, feed their children, all for peanuts or nothing.

Here he raises two questions for himself and to Mr. Premier. The first is: Why does the Rooster Coop work? How

does it trap so many millions of men and women so effectively? And secondly, can a man break out the coop? In Adigas' own words the answers are:

The answer to the first question is that the pride and glory of our nation, the repository of all our love and sacrifice, the subject of no doubt considerable space in the pamphlet that the prime minister will hand over to you, *the Indian family*, is the reason we are trapped and tied to the coop.

The answer to the second question is that only a man who is prepared to see his family destroyed-hunted, beaten, and burned alive by the masters-can break out of the coop. That would take no normal human being, but a freak, a pervert of nature (176).

In India, we can ever find a situation, when a person is caught into violating the traffic rules, then the staple of power politics jumps into the way! The example of the power politics in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* describes the same situation from the oration of Mr. Ashoka addressing to Pinky, his Indian born American wife:

'Pinky, that was New York - you can't drive in India, just look at the traffic. No one follows any rules - people run across the road like crazy - look - look at that-'
'It's on the wrong side of the road! The driver of that tractor hasn't noticed!' (81)

This was a minute example for the power politics, the above said disease spread over on to the Indian roadside. The perfect contextual example of power politics can be found through the text lines of this novel on 'The Fourth Morning' scene. He describes how the poor and powerful have the similarity in literal writings, but on the other hands how the gain of poor becomes the power of the rich or the capitalist or for most of the enjoying powerful politicians or some of the reputed statesmen. "..... [t]he poor, and take the power away from us, the poor, and put those shackles back on our hands.....(100)

The power politics is having it's black economical roots

in the corruption of the human beings, especially achieved through the means of politics. He portrays the situation of the country in the case of law makers and protectors and enjoying the power while corrupt on the other hand.

Not easy to get convictions when the judges are judging in Darkness, yet three convictions have been delivered, and three of the ministers are currently in jail but continue to be ministers. The Great Socialist himself is said to have embezzled one billion rupees from the Darkness, and transferred that money into a bank account in a small, beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money. (97-98)

The political system and bureaucratic set up, according to the novel, refer to the darkest areas of our country which breed, "rotteness and corruption" (50) in our society and hamper all developmental and welfare schemes. It restricts half of this country from achieving its potential. Most of the politicians are "...[H]alf-baked. That's the whole tragedy of this country" (10). Further, the narration of Balram's emergence is the story of how a half-baked fellow is produced. Politics is the last refuge for scoundrels. Government doctors, entrepreneurs, tax payers, industrialists all have to befriend a minister and his sidekick to fulfill their vested interests. Mukesh and Ashok also bribe the minister to settle income tax accounts. Election, though we feel proud of glorious democracy of ours, are manipulated; power transfers from one hand to another but the common man's fate remains unchanged. Aravind Adiga considers, "...[T]yphoid, Cholera and election fever the three main diseases of this country and the last one the worst" (98). Money-bags, muscle power, police, strategic alignment of various factions and power to woo the underclass assure the victory in the political game. Balram reports: "[I] am India's most faithful voter, and I still have not seen the inside of a voting booth" (102). Adiga observes that we are lagging behind China because of "...[t]his fucked up system called parliamentary democracy. Otherwise, we'd be just like China-' ". (156)

The novelist visualizes India as big and boisterous, rowdy jungle where hierarchy, corruption, and ruthlessness are at the helm and the rudder of the affair. He feels that after independence jungle-law has replaced zoo-law:

...[o]n the fifteenth of August, 1947—the day the British left—the cages had been let open; and the animals had attacked and ripped each other apart and jungle law replaced zoo law. Those that were the most ferocious, the hungriest, had eaten everyone else up, and grown big bellies (63-64).

Further Adiga argues that the youths are out of jobs and have become helpless. Instead of struggling and facing the challenges of life, they are busy in non-sense gossiping and watching the photographs of the film actresses:

[T]hings are different in the Darkness. There, every morning, tens of thousands of young men sit in the tea shops, reading the newspaper, or lie on a charpoy humming a tune, or sit in their rooms talking to a photo of a film actress. They have no job to do today. They know they won't get any job today. They've given up the fight. (54)

The foregone discourse and discussion on the realities of power politics in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* expound the fact that there is an ineluctable relationship between several forms of power politics and the apparatuses which perpetuate the complex process of power exercise. It has made an attempt to exemplify the fact that power itself contains the dialectics of its exercise. The dialectics in power politics prevails because it not only enslaves but it also liberates as it is immanent in its nature, which is explicitly clear in the case of Balram Halwai and other characters in the novel. A philosophical line from an Urdu book read out by a so-called Muslim uncle symbolically gives an exegesis of the dialectics of power: "You were looking for the key for years/but the door was always open!" (TWT, 253)

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Lucy Poems of Wordsworth: An Ecocritical Study

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Ecocriticism is comparatively a new approach in literary criticism that studies the relationship between human culture and society and the natural world. It is a re-reading of the canonical texts with a view to consideration of textual explorations and representations of the natural world. The need for re-reading is felt because we are passing through disastrous changes in environment throughout the globe. The main reason, on which the scientists are unanimous, is the global warming. Because of scientific and commercial development trees are being cut on a large scale. Deforestation gives birth to many problems and the life of the wild animals are endangered. The flow of the rivers is almost stopped in the name of building dams and producing electricity but the result is that human life is greatly affected. Whenever and wherever Nature is disturbed, man's life is badly disturbed and the result we see in the forms of Tsunami and Sandy storms, droughts and floods, changing seasons and in life death like situations. Large scale industrialization demands not only deforestation but it also pollutes air with smoke and water with garbage and again the result is that the life sustaining rivers are changed into life finishing forces. In India although we have understood the importance of Nature since time immemorial and we have been worshipping the rivers, the trees the wild animals, the sun and other forces of Nature so much so that there has been an unbreakable relationship between man and Nature but due to the gap between our theory /principle and practice, willingly or unwillingly we have done great harm to Nature

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and ultimately greater harm to ourselves. Fortunately, some environmentalists like Sundar Lal Bahuguna, Baba Ambe, Medha Patkar, Maneka Gandhi, recently and Uma Bharti have done their level best to awaken the people and make them understand the pros and cons of commercial development at the cost of Nature. This idea was felt in England by the great Romantics who had a deep interest in Nature, not as a centre of beautiful scenes but as an informing and spiritual influence on life. It was as if frightened by the coming of industrialism and the nightmare of towns and industry, they were turning to nature for protection. Not only beautiful poems were written and the importance of Nature was felt but also a new religion was brought into existence from the spirituality of their own experiences.

Since small space here does not permit to discuss all the aspects in detail, I shall concentrate only on the ecocritical study of the Lucy poems of Wordsworth. This topic I have chosen because Lucy is the adopted child of Nature and has been given proper training under her (Nature's) guidance. How the relationship between man and Nature brings sweetness and light in our life will be stressed. But first of all, a very brief introduction to ecocriticism and its aspects.

Ecocriticism is now a school of literary criticism that studies the relationship between literature and the surrounding environment. It is sometimes referred to as literary ecology, ecopoetics, environmental literary criticism, green culture studies, or (some what mockingly) as compost structuralism. The word 'ecocriticism' was first used by William Rucekert in his essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" in reference to "the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature." The practice of ecocriticism had its nascence in the environmentalist movements of the late 1960s and 1970s, but the work of its early practitioners was slow to come together as a recognizable school of criticism. It focused primarily on 'nature writing.' First, its attention was attracted by Romantic poetry in

which there was a depiction of nature with altogether a new concept and then by canonical literature and these days by film, theatre, animal stories, television and scientific narratives. In 1992 in the meeting of the Western Literature Association, a new professional association was formed for the development of ecocriticism- the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE). Its first conference was held in Ft. Collins, Colorado with 750 members comprising teachers, writers, students, artists, and environmentalists who are interested in the natural world and how it appears in language and culture. Quite rapidly its membership has increased and this organization is now active in Europe, the Far East, India, and Taiwan.

When we try to analyse any poem from ecocritical point of view, we should keep in mind that *nature* is not synonymous with *environment*. Nature refers to the environment before it was impacted by technology: the land, its flora and fauna, its water ways, living creatures, and the ecosystem that nourishes them. Environment, on the other hand, is the surrounding landscape. Environmentalists, who support conservation and limits, are sometimes, referred to as "light greens", "dark greens" are deep ecologists who advocate a complete return to Nature. Although a physical return is not feasible for most people, a reader can experience the pre-industrialized world through literature that recreates it. As we said earlier, the ecocritics paid their first attention to the Romantic poetry, we chose William Wordsworth's Lucy poems for their ecocritical analysis for Lucy has a special kind of relationship to Nature. She is very nearly one with the moon, with "untrodden ways", with bowers and green fields, with "mute insensate things," "with rocks, and stones, and trees.

'Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower' tells a story, most of which is narrated by Nature herself. Lucy is a three year old girl. Nature takes the responsibilities of her upbringing -

"This child I to myself will take
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own"

Nature promises to make Lucy an almost perfect woman. She reveals those methods by which the complex unity of a living being would be created. Organic forms of life would emerge from the brute matter and the simple forces of the physical universe Nature will take the help of the opposing polarities to give completeness to Lucy –

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade shower,
Shall feel and overseeing power
To Kindle or restrain.

Lucy is going to be shaped by a pattern of antithesis, 'between law and impulse', 'glade and bower' and 'kindle and restrain'. The elaborate fabric of life should be woven by the loom of the opposing principles. Lucy's personality will be filled with energy produced by the natural of forces–

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.
Without vital energy no one can enjoy
..... The silence and the calm
of mute insensate things.

It is the need of the hour that we should be attentive to this vital energy otherwise we will lose all sensations towards Nature. Here Lucy is not a particular person but the representative of all organic living beings. And living beings, particularly human beings need to understand the importance of the different aspects of Nature not only to keep the world beautiful and harmonious but to make their lives dangerfree, problem free & disease free.

Nature talks not only about the moulding of the physical forces but also about one's imagination and sensitivity. The 'motions of storm' will be converted by the perceiving imagination into perspicuous patterns and models for the human life. Lucy shall not fail to see'—

The floating cluds their state shall lend
 To her; for her the willow bend
 Nor shall she fail to see
 Even in the motions of storm
 Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
 By silent sympathy.

We should understand that the world is largely what the perceiving mind makes of it, and we should not suppose that only the external forms would be enough rather internal forms are also very essential. One should be attentive to the harmony that Nature has to offer —

The stars of midnight shall be dear
 To her, and she shall lean her ear
 In many a secret place
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round
 And beauty born of murmuring sound
 Shall pass into her face.

The complex relationships between the permanent and unchanging laws of Nature and the magical complexities they produce will give 'stately height' to human beings —

And vital feelings of delight
 Shall rear her form to stately height
 Her virgin bosom swell;
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
 While she and I together live
 Here in this happy dale.

And in the last stanza we find that the joyful creation of life has its inevitable result, the creating of death. Again here, Lucy is not a particular person whose death is being lamented but it is a statement of the condition of human life, in which all the powers of nature combine in complex ways

to create a human being, which is doomed by nature's law to death.

In the poem discussed above the important point to note is that the importance of nature in the bringing up of human beings and if human beings are shaped the way Lucy was shaped, life will become happy. This poem makes the readers aware of the natural world and also makes them connect themselves to the different objects of Nature.

In a short poem consisting only of two stanzas 'A slumber did my spirit seal' has a great dramatic compression. Here Lucy is thought of as having the relative permanence of a thing, not as an organic growth which from its very nature must fade and die within the limits of time - She seemed a thing that could not feel/ The touch of earthly years.

Lucy has the status of a thing in being capable of motion and utterly insentient. She is 'rolled round' with the earth in its daily rotation. She is like a stone or rock that can be rolled as the earth, while turning on its axis. The lover sees Lucy as a thing among other things, all of them subject to the same laws. The words 'earth's diurnal course' suggest that Lucy's death is in accordance with the laws of nature. Here human beings and nature are the same and every action of living beings is determined by Nature.

In 'She dwelt among untrodden ways' we are told about Lucy's growth, perfection and death. Once again she is thought of as a flower - 'A violet by a mossy stone -

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove
A maid whom there were none to praise

And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know

When Lucy ceased to be
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,
 The difference to me.

Lucy as an obscure flower, a violet, is shown as having dwelt, like a violet, in an unfrequented place. Perhaps the narrator wants to say that Lucy dwells in a deep and shady place. The River Dove runs its early course through deep and rocky dale, providing an apt equivalent for the shady obscurity in which a violet grows. Lucy is a beautiful girl but valued by very few. So as per the demand of the situation the poet compares her with the most retiring flower, the violet, at the same time with the most public beauty that is possible – that of a single star when it is shining in the star. She is compared with the star which is usually seen shining when 'only one' is visible, the planet Venus, star of the goddess of love. What is interesting in the poem is that the poet has chosen all images from nature. So it can be said that nature has inexhaustible source of concrete as well as abstract images for the poets. No poetry is possible without choosing images/situations from nature.

'Strange Fits of Passion' is about the narrator's 'strange fits of passion' that is to say, moments when strange fears have come into his mind. The story is of a lover who rides on his journey, during which his eye is fixed on the moon, which, as he arrives at Lucy's cottage, suddenly disappears behind the cottage roof. The disappearance of the moon brings into the lover's mind an apparently irrational fear that Lucy may be dead:

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
 Into a Lover's head!
 'O mercy!' to myself I cried,
 'If Lucy should be dead'.

It is our mindset that if we see something which has been considered as bad signal, for example, storms, rain, cloudy weather or sudden disappearance of the celestial beings, we think that something wrong has happened or

may happen. Although we know that the universe is regulated by the law of Nature and time is divided into years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, and seconds and therefore with the advancement of time we are slowly proceeding towards death, yet we do not normally think about our near and dear that he/she must die. And the lover of this poem suffers from the same mentality –

When she loved looked every day
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening moon.

Here the comparison of Lucy with rose offers an ironic comment on the complacency of the lover's view of Lucy, whom he sees 'every day' blossoming like a rose, but of whom he does not usually allow himself to think that she must sooner or later fade. This is also suggested by the introduction of an 'evening – moon' in other words a moon that is about to set. When the lover says that all the while' he kept his eyes upon the descending moon he is ironically unaware of what he is saying. He sees the moon sinking, but at the sametime he thinks of Lucy as a rose that will go on blooming 'every day'.

The lover continues his story, and as he does so he illustrates the way in which he eagerly move forward through clock-time, without realizing that every step forward through time brings us nearer to an end:

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

Here, the lover, though watching the moon descending, is not aware that it is doing so. For him time is represented by the 'quickening pace' of his horse towards the object of his desire. Here two natural objects one non non-living and the other living that is the moon and the horse respectively are active – one is descending while the other is 'quickening' and the lover mind is disturbed.

And now we reached the orchard-plot
 And, as we climbed the hill
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
 Came near, and nearer still.

The slow descent of the moon- 'near and nearer the cottage still' – towards Lucy's cot suggests the approach of threat. But still the lover has not consciously learnt the lesson that the moon is about to convey to him. The reason for this, as the poet now suggests, is that we find it tolerably painful to think of time as a process by which all living things move through decay to their deaths. We prefer the clock-time with which we are familiar, and which we can imagine as being extended indefinitely into the future:

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
 And all the while my eyes I kept
 On the descending moon.

The repetition of the 'evening-moon' the 'sinking-moon', and now the 'descending moon' creates an insistent pattern of suggestion which, because of his natural resistance to such awareness, the lover ignores. He continues his journey in unconscious of what is being presented before his eyes. At the sametime the steady rise and fall of his horse's hooves mark of the beat of clock-time, and contrasts: by its intermittent nature with the slow and inexorable deascent of the moon. It is at this moment that the moon disappears entirely, and thus forces to the lover's mind the consciousness of what has been enacted:

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
 He raised, and never stopped:
 When down behind the cottage roof
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

With this sudden disappearance of the moon the curse of its motion across the sky – imperciple until it cuts the horizon and disappears – is dramatically revealed. The speed with which it vanished is not in itself mysterious;

Wordsworth is always careful with such details. The rotation of the earth, causing the moon to set, and the lover's closer approach to the cottage on the hill, which cuts the moon from his view as it sets, account sufficiently for the sudden vanishing. When this happens, the lover suddenly fears that Lucy may be dead, because in a flash of intuition, he realizes that the 'rose in June' is fated to die as surely as the moon is fated to set. We do not think of the moon as it shines in the sky as 'setting' or of a rose in full bloom as 'dying' but if we remember that life is process, and not the movement of an unchanging object through clock-time, we realize that the moon's setting is implied in its shining, and that death is twplied in life. With the help of moon' the lover experiences the moment of shocking realization of a truth that can be faced only briefly – that all life, including Lucy's, is a pattern in which growth and decay form a single process, the end of which is certain. Lucy, like the rose and the moon is, after all, subject to the touch of earthly years.

With regard to the treatment of a generally common theme, it may be worthwhile procedure to read 'Lucy Gray' immediately after the Lucy poems. We have another Lucy who becomes merged into the nature that surrounds her, although the circumstances are more definitely and elaborately narrative than in any of the Lucy poems.

Many a time had the poet heard of Lucy Gray. He had actually seen her once, once when he crossed the 'Wild.' Lucy's life had been spent in solitude on an expansive wasteland, "on a wide moor." Lucy Gray was "The sweetest thing that every grew/beside a human door!." Nature has not changed where Lucy lived, for the fawn and the hare continue their vibrant play, but Lucy will not be seen again. The narrative of the poem begins with stanza four: there the quotation marks begin as the father addresses himself to Lucy. He tells her that she must go with lantern to the town and give her mother light for the walk home. Lucy replies that she will gladly go on this errand, and as if in effort to assure herself and her father of her safety, she calls

attention to the fact that the morning has barely passed, for it is only two o'clock. But, it proves to be a bad omen that she sees the moon during this early afternoon hour. The father continues his work as Lucy goes blithely toward town, wantonly dispersing the snow that lies on the ground. But a storm comes up unexpectedly, and Lucy is lost. She tries strenuously to recover her directions but cannot. The parents go looking for her, shouting for her, but there is no answer. In the light of dawn the mother finds Lucy's footprint, the parents trace it over an expanse of ground but find it disappears in the middle of a bridge of wood, a bridge located only a furlong from the door of their cottage. Some refuse to admit that Lucy had died: "...some maintain that to this day/She is a living child..." They say that she may be seen upon the lonesome moor and that her joyful step has not been slowed.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

In no other poem by Wordsworth is the union of a solitary figure with nature so evident as it is in *Lucy Gray*. In very nearly the classical way that mystics become in a final stage blended with the Godhead they yearn towards, *Lucy Gray* merges with nature.

What we see in *Lucy* poems is that sometimes human being-Lucy is a passive figure, the recipient of impressions and actions by the elements around her for Lucy's education will be complete only when Nature and Lucy remain together. Between them will be the relationship of the teacher and the taught. After Lucy learns lessons, she no longer remains passive but becomes very much active. Nature, here affects human beings more than man affects nature. In *Tulsidas's Sriramcharitamanas* nature is affected by man's personality. When Bharat goes to visit Ram in Chitrakut, nature becomes his helper and facilitates his going -

Kive jahin chhaya jalad
Sukhad bhai var vat

(Tulsidas)

But sometime Nature remains unaffected even when man is in deep sorrow and distress. When Sita is kidnapped Ram wanders in the forest in search of Sita. He is excessively sorry but nature is unaffected.

Srifal kanak kadali harshahi
Neku na sank sakuchi man mahin.
Sunu janaki tohi binu aaju
Harshe sakal pai janu raju
(Tulsidas)

Madhuvan tu kat rahe hare
Virah vijay shyam Sundar ke tharhe kyon na jare
(Surdas)

An ecocritical reading of the Lucy poems of Wordsworth reveals that the readers should be attentive to nonhuman issues that have been traditionally pushed into background. Those unusual marginal elements, the rivulets, the mountains, the untrodden ways, the violet, the evening star etc are brought to the centre and their importance in life is understood, where a traditional reading is usually anthropocentric, with human characters drawing our attention to them and what usually be viewed as merely background becomes an active player in the working out of a narrative.

Although ecocriticism is an 'ism' like other 'isms' to interpret and understand a work of art yet it is more important than others in the sense that it (ecocriticism) unfolds to us such aspects of nature and society which remained unfolded for till now. So it is time we paid attention to those different objects of nature that are essential for our life.

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Unmending Walls: A Post-Colonial Scrutiny of Kamala Markandaya's *Pleasure City*

Dalbir Singh Yadav*

The aim of the present paper is to make an in-depth study of Kamala Markandaya's last published novel *Pleasure City* (1982). Kamala Markandaya's first novel appeared in the year 1954. The dates are important since they are markers and indicators of social, political, economic and cultural changes of the time in the historical continuum. She can be rightly termed as a post-colonial Indian English novelist. She writes about India's social changes before and after independence. The term 'Post -colonial' is significant here for perhaps it was also first used with reference to India in 1959. It was freely being used in academia in 1970s and 1980s. In quoting these years, my endeavour here is to locate the text under study in these times for it was only then the terms like globalization, liberalization, privatization etc. had gained ascendancy and perceptible socio-cultural changes were taking place. How critical discourses began to shift from the use of the term post-independence to post colonial in these year, Prof. Jasbir Jain remarks:

"I accepted it (post colonial) first as a conflictual intellectual phase, then as a mere marker, later as a forward looking term, indicative of a wish to transcend the colonial experience to "step outside the influence and framework to reclaim an autonomous and a free identity" (22)

Markandaya wrote this novel in this high flown era of social changes and being a social realist and an established Indian English novelist, her work was bound to reflect the

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social reality vividly. Her forte as a novelist has been to explore and delineate, in terms of situation and character, the realities of cultural dualism in Indian life. Her fictional world is aptly termed as 'bipolar'. Her fiction captures the multiple nuances of cultural encounter between indigenous Indian culture and the Western culture. Being an expatriate Indian writer living in alien land, she has become fully aware of the conflict between eastern and western values and has tried to portray Indian social reality very objectively from a distance. Hers is truly "a literature of concern" to use her own words. No doubt, most other Indian English novelists of the early 20th century like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Manohar Malgonkar, Arun Joshi, Anita Desai to name a few, have dealt with this cultural dualism in their different distinctive ways. But what is unique in Markandaya is that her fictional corpus consists of a series of responses to this situation of East-West cultural dualism. Her ideology is not stagnant but evolutionary. In her every other novel, she explores the impact of change in terms of human psychology and so her characters become archetypes and representative of their race and culture and also even of the time. Shiv K. Kumar has very rightly observed.

"Of all the contemporary Indian novelists writing in English, Kamala Markandaya is the most accomplished, both in respect of her sensitive handling of a foreign medium and her authentic portrayal of the Indian scene. What distinguishes her most incisively from other Indian novelists is her acute awareness of a gradual shift in values that has been taking place in this sub-continent during the past two decades or so". (1)

The text under study being her last work, presents a mellowed view of this 'gradual shift in values' as quoted above. The phrasal term 'Unmending Walls' attached to the interpretation of this text is quite significant. It has reference to Robert Frost's poem wherein the American poet underlines the idea that good walls make good neighbours. Going against the poet's notion, the term here designates a mental make-

up or an intellectual exercise to detoxify the suffocating influences of colonial subjugation and imperial prejudices and to step outside the constricting walls of perennial oppositionality and enduring resistance to European containment, in order to set free the faculties of perceiving reality, thought processes and action that will lead to formation of a composite global culture. It may also be taken to signify the dismantling of the walls of racial division. Commenting on the urgency of the time of hyperconsumerism and postmodernism happening around the last decade of the previous century, Prof. Avadhesh Kumar Singh rightly comments:

"In a fast changing and shrunken world it is neither possible nor advisable to insulate ourselves from what is happening around and also being done to us. Post colonialism is still happening to us. Rather than regretting it what is needed is to understand it and its conditions, its strategies and ways of operations. It can't be wished away. We can respond to it and resist whatever is inimical to our interests with our own counter strategies" (43)

The terms 'unmending walls' and 'Post colonial' are being synonymously used to underline the idea that de-insulating or delimiting oneself is a contingent condition. Markandaya was fully aware of the currents of the time that is evinced in the texture of her novel under study. This term post-colonialism has been treated differently by different critics. But for the present purpose, my gaze is focused on the definition of it as given by Meenakshi Mukherjee: "It is an emancipatory concept" which enables the students of literature outside the western world to "interrogate many aspects of the study of literature that we were made to take for granted, enabling us not only to read our own texts in our terms, but also to reinterpret some of the old canonical texts from Europe from the perspective of our specific historical and geographical location" (3-4) Prof. Jasbir Jain substitutes the term post colonial with post-national to mark a shift from the concept of the nation state to a plural

composite culture. It also meant to acknowledge a break with the dominantly nationalist discourse of the late nineteenth century. In her own words:

"It would also signify a departure from the kind of nationalism which led to the Nazi persecution of the Jews, or the insular, myopic variety which divides people. It would help relocate us in our present and foreground the "self" enable our value structures, tradition and aesthetics to be visible" (23)

Viewed from this perspective, Markandaya's *Pleasure City*, unlike her earlier novels, offers significant variation on the usual treatment of the encounter/ interaction between the West and the East. The novel consists of multiple episodes. The narrative shifts from one episode to another and in the process it brings out various visions, scenes and view points. Mainly the novel revolves round two strands of narrative viz the development of a holiday complex named Shalimar near a fishing hamlet by an international company AIDCORP, and the developing friendship between Rikki, a young fisherboy and Tully, an employee of AIDCORP. The central motif of the novel is the intrusion of technology into a non-descript-fishing village that jeopardizes the traditional occupation of the villagers. The situation is similar to the one in Markandaya's first novel *Nectar in a Sieve* and another novel *The Coffer Dams*. The narrative works on the same pattern as of her earlier novels, that is, meeting of the East and the West; friendship and then inevitable parting. But it being the text fitting into the parameters set above offers a varied treatment in plot and situation reaction.

Apu, that headman in the novel is an echo of the tribal chief in *The Coffer Dams* and Nathan in the first novel *Nectar in a Sieve*. He feels unsettled at the advent of the holiday complex and offers resistance to this invasion of technology. The spirit of outright materialism and technology represented in the earlier two novels mentioned above is also embodied in *Pleasure City* by AIDCORP. To quote: "AIDCORP built anywhere, everywhere almost anything for anyone,

with a virtuosity as dazzling as its politics were bland. To put it plainly, it never allowed private feelings to interfere with business. To put it even plainer, it consisted, with admirably distilled purity, of purely technological mercenaries". (11) Apu, the headman, like Nathan and the tribal chief reacts vehemently thus: "This is our territory. The waters are ours, to a five fathom depth". (26) Unlike the mercenaries of the previous novels, Cyprus contractor replies: "There is not intention whatsoever to purloin their waters. But tell them; he said in his soft-voice to convince other as he was himself convinced, we must all learn to share what is God's gift to us all" (26)

The kind of race arrogance, skepticism, indifference and hard headedness that were perceptible in the earlier novels have disappeared. The kind of soulless encroachment upon the villager's land and uproot them is not be found here. Commenting on the earlier attitude of the colonial masters, Rekha Jha elaborates:

"The British, confident about the value of their own culture, believed that to succeed in their endeavour in India it was best to retain their own individual identity and so they rejected everything Indian. It was not desirable to forget that one was an Englishman first and foremost; so while India was enjoyable as an experience one took care not to get involved with it" (9)

This type of attitude and social behaviour of the West was certainly a stumbling block in the meeting of the East and the West. The East, likewise, remained in the closed walls of its cultural fortress. In this novel there is a paradigm shift, as presented by Markandaya. The kind of earlier hostility, prejudice and race divisions have disappeared to certain extent in the present era of cosmopolitanism. D. Maya suggests, "In the post-colonial era Markandaya's text assumes relevance as one that cuts across boundaries and suggests the possibility of relationship across frontiers. With the added sensitivity of the writer in exile, exposed to racism in Britain and the plurality of cultures in modern society,

she envisages the emergence of a multicultural personality. What is advocated is a modern post-cultural formation that moves from the 'filial' to the 'affiliative' from automatic acquiring of parental identities to an eclectic accumulation of identifications" (113). There is a great amount of understanding and acceptance. When Boyle one of the Directors of AIDCORP reminds Tully that the sun never set on the British Empire, Tully retorts that God so ordained it because he did not trust the English in the dark. There is a plethora of British characters namely Mrs. Pearl, Mrs. Lovat, Carmen, the Spanish dancer and Corinna, Tully's ravishing wife. There is a glimmer of understanding between the characters of the two distinct cultural identities – the East and the West. Valli, the local belle and Carmen, the dancer interact assimilatively in terms of their culture. At the time of departure of Carmen, Alvarez, Valli takes off her garland and places it over her friend's. In a reciprocative gesture, Carmen offers her the packet of dark chocolate cigarillos. This exchange of heartfelt greetings is a step towards the co-existence of dual cultures. While trying to save Tully's wife Corinna, Rikki injures his leg and is hospitalized. Unlike the westerners projected in the earlier novels, Corinna acted differently. To quote : "She too felt that something was being broken down and said quite simply as she was now able, I am sorry, Toby. About Rikki, I mean, it was unforgivable. I must have been made" (317). It is this humility on the part of the westerners that fosters a bond of understanding between two different cultural polarities. The scene in the novel is that of independent India in *Pleasure City*. In this post national or post colonial (to use Prof. Jasbir Jain's terms) era, Makandaya depicts that the process of occupation, possession and displacement as a result of technological invasion on traditional life style of India goes on as before but the spirit of resistance and oppositionality has been negotiated by the modern youth. D. Maya rightly comments: "The process of occupation is the same but in independent India there is hardly any resistance: only willing acquiescence with the powers that preach the new economy". (110)

Another important strand of the narrative of the novel is the relationship between Rikki and Tully. It is in the evolution of the consciousness of Rikki and in the unconscious desire of Tully to free himself from the shackles of racial walls and class-consciousness that we find the twilight of togetherness of two different races and cultures for Rikki and Tully are archetypes of their own folds. Rikki is an embodiment of an elemental innocence that Tully feels he has lost in the false glare of sophistication and civilization. Rikki grows under the environment of co-mixture of simplicity and sophistication. Mrs. Rose Birdie initiates Rikki into the world of aesthetics through books while still living under the umbrella shade of native sea coast. To cite from the text:

"At no time did Rikki rebel. He took to books as he had taken to the sea. Both gave him pleasure, but the sea had come first. He kept from his infancy as clear, asiding memory of being lowered from his father's arms into a warm, familiar, infinitely blue and embracing element, The baby swam! No sooner the water touched than he swam! The child's father swore to cronies, in accent of pride and joy. These feelings echoed his sons; and to this enduring memory was a added another of similar intensity when Mrs. Rose Birdie placed the open illuminated volume in his hands" (5)

Rikki takes deep interest in Mrs. Rose Birdie's lessons and their sweet togetherness fructifies in Rikki growing a well balanced personality who is able to assimilate the diverse influences. Rikki's father dies and his mother also soon departs and Rikki's is left to the mercy of others. Markandaya portrays the social reality of the community of fisherman very vividly in terms when Muthu's family adopts Rikki; To quote:-

"If not they someone would have sheltered the orphan. It was a standing arrangement, or a way of life, that went back as far as anyone could remember and beyond that they guessed. So long as one soul or one roof was left all of them knew no one need fear having to scavenge around

like a stray dog. It was the one certainty or assurance or an uncertain life". (9)

As the story unfolds, the reader find Rikki growing from a six years old child in chapter-1 of the novel, "he was bulging with good food and her attentions..... He was older now beginning to go to sea and his skin was glossy with health". (17-19) Later in the novel, we confront Rikki as a youth when he meets Tully for the first time. Rikki saw Tully swimming out through the barrier. Out of his innocence and naivety Rikki launches off the log and swims to intercept Tully, calling out a warning as he went. To illustrate:

"Tully stopped swimming and trod water. Used to the Atlantic since knee high, he knew enough to pause when advised; and also enough to know himself outclassed. Good swimmer he was, but the boy was an altogether different stripe. Swimming in long, clean strokes, with a grace that suppressed all notion of effort, he had made the sea his element". (41)

Rikki sounds a caution to Tully about the sea: "You must be careful. There are rocks here, you know. Tully did AIDCORP carried out exhaustive surveys before launching its projects, as any concern would as almost anyone would know. Not to, argued a quality of almost anyone would know. Not to, argued a quality of unflawed innocence that touched Tully. He smothered the crisp yes – I know that hovered and said instead", I am glad you told me. We must do something about it". (41)

It is a meeting of innocence and experience. Rikki finds in Tully someone with whom he could connect himself emotionally and it is this noble virtue of human being in Tully that impelled Rikki towards him more and more with each passing day. To quote: "Indeed inwardly Rikki was smouldering seals of wax beginning to melt. After a lifetime (it was barely a year) here was another like Mrs. Birdie. One who could speak if he chose, like Mrs. Bride, who would lose aside the tools, and stop cursing the obstinate rusty hinges, and being telling about cupolas and dornea". (46)

The friendship of Rikki and Tully flourishes through innocence of Rikki and understanding of Tully. In the character of Tully, Markandaya forges out a symbol for future possibilities. Rikki tells Valli: "He is as human, he said, as you or me" (73) and Tully in his turn fully understands: "Why under the skin he is not that different". (81) At one place in the novel Tully tells Rikki "What I love about you is the labyrinth you invite me to enter" (160). However, no one is culture free. Invariably one's nation, society and culture exert tremendous influence on the life of every individual and it also shapes one's value system. Rikki and Tully, in fostering the bond of their friendship endeavour to go against the dictates of racial divisions. In this understanding and desire lies a search of a fullness of being or a true essence of existence. Rikki's act of building a boat for Tully and the pious act of saving Tully's wife Corinna provide strength to their friendship. Despite Rikki's assertion that 'there is an ocean between us', Tully, in a state of solitude admits the extent to which Rikki has penetrated his life. To quote: "Yes, Rikki permanent niche chipped in the marble between them. Tully had never been averse, was not now, but was not in the mood for company, even of this tender order". (305)

Sincerity in maintaining relationship is indeed a strong step to lend endurance to it. Rikki's final act of taking Tully to the former mansion of the Birdies is almost an act of dedication. The barriers that divide the races have to be eliminated only by the united efforts of all races. A.V. Krishna Rao and Menon rightly remark: The novel "*The Pleasure City*" stresses the fact that the time is ripe for a proper permanent friendship between the East and the West but it depends on the effect of the human race to make allowance for one another". (143)

Unmending walls thus signifies this spirit of give and take by which alone any viable relationship can be established. Tully connects himself with Rikki on a level of equality and also gathers from knowledge of the sea and the

fishing folk. He places a considerable faith in Rikki's instinctive knowledge of the land. In their relationship, Rikki and Tully transcend the corrupting influences of race, nation and culture. By thus doing they attain: "A quality of simply being that washed over them like water or light and merged them into the one landscape" (PC 148)

When Tully goes away, Rikki wonders in and out of the rooms of Avalon-the dream mansion and finally rushes to the Prospect point: "Rikki's steps quickened. He would hurry and get to the prospect point in good time, and settle down to watch. The views from there were matchless- not to be had from anywhere else, as he and Tully had often agreed." (341)

Tully has gone but his bond of friendship with Rikki remains. His love, tenderness and human elements of his personality hovers around. Rikki silently grasps the idea that the inevitability of their parting can't lessen the quality of the experience that had once been his. In Rikki's and Tully, we find living, breathing metaphors of the perception of human essentials that overcome the surface barriers of race. A.A. Sinha aptly remarks:

"They also depart but in their understanding and relationship, the rancour, fury, hatred and anger of racial incompatibility is almost obliterated. Their relationship illustrates that two cultures can co-exist without smothering each other's identity and can enrich each other by a harmonious approach". (95)

What transpires at the end of the whole interpretation is that this latest novel of Markandaya indicates a direction as it were towards the possibilities of co-existence and assimilation of cultures of the West and the East in the contemporary post-colonial time.

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Three Cheers to Women's Power

T.S.Chandra Mouli*

Post-Independence era witnessed the spirit of nationalism gaining strength. A fundamental transformation occurred in the lives of the people as a result of progressive programmes initiated. Common people began to understand the language of entitlements and rights due to the emergence of a democratic form of governance. New writers emerged from various sections of the society. They presented in their writings, their own language, environment, condition and issues. Dalit literature attracted considerable discussion because of its form and objective, which were different from those of the other post-independence literatures. It gained acceptance and appreciation slowly, yet steadily

“Dalit writers make their personal experiences the basis of their writing. Always prominent in their writing is the idea that certain notions have to be revolted against, some values have to be rejected, and some areas of life have to be strengthened and built upon. Because Dalit writers write from a predetermined certitude, their writing is purposive. They write out of social responsibility. Their writing expresses the emotion and commitment of an activist. That society may change and understand its problems - their writing articulates this impatience with intensity. Dalit writers are activist - artists who write while engaged in movements. They regard their literature to be a movement. Their commitment is to the Dalit and the exploited classes.”[S.K.Limbale, 2010]

As one goes through the creative works of the Dalits, it may be noticed that they have used the language of the quarters rather than the standard language. Standard language smacks of a class, which has been rejected by Dalit

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writers. Cultured people in society consider standard language to be the proper language for writing. Dalit writers have rejected this validation of standard language by the so called educated and cultured classes as it is conceited. The language of the 'harijanwada' is more familiar than standard language. In fact, standard language does not include all the words of Dalit dialects. Besides, the ability to voice one's experience in one's mother tongue gives greater sharpness to the expression.

Just as the African Americans have ridiculed the word 'Negro' and called themselves 'Blacks', Dalits also ridiculed the term 'Harijans' and named themselves 'Dalits'. Creative writing of the sufferers across the continents is a unique portrayal of pain and hurt feelings eloquently, powerfully, and touchingly. Folk forms, folk songs and performing artistes projected the suppressed feelings of the oppressed Dalits effectively.

Dalit poetry has drawn public attention with strongly worded stunning pictures of dreadful discrimination. Whatever be the tone, mild or sharp, ferocious or highly confrontational, it is written with a specific purpose, to sting the complacent and the leering into active thought. The idea is to focus attention on the despicable reality, poking them in their ribs to intense soul-searching or, even shocking readers by seething paroxysms of fury with a wiry virulence. The poets stung like bees and danced like butterflies. Flattened noses, black eyes, smashed heads testify to the violent, uncontrollable fury let loose by the wounded pens of the oppressed poets. Quite unsparing in their attack, they sought to register their agony through powerful means of protest and poetry.

Women in India as elsewhere have been treated as a commodity. Though they played a vital role in domestic and social activities they had been mercilessly relegated to a secondary position in a patriarchic society. Leftist ideology and ensuing feminist trends stirred some Dalit women poets

to confront vestiges of patriarchic fervour with all their might. Besides social, domestic oppression, sexual harassment is singularly specific to Dalit women. Some Dalit women took part in different movements and emerged as leaders. It is a moot point to question whether movements created leaders or ordinary women sustained movements through their leadership qualities.

Superstitions are bane of any society, more so among uneducated poverty ridden Dalits. In the name of religion, appeasing an angry village goddess, many Dalit girls are forced to become 'Jogini', 'Devadasi', 'Mathangi' or 'Basivi' in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. They are, in fact, pleasure givers to all men in the villages. Here, ironically untouchability doesn't matter, since seeking pleasure is the main goal. While religion is used as a ruse to lure or force an innocent girl child in Dalit families in getting married first to a village deity and then become a puppet to satiate carnal desires of men of means. This abominable practice is on the wane slowly due to the relentless efforts of social reformers and educated Dalit women. Dalit women are unable to get proper education on account of their poverty, rural background and absence of facilities due to geographical and financial conditions, while those living in urban environment are relatively better placed. Marriage at a young age too deprives them of opportunities to get educated. In turn it has a cascading effect on their lives.

One may mention the following as the major concerns of Dalit women: Untouchability / Caste discrimination, victimization due to inter-caste marriages, economic backwardness, ignorance of their rights, abject poverty, severe condition of reproductive health, high mortality and fertility rate, sexual exploitation, lack of employment opportunity, trafficking and forced entry into prostitution, illiteracy the bane of the community in general and women in particular, and lowest life expectancy due to socio-economic conditions.

African American women and Dalit women in India

narrate almost identical experiences. Race/caste, class, gender and location generally determine the kind of experience as one recounts. Centuries of oppression made black women in America face the situation boldly with a steely resolve and work hard in spheres of their interest and emerge triumphant ultimately. Maya Angelou, Mae Jenison, Oprah Winfry, Serena and Venus Williams, Toni Morrison, among others have amply demonstrated that they could reach the top unshackling themselves. In a way they enriched the American society and life.

A black woman keeps 'shifting' from stance to the other constantly; both at work place and home to keep her sanity intact. Mostly this remains invisible. Over working, keeping silence, smiling away blues, talking animatedly when required she manages to survive on a day today basis. Racial discrimination is as pervasive as gender discrimination even in America. They shift behavior to get accepted by the white people. For many women work place is a testing cauldron. Wages and quantum of work assigned too varies for them significantly.

As in India and everywhere black women subordinate preferences, interests and talent to please their men. They know too well that remaining passive and submissive ensures peace at home as in work place. Appearance, standards of assessing beauty, mostly Euro-centric in belief and practice torture womenfolk to gnawing pain of their own inadequacies as conditioned by socio-cultural patterns. This anxiety manifests itself manifold: eating or sleeping disorders, depression, feelings of alienation, social isolation, and inability to express adequately. Psychosomatic disorders are on the rise generally.

Like several myths in Dalit lives in India, myths make lives of black women in America miserable. The most prevalent one is that blacks by birth are inferior to whites. In addition to prove the myths wrong through their strenuous efforts at home and work place, they have to disprove that they

are unfeminine on account of their strong physique. To thwart accusations that they are over bearing, demanding and rough they choose to keep a low profile and remain silent most of the time. Most galling and humiliating myth is that a black woman is untrustworthy, dishonest and prone to law-breaking. Hence, a vigilant eye is kept on her constantly, which braeks her spirit and shatters confidence. It is all the more degrading that she is perceived as promiscuous and easily available.

Unfortunately, no one musters courage to question these unfounded perceptions and counter effectively. It is also a fact that disapproving misconceptions hardly helps in dispelling them. A stereotype remains so always. At times the stereotyped make a black woman look like a caricature rather than a human being like any one else. In spite of all endearing endeavours, she is forced to remain invisible. A complement rarely enthuses her, for she knows that it is a comment on her not conforming to long held convictions.

Apart from snide remarks about her colour, physique and nature a black woman is also branded a criminal. Most of the marginalized all over the world have to face this charge. Questioning their moral fiber is the privilege of better placed sections in society. Their integrity is never accepted or appreciated, leave alone rewarded that are supposed to accrue for a person of impeccable integrity. The misconception that a black woman sexually fragile is the most tragic and traumatic aspect that should render a woman feel disgraced and disrobed. It corrodes her conscience, consumes her like poison in a scorpion's sting and scalds her constantly like an invisible flame. She is always viewed as a commodity, a 'body' to satiate carnal desires of men.

'Silence' is the most potent weapon wielded to keep off blues. Festering emotional wounds of sexual exploitation, childhood abuse and work place compulsions render a black woman suffer in silence. They are often linked while abusing men, denigrating their birth obnoxiously.

"Anna Julia Cooper's book of essays, *A Voice from the South* (1892) can be considered to be one of the founding texts of the Black feminist movement. The women writers in their own voice clearly proclaim and assert that they are women of substance, not merely sex objects or sacrificing persons in the family. And above all, they have established and declared in their own voice that they too are human beings. Shashi Deshpande has beautifully expressed it in her novel *That Long Silence*."

[Neeru Tandon, *Vituoso* Vol 2 No2 2013]

A black woman is at a loss to know which is more reprehensible: her race or sex. The same is the predicament of a Dalit woman in India. Is it her gender or caste that victimizes her? She is unable to shake off either, for they are far beyond her control to disclaim or disown.

Altering behavior pattern by sharing information, gathering a circle of likeminded people, moving in groups, facing the tormenter boldly, confronting his moves and questioning his authority and motive openly a victim can often manage her survival on a successful note. Regulating and monitoring her environment at home and work place constantly a woman can ensure a sense of security for herself and other similarly placed victims. Expression or articulation of her problems obliquely, if not directly too helps her to a greater extent.

"Elaine Showalter views silence in women's writing only as an absence of women's voice in history, literature and the main current of life. She states that 'women have been denied the full resources of language and have been forced into silence. Hélène Cixous asserts "Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing. Indeed, Cixous frequently employs "woman," to speak for all women's experience. Her latest book, *The Whole Woman*, is the sequel to *The Female Eunuch*. As the introduction says. On every side speechless women endure endless hardship, grief and pain, in a world system that creates billions of losers for every handful of winners. It's time to

get angry again. She says loudly 'Women's changeability is a value in itself. Change the world by voicing your silence.' [Neeru Tandon 2013]

Rich and vibrant in form and content, this pattern of articulation has given African American people a strong sense of identity and an independent state of expression and existence. In fact, it has extended a rare grandeur to their literary works. Here, language functions as a means of identity and respectability. Barbs and taunts could never extinguish the fire or zeal of self-expression among black women in America.

As everyone knows colour is the basis of racism and ensuing brutality, African American woman is constrained to feel unwanted and discriminated on account of her colour. It may be termed a scar or wound that constantly rankles resulting in low self esteem. She invents her own methods to cope with such situations. Slowly she started to appreciate herself for what she is and not for what others expect her to be. Their expectations are quietly ignored and quickly buried. Self realization, appreciation bolstered her morale in conceivably. Black stars in Hollywood movies, black athletes and sports women cheered her spirit and reinforced her stately resolve for survival and fighting back for her rights.

One is reminded of 'Cultural Materialism' a literary theory. "It looks for ways in which defiance, subversion, dissidence, resistance, all forms of political opposition, are articulated, represented and performed" (Brannigan 108) in literature. The cultural materialist critics generally read a text with the motive of facilitating the reader 'to recover its histories'. It is, according to Graham Holderness, "a politicized form of historiography" (Holderness 65). In other words the focus is upon the narratives of socio-cultural and political exploitation, diffidence and resistance which are the basis of the work." [Rohit Phutela, *Virtuoso* Vol 2 No 2 2013].

It is well known that the native individuals, women,

migrants, who were subdued have gained prominence in the literary articulation of Australia. Rohit Phutela observes:

The aboriginal writers, especially women, like Sally Morgan and Ruby Langford have tilted the tide in the favour of those who had been seconded in importance. Hence the women aboriginal writers and males as well take the position of 'resistance' emerging out of 'diffidence' (again, from the binary patterning of male/ female, foreign/ native, diffidence/ resistance, etc.) which is central to the cultural materialists. [Rohit Phutela 2013].

One can perceive the truth that discrimination; distrust and exploitation are conspicuous across the continents in some form or the other resulting in sections that suffer endlessly and those that persecute relentlessly. As long as this continues, resistance resurrects itself despite despicable onslaught of the oppressors. Resistance against gender based exploitation, struggle for respectability, desire to establish their identity mark the enchanting endeavours of women suppressed everywhere. Resurgence of Dalit women in India, black women in America, Aborigines in Australia and the ever struggling women in Africa is an instance of women power on the rise which is desirable, remarkable and justifiable. Black Lotus blooms beautifully!

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Images of Motherhood: Reading Alice Walker's *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*

Monika Singh*

The available literary corpus on African-American women and mothering has distinctly characterized the attitudes and attributes of women which are distinguishably different from the women of European Americans realities. The literature on mothering examines how cultural influences and dynamics of class and race have shaped the mothering patterns. The present paper undertakes the odyssey of exploring the multidimensional character of the Black mother as has been portrayed in Alice Walker's *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* (1970) which follows the lives of the Copeland family and their trials and tribulations for three consecutive generations beginning with the eldest member and protagonist, Grange Copeland. The paper also traces Black mother's potentiality of adaptability and versatility which are some special features of African American motherhood. Further, the paper explores the subjectivization of Black motherhood by the socio-economic conditions, white racism, and patriarchal oppression. In addition, it also exemplifies the influence of Black mother's subjectivity in a racist and patriarchal social setup on her relations with her children and family members.

'Black Motherhood' has been subjected and defined by socio-economic conditions which have been an ever existing phenomenon in the life of every woman in African-American community. Black mothers because of the economic necessity have always been forced to work outside the home to

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supplement the meagre income of their husbands to support the family which heralds their oppression in a capitalist white patriarchal society. However, there are many African American families where the income of the mother is the sole source of income which further mandates their employment even in adverse circumstances. Robert Staples states in *The Black Woman in America* that "...the woman is likely to contribute the larger share of the income and to assume the larger share of the family responsibility" (134). Black mothers are keenly aware of the economic problems of their families which is exemplary in that most of the times they mutely bear their oppression and exploitation. They suffer most from these problems and strive hard to alleviate them. The opportunity of job of Black mother emanates from their domestic skills, however, on the other side; the black male often remains unemployed because of the racial politics. The lack of employment for black male causes serious mental setback to them and often they become hostile to their women and perpetuate patriarchal oppression. In addition, the domestic employment of Black mothers exposes them to economic oppressions which results in their neglect of their children. The mother is unable to give her child a proper care, love and attention because she has to work in a white house and has to cares for her master's children. The dialectical nature of black motherhood -to care for master's children on the cost of the neglect of her children leaves Black mother fractured and disheartened which solely stems from the socio-economic conditions and deprivation. William Henderson and Larry Ledebur have delineated the problems of economic oppression of Black mother in American society in *Economic Depravity: Problems and Strategies for Black America* "Lack of access to respect positions in society and the lack of power to do anything about it lead to insecurity and unstable homes, an existence that tends to perpetuate itself from one generation to the next" (03). Margaret in Walker's *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* is a victim of such dire economic oppressions. She has to work outside her house where her master has strictly ordered not to bring her

son, Brownfield to work place with her. Impelled by the economic deprivation, she has to continue the job so she is forced to leave her son at home alone. In such a situation where the small child has to stay at home alone, the child not only gets deprived of its mother's love but also is exposed to a dangerous vulnerability. We can mark the following paragraph:

As a very small child he had scrambled around the clearing alone, chasing lizards and snakes, bearing his cuts and bruises with solemnity until his mother came home at night. His mother left him each morning with a hasty hug and a sugartit, on which he sucked through wet weather and dry, across the dusty clearing or miry, until she returned.... At first she left him in a basket, with his sugartit pressed against his face. He sucked on it all day until it was nothing but a tasteless rag. Then when he could walk, she left him on the porch steps. In moments of idle sitting he shared the steps with their lawn mangy dog...When he was four he was covered with sores. Tetter sores covered his head, eating out his hair in patches the size of quarters. Tomato sores covered his legs up to the knees...and pus ran from boils that burst under his arm pits. His mother washed the sores in bluestone water (TLGC 6-7).

The passage reflects the miserable plight of the child and focuses on the problems inextricably embedded into the complex rubric of historical material realities. Her shortage of resources is directly related to her position in society. The entropy of negligence that Margaret exhibits above is the consequence of economic conditions and material imperatives. She loves her son, Brownfield, but the family's monetary situation dictates her to seek employment outside the home. Margaret neither has any relatives nor adequate budget to support the child. Hence, she has to leave Brownfield at home alone during which the child is neglected.

Brownfield who is a victim of socio-economic deprivation, for instance, perpetuates on his educated wife. Education is the only possibility in the lives of the poor Black people to

alleviate their poverty and uplift their social position. However, the poverty constrains their efforts to receive education. Margaret in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* wishes that her son may attend school and become a respectable man. Poverty runs its cruel course and her wish to educate her child meets with "the shrug" of his father who "...had assessed the possibility with the same inaudible gesticulation accorded the house. Knowing nothing of schools, but knowing he was broke, he had shrugged; the shrug being the end of that particular dream" (14). What is evident here is that the inability of the poor to use education as a means of upward mobility tends to perpetuate their poverty. Their lack of education and job training forces them to accept menial jobs with low wages. Low wages or economic deprivation also affects their family life. The men of the family, at times, become bitter because of their socio-economic conditions and perpetuate oppression on their women which lends validity to the theory that Black men encourage and insist upon the subordination of Black women. Brownfield, for instance in the novel is "a ruined man and thus ruinous man, bent on undermining everyone who feel worthwhile and has a sense of pride and dignity" (Coles 105). Consequently, Brownfield pours his frustration on Mem, "imprinting" his "failure," and wrath, on her face with his fists (55). People from the domain of petty bourgeois world are not only subjectivised and get interpellated but they also perpetuate their hegemonic experiences upon the people of their community by vouching the ideology of the dominant class. Brownfield encompasses the realities of what Raymond Williams calls 'emergent and residual'. The emergent class always continues with the experiences of dominant ideology, however, aporatically tries to establish its own ideological realm. The aspiration of establishing its own ideology brings the situation of ideological contestation. Brownfield in the text also experiences the similar kind of the disintegration of ideology and its contestation which results into an unsurmounting frustration in him. The frustration creeps into him with a notion that living on wife's expenses is a

threat to his masculinity. So he first of all forces Mem to give up her job as a school teacher and forget that she has ever had any education "[f]irst to please her husband, and then because she honestly could not recall her nouns and verbs, her plurals and singulars, Mem began speaking once more in her old dialect" (TLGC 56). Brownfield employs the oppressive and tyrannical patriarchal order to control and to subjugate his wife, Mem. The process of subjugation, he inchoates with instructing her to let her to forget her language that she has acquired while educating herself.

Further, his desire to control and to subjectivize his wife emanates from his psychological deprivation which is deeply rooted into his economic destitution. The state of economic desiccation forces him to forget the rationality for which and with which he has married Mem. On the one hand education has been the primary trigger for him to marry her but now it becomes an important factor to subjugate her and to finally kill her. Education contains a tension as it dialectically allows Mem to earn her livelihood but the same education deprives Brownfield from the state of psychological and economic control. Further, the oppression of Mem in the family is conceived in the fact that in spite of allowing her to help him achieve literacy which his mother has not been able to offer him, he has suppressed her wishes to practice her literacy. However, Mem defies every attempt of patriarchy to manage a job and a house in the town. The following conversation in the novel explains the patriarchal whims that Brownfield carries:

"You going to move where I says move, you hear me?" Brownfield yelled at her, giving her a kick in the side with his foot. "We going to move to Mr. J. L.'s place or we ain't going nowhere at all." He was hysterical. Mem lay with her eyes closed. "You listening to me, Bitch." Mem opened her eyes like someone opening up the lid of a coffin. "I ain't going to Mr. J. L.'s place," she said quietly. "I done told you that, Brownfield." Hesitantly she moved her hand up to wipe the blood from her chin. "I have just about let you play man long enough to find out you ain't one," she said slowly and

more quietly still. "You can beat me to death and I still ain't going to say I'm going with you" (TLGC 91).

As the aforementioned communication between Mem and her husband suggests that temporarily Brownfield agrees to let her get job, he never supports the family financially. On the contrary he contributes to deteriorating the physical stamina of his wife by keeping her pregnant all the time which is yet another way of controlling the woman in the family by the patriarch. The deterioration of Mem's health results in the loss of her job and the loss of the house in the town. Further supporting the credence that the Black men contribute to the oppression of the Black woman, Brownfield moves his wife and children into a shack where the condition is quite unliveable. The following paragraph explains the condition:

It was an overwhelmingly bad dream, and Mem fainted and was loaded half conscious into the cab of the truck that came to move them. She had no chance to pack, to cover her things from the weather, to say good-bye to her house. She was too weak to argue when the friends he got to help him move broke her treasured dishes, tore her curtains, dragged the girls' dresses through the mud.... Rain poured into all three of the small rooms and there was no real floor, only tin, like old roofing, spread out to keep the bottom of the hay bales from getting soggy (TLGC 106).

This is conspicuously clear from the above deliberation that Brownfield's interpellation into his own poverty and his patriarchal oppression has compelled the entire family to move to such a dilapidated place. His return to the farm suggests that "the culture of poverty in the rural areas tends to be fatalistic and pessimistic, compounded by the vicious cycle of poverty" (Henderson and Ledebur 04). Having been impoverished, rural families usually remain that way. They eventually accept the idea that it is impossible to escape from their poverty. The poor of one generation find it impossible to help the next generation; thus the poverty cycle continues from father to son through the generations. Mem's effort to

break the cycle of poverty and to challenge the established order of poverty has been doomed to be short-lived.

The above exploration delineates the fact that it is economic depravity that has been the reason of the oppressed condition of Black mother in the family by her husband. It is precisely because the means of production is generally controlled and owned by the patriarch which does not allow the women to share anything from the surplus value. It is not only so but the women are often made to be alienated from her product which is the result of her hard work. Apart from that, Black mother is also subjected to the white racism which she has been perpetuated against her for centuries and "institutional racism has exerted the strongest impact upon all facets of the Black woman's life" (Ladner 270). Working in a white house, Black mother takes care of the master's children and is subjected to the tyranny of her master's sexual advances. Mem and Brownfield are subjectivised in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* by the tyrannical forces of white racism. Mem's awareness, for instance, that a beautiful Black woman is a prime target of the advances of white men has forced her to disguise her beauty. Mem is a beautiful lady as Brownfield describes it but may not celebrate her beauty because of the existing white racism in American society "You should have seen her when she was young and pretty and turning heads, putting on veils and acting like a cripple or something when white mens was around" (TLGC 225).

Brownfield through his experiences learns and accepts the white supremacy and thus inflicts oppression on his disobedient wife who despite Brownfield's efforts never lost her Black awareness or developed any shame about being Black. Her attitude is nicely conveyed in her response to white Captain Davis' attempt to look out for them by trading them like a string of horses to his son J. L.. Mem asks Brownfield, "You just tell that old white bastard...that we can make our own arrangements. We might be poor and black but we ain't dumb" (TLGC 86). The Black mother's

subjection to racism is again made clear through Mem's efforts to get medical attention for her daughter Daphne. The following paragraph deliberates on the same:

Mem had taken Daphne to the clinic, but the nurse said she didn't see anything wrong with her, except that she was nervous. Mem had said that she knew the child was nervous and wanted the nurse to tell her what to do about it, but the nurse was busy talking to another nurse about changing her hair color, and both nurses ignored Mem, who was standing there exasperated, holding a quivering Daphne by the hand (119).

Mem's effort remains, however, fruitless simply because of being Black. She deals with similar white racism on a day-to-day basis when she is employed by a woman who refers to her as "Mem, my colored girl" (119). Through the above discussion it is evident that all aspect of Black mother's life are controlled by the racist white in America "[e]verybody in the world was in a position to give them [Black woman] orders. White women said, "Do this." White children said, "Give me that." White men said, "Come here." ...But they took all of that and re-created it in their own image" (*The Blues Eye* 109). This exemplifies that Black mother is constructed by the white racism and economic conditions "[t]he ability to utilize her existing resources and yet maintain a forthright determination to struggle against the racist society in whatever overt and subtle ways necessary is one of her major attributes" (Ladner 282).

However, the condition of Black woman is made more pathetic with the imminent violence that they receive from their husbands in the house "[t]he Black woman is one of America's greatest heroines. The cruelty of the Black man to his wife and family is one of the greatest tragedies. It has mutilated the spirit and body of the black family and of most black mothers" (Bannon 195). Robert Staples states in *The Black Woman in America* that "in the lower classes...the threat of physical abuse is a form of control exercised by the male over the female" (113). "For years in this country there

was no one for black men to vent their rage on except black woman. And for years black women accepted that rage—even regarded that acceptance as their unpleasant duty” (Morrison “The Black Woman and Women’ Lib” 63). Mem in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* is a perfect example of the mother who has been subjected to such patriarchal violence in the family and her benign acceptance perpetuates and aggravates the same. Brownfield, Mem’s husband has destroys his family by his tortuous and abusive acts “[i]n fact, it would have been better for Mem and her children if Brownfield had left them. They would not have had to suffer the insults, beatings and death that he calculatedly plans for them” (Harris 239). The following passage may give an idea of his cruelty “Brownfield beat his once lovely wife now, regularly, because it made him feel, briefly good. Every Saturday night he beat her, trying to pin the blame for his failure on her by imprinting it on her face; and she, inevitably, repaid him by becoming a haggard automatus witch, beside whom even Josie looked well-preserved” (TLGC 55). However, the possible explanation that may be drawn for his inhuman treatment of his wife as:

It was his rage at himself, and his life and his world that made him beat her for an imaginary attraction she aroused in other men, crackers, although she was no party to any of it. His rage and his anger and his frustration ruled. His rage could and did blame everything, everything on her. And she accepted all his burdens along with her own and dealt with them from her own greater heart and greater knowledge (55).

Because of the “American social system”, men like Grange and Brownfield are crushed by the power of the white man “[t]he American social structure turns the Black man into a beast—suppressing his human qualities and accenting his animal tendencies. The Black man, in turn reflects his violent relation with his white [counterpart] in his relations with his wife and [children]” (Hogue “History” 49-50). The oppression of Mem in the family becomes a regular

phenomenon as she resigns to Brownfield's torturers and abuses. However, she continues to be an ideal wife and an ideal mother despite her socio-economic and familial circumstances. She always treats her husband with love, care and kindness and however, for that she gets kicks and slaps in turn. The recurrent motif of Saturday night incidence in the family illustrates the most horrible sights.

Yet another incident happens when he threatens Mem not to leave the shack for town. Mem is discussing her dreams for her children and the way in which the move to town will be instrumental in realising those dreams. Brownfield, who is determined to move his family into another rural shack, tells her, "You better git all that foolishness out your head before I knock it out!" He threatens with a knife and later with a shotgun. The acceptance that Mem seems to have imbibed in herself meets with its apex as she bursts out in the following paragraph with all bitterness that she has been carrying within herself for long:

"To think I let you drag me around from one corncrib to another just cause I didn't want to hurt your feelings," she said softly, almost in amazement. "And just think how many times I done got my head beat by you just so you could feel a little bit like a man, Brownfield Copeland." She squinted her eyes almost shut staring at him. "And just think how much like an old no-count dog you done treated me for nine years." ... "Woman ugly as you ought to call a man Mister, you been telling me since you beat the ugly into me!" his wife said and moaned (TLGC 95).

Brownfield's abuse and oppression culminates in the murder of his wife. He destroys a woman whose only mistake was her devotion to him. The incident takes place on the eve of Christmas. Mem has been doing domestic work in town since Brownfield has been fired from his job for excessive drinking. He is on one of his drunken rampages and the children have sought shelter in the henhouse in order to protect themselves from his abuse. Daphne, the eldest child has gone to warn her mother "Now she told them, with her

voice shaking, that she was going to walk to town to try to head Mem off. She said maybe she could keep her from coming home while Brownfield was drunk" (120).

Brownfield rather than profiting from his father's mistake, he perpetuates the same oppressiveness on his wife. Brownfield, Grange's son, is orphaned when his father leaves and his mother kills herself and her mulatto infant. Father and son meet again when Grange returns home and Brownfield has married. The dynamics of their relationship during this time is the true jewel of this novel. Brownfield finds himself in the same situation as his father - working a plantation, barely able to provide for his family, and eventually stripped of all self-respect. Having married an educated woman, he felt further minimized by his lack of schooling. Repeating the pattern of his father, Brownfield turns to a life of free spirits, using whatever force he can muster within him to reduce his wife to his standard of existence. Brownfield becomes so caught up in sharecropping, adultery, and wanting to feel like a man, he then neglects his children and his wife like his father; however, Brownfield's actions are results and products of pain for what Grange has done to him as a child. This has created a pattern that trickles down into the third generation. He should have had a particular aversion to violence due to the treatment that he and his mother received at the hands of his father "[l]ate Saturday night Grange would come home lurching drunk, threatening to kill his wife and Brownfield, stumbling and shooting off his shotgun. He threatened Margaret and she ran and hid with Brownfield huddled at her feet" (12). What is evident in here is that excessive drinking on the part of Grange and Brownfield Copeland in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* has served as provocation for the abuse of their wives.

Mem, despite hostile economic circumstances, has never given up fighting against the situations and has cared for her children. There are other characters in the novel who choose the other when driven by the economic depravity.

Josie, for instance, in the novel is drawn into the profession of prostitution as a means of supporting her children because of the sheer economic reasons. She was evicted from her home at the age of sixteen immediately after giving birth to Lorene. From then on she "did her job with gusto that denied shame, and demanded her money with an authority that squelched all pity. And from these old men, her father's friends, Josie obtained the wherewithal to dress herself well, and to eat well, and to own the Dew Drop Inn" (TLGC 41). She reared her daughter in the Dew Drop Inn and as a result of that kind of environment coupled with the burden of two children, Lorene too turned to prostitution as a means of supporting her children. For both of these mothers prostitution was just another item in a long list of sacrifices that mothers will make in order to properly provide for their children.

The novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* also exhibits Black mother's dedication in providing and protecting her children. Her sense of motherhood is located in the historicity which indicates that "Black women in America had an unbreakable bond with their children" (Staples 128). The matrilineal system of Africa has allocated the children to be the sole responsibility of the mother "[t]he universal testimony of travellers and missionaries was that the African mother's love for her children was unsurpassed in any part of the world" (Frazier 33). However, the mother's love for her children was one of the factors that remained constant when she was torn from her native land and subjected to the harshness of slavery. The Black mother of the slave era devoted as much time as possible to her offspring before the child was taken from her and sold for the master's financial gain. The amount of time that she could devote was limited because she also had the responsibility of taking care of the master's children. The white mistress recognized the Black mother's maternal instinct and quickly converted that instinct to her own advantage by placing her children under the care of a Black "mammy". Robert Staples traces the bond of

the Black mother with her children in his *The Black Woman in America* and discovers that "many of them (Black mother) have found their gratification in their children. To attack motherhood would be to strike at the heart of their reason for living" (05). In a situation where there is hardly any hope for a better future, the Black mother always locates her happiness and hope in her children. Mem, for instance, exists only for her children because Brownfield has made her life hell. Alice Walker says that Mem "slogged along, ploddingly, like a cow herself for the sake of her children" (59). Years of back breaking labor and abuse from Brownfield are responsible for her plodding condition. Brownfield mistreats her and her children to the extent where she begins to hate him. He receives her hatred with annoyance "he was annoyed when she despised him because out of her hatred she fought back, with words, never with blows, and always for the children" (59). However, Brownfield regards her dedication to the children with scorn. He is jealous of their relationship and accuses Mem of trying to turn them against him. She refuses to be intimidated by his accusation and continues to provide for her children to the best of her ability. The length to which she goes to protect the future of her children is revealed during the conflict cantering around the family's wish to move into town "Mem fights for her children in the matter of the house and exacts submission from Brownfield at gunpoint" (Harris 242). For Mem all future hopes revolve around the move to for a good job for her, a house with modern facilities for her children and better clothing for them. Mem is finally aware of how she can offer her children more in terms of maternal and emotional benefits. When Mem and Brownfield had married, Mem was no longer able to work as a teacher and was forced to become a domestic worker in her home and in the homes of white families. Even though Mem could not use her education like she wanted, she still wanted to give her children the opportunity to learn just as she had. Brownfield was jealous of Mem's education and wanted her to suffer for it.

His crushed pride, his battered ego, made him drag Mem away from school teaching. Her knowledge reflected badly on a husband who could scarcely read and write. It was his great ignorance that sent her into white homes as a domestic, his need to bring her down to his level!... And she accepted all his burdens along with greater knowledge. He did not begrudge her the great heart, but her could not forgive her the greater knowledge. It put her closer, in power, to *them*, than he could ever be. (Walker *The Third Life* 73)

Mem's willingness to work hard emanates from the collective unconscious of Black mothers who have always faithfully met their maternal responsibilities. Sometimes meeting their responsibility seemed to be more than the human body could endure. Mem discovered how much endurance was required of the Black mother when Brownfield moved her and the children back into a windowless shack half full of wet hay. This move has been initiated at a time when she was at her lowest point of resistance due to an attack of influenza. However, she makes a verbal resistance "Brownfield, I'm sick," said Mem, "but I ain't going to ask you for mercy and I ain't going to die and leave my children. Even in this weather you brought me out in I ain't going to catch pneumonia. I 'm going to git well again, and git work again, and when I do I'm going to leave you" (*TLGC* 107). Mem's responsibility is not only limited to secure a bright future for the children but also to protect them from the brutality of the father. Mem tries real hard when he beats the children up. She always says "Brownfield, you ought not to carry on this away. You know you won't be able to look yourself in the face when you gets old and the children done gone" (96). She further tells Brownfield "You teach a hair on one of my children's heads and I'm going to crucify you—stick a blade in you, just they did the lawd; if it was good enough for him it's good enough for you" (96). This evinces the fact that her primary concern is her children and that she becomes most protective in situations when their well being is threatened. Mem continues to work

in order to provide her children something important until the time of her death, proving that the relationship between mother and child is "the primary and essential social bond around which the family develops" (Frazier xii). The community position on the value of the mother-child relationship is reflected in the attitude of Ruth's classmates "Mothers, she learned very soon, were a premium commodity among her classmates, many of whom had never known a father and if they had could no longer even remember him" (TLGC 128). The depth of the response to losing one's mother reiterates the phenomenon that the mother-child relationship is the backbone of the Black family.

In addition to loving and providing for her children, Black mother tends to exert an influence over them. This influence results in the formation of the child values and strengthens the bond between mother and the child. Andrew Billingsley asserts that "it is within the intimate circles of the family that the child develops his personality, intelligence, aspiration, and indeed, his moral character" (Billingsley 27). Margaret in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* manages to generate in her son Brownfield one of the few positive responses that he feels throughout the novel. Mem's relationship with her children is one of the most inspirational. She seems to be aware of the needs of her children and tries to fulfil those needs to the best of her ability. The culture of poverty combined with the crippled effects of being married to Brownfield severely limited the positive influence that Mem could exert on her children. In spite of these limitations Mem gives validation to the idea that "as the most important socializing agent, the Black mother must insure that the child receive maternal and emotional support and he is encouraged to learn the educational and job skills necessary for success in the world" (Staples 157). Alice Walker intimates that Ruth, Mem's youngest child, will be successful in life. Her success will result from Grange's cultivation of the values that Mem has instilled in her.

However, Josie in the novel exemplifies mother who has

a negative influence on her child and who transmits negative values. She is a prostitute and it has been through the financial gains from her profession that she has supported her daughter, Lorene to the profession. Their relationship is based on rivalry. Brownfield reveals:

Sometimes he felt he was the link they used to prove themselves mother and daughter. Otherwise they might have been strangers. They existed for the simple pleasure of flirting with each other's men, and then of fighting it out in the street in front of the lounge, where every man in the district soon learned that if you wanted a piece of pussy you had only to make up to one of them to have the other fall in your lap (*TLGC* 47).

Apart from the influence that the mother exerts on the child, the Black mother also contributes in generating a home atmosphere conducive to the positive development of the mother-child relationship. Billingsley believes that this should be "the kind of atmosphere which generates a sense of belonging, self-worth, self-awareness, and dignity" (26). Mem in the novel attempts to present this kind of atmosphere for her children by first giving consideration to the physical condition of the home. Though her house was little more than a shack, she dedicated many hours to keeping it as clean as possible. She has also made attempts to decorate it by pasting pictures from magazines on the walls and placing jars of colored leaves on the tables. Mem also cuts logs to make steps for the house and planted flower seeds in the yard. She is aware, however, that it will take more than these physical repairs to make her house a home. Eight of the stipulations in her ten point plan presented to Brownfield prior to the move to town will contribute to a better home atmosphere for her children. She advises Brownfield to shun his drinking, profanity, unmannerly behavior and his inclination towards violence. For almost three years Mem manages to maintain a home atmosphere in which the children are able to feel secure, worthwhile and dignified.

The mother-child relationship is one of the most complex in all areas of family relationships. It is taken for granted that the Black mother will monitor total responsibility for her children. In addition to providing them with comforts and a conducive home atmosphere, it is also the responsibility of the mother to function as the emotional center of the family. It requires much love and dedication. The dedication of mother like Mem makes it easy to understand how "Black mothers for generations have raised their children effectively in spite of many hardships they had to endure" (Staples 151). For the women, motherhood serves as the core of their living.

The above discussion encapsulates that motherhood indicates maturity and the fulfilment of one's function as a woman. For the Black mother, motherhood also means the acceptance of responsibility for that new life. The acceptance of this responsibility will necessitate sacrifice, understanding, and above all, a lot of love. The portrait of Black mother as painted by Alice Walker in *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* captures many of the qualities that make her such a complex figure and a beloved individual.

Since a child has to be supported, attention has to be given to the economic situation; Black mothers have to contribute a great deal to the support of their children. Their husbands are often trapped by the economic oppression that white society imposes on Black families. Black males, even if employed, are paid less for their services than their white counterparts. Menial jobs are more plentiful for the Black female so most Black mothers are working mothers. Their position as working mothers influences their overall image. Some working mothers are too exhausted to be congenial with their families at the end of the day. Margaret and Mem both fall into this category.

In addition to the economic problems, the Black mother is also faced with rearing her child in a society overflowing with white racism. She meets and deals with this racism on

a daily basis and also prepares her child to deal with it. It is this difference in preparation that affects the image of Black mother. Mem, for instance, recognizes the fact that white racism exists and that there is no feasible way of overcoming it. She is forced to try to accept racism as just another of life's bad aspects and to teach her children this acceptance. The Black mother's lot is a harsh one, and the manner in which she seeks to overcome it can only be regarded with the utmost admiration and respect. Brownfield follows his father's footsteps into the mire of the white man's sharecropping system. Feeling defeated and trapped, he turns his rage against his wife and children. Eventually, Mem grows tired of Brownfield's abuse and the unhealthy conditions in which they live. She forces Brownfield, at gun point, to get a factory job and returns to her profession as a schoolteacher. Mem succeeds in raising the family's standard of living until her health fails and Brownfield drags her back to the rat-infested shacks she despises. She takes a second step toward change but is defeated when Brownfield, jealous of her and fearful of any future she might be able to create, kills her.

Factors which affect Black mother adversely can not only be attributed to external forces. Domestic problems rank high on the list of obstacles to the successful rearing of their children. Black men become frustrated with their position in society and relieve that frustration by becoming abusive to their wives and children. The Black mother accepts this abuse along with the other complicating factors in her life. This acceptance is truly a dedication that sores above and beyond the call of duty. Though the outsider may regard her acceptance of this abuse as insensitivity rather than an indication of loyalty, the Black mother understands the underlying reasons for her husband's attitude. It is difficult for a man to be constantly degraded without believing that he is less than a man. Granted, abusing his wife is not the ideal way to regain confidence in his manhood, but it does seem to fulfil a psychological need for the Black male.

Grange, for instance, who has worked on a plantation enduring the hatred and cruelty from his white boss for so long he does not know what it is to be a man. Dismissed, disrespected and dejected, Grange's disdain for the oppressor implodes creating a hollow, spiritless shell of a man. In an effort to exert a misdirected sense of manhood, or perhaps feel what it's like to have the upper hand in something, Grange attempts to liberate himself by drinking, gambling and womanizing, further separating himself from a wife and son he feels unable to love, honor or protect. For this reason the Black mother accepts his abuse. Dubey says, "In *The Third Life*, the very physical survival of black women is in jeopardy, as two of the novel's central women characters, Margaret and Mem, are directly or indirectly killed by their husbands. With the exception of Ruth, all black women in the novel are subjected to violence and sexual and economic exploitation by black men" (Dubey 107). Even though the fate of death is the same for both Mem and Margaret, their husbands also murder them both mentally and physically. Margaret committed suicide mostly because of Grange's actions towards her, whereas Brownfield shot Mem in the face. "Brownfield follows his father's footsteps in other ways, too. While Grange abandons his wife, who soon poisons herself, Brownfield shoots his mate. This action was possibly predestined the evening that, as a child, he saw his father angrily wait up for Margaret with a gun" (Hellenbrand 117).

The virtues of the Black mother make her idolized by her children and immortalized in literature "whatever the future of motherhood in this society, Black women have left their imprint on the history of maternal role performance throughout the world" (Staples 158). The above deliberation may well be summarized in the words of Daryl Dance:

Indeed as we look back over the history of the Black American mother, we see that she emerges as a strong black bridge that we all crossed over on, a figure of courage, strength, and endurance unmatched in the annals of world

history. She is unquestionably a Madonna, both in the context of being a saviour and in terms of giving birth and sustenance to positive growth and advancement among her people. It is she who has given birth to a new race; it is she who has played a major role in bringing a race from slavery and submission to manhood and assertiveness. It is largely because of her that we can look back on the past with pride and look forward to the future with courage (110).

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Teaching of English Language through Literature

*Rajesh K. Lidiya**

To teach a foreign language is always a difficult task. By the word 'teaching' I mean 'to give a complete knowledge' regarding reading, writing, listening and speaking. And above them all is the question – 'where to start from?' It is of great importance to choose the right beginning. And so is the case with teaching English language in India. Our universities are running various programmes to simplify the process of teaching and learning English language. No doubt, these programmes are helpful in one way or the other. The students start learning with much enthusiasm, but gradually, not all, but many of them suffer the boredom in learning thus mechanically. This results in a lack of interest to continue. So this is our responsibility to wipe out this boredom and apply something interesting in language teaching. Literature can be that interesting option for us since it is not just about words. It is all about 'expression' in the best possible way incorporating the emotion, tone, time, and place along with culture.

The first step in this direction should be in the selection of literary texts which can meet the demand as per the need. These literary texts should have both high moral values and an aesthetic appeal. The blend of these two will create a healthy interest into them which, in turn, enables the students to learn English language easily and to develop humanistic values as well.

There are various genres in English literature like: drama, poetry, novel, short story, and essay. Each has its

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own way to express the theme with which they deal. They project various situations which have clear connotations with real life. It is a unanimous truth that literature is all about life. So, when students experience life through them, they will feel a kind of affinity with them. They will mark how the particular situation is being projected using what type of words (vocabulary); what type of tone (pronunciation); and what type of sentence construction (grammar). Literature uses language dexterously. However it will not be possible to fathom out each jewel that lies lurking into the deep and vast oceanic territory of literature. Let us deal with some of the genres in English literature for the purpose.

Drama is one of the oldest genres in English literature beginning with Mystery, Miracle and Morality Plays. The action in drama develops through dialogue delivery. Students should notice how they give an outlet to their own thoughts in the particular situation. Attention should be given to the pronunciation of the words and to the tone of sentence as a whole. If one does not listen carefully, his own pronunciation will falter.

As a classroom activity we can choose students to play the role of characters after giving them an imitation reading of the dialogues. We should also instruct them about the use of punctuation marks in the text and the necessary pause they demand, so that they can apply it in their reading and writing skill. Let us discuss an extract from "All My Sons" (1947) where the character Chris uses words as weapons to wake the human inside us up. This is superb for its rhetorical language and the use of pause. Even the silence, where we pause, speaks a lot. Talking about his dead fiends in army, he says:

It takes a little time to toss that off. Because they weren't just men. For instance, one time it'd been raining several days and this kid came to me, and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That's only a little thing - but . . . that's the kind of guys I had. They didn't

die; they killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly; a little more selfish and they'd've been here today. And I got an idea – watching them go down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of – responsibility. Man for man. You understand me? . . . I felt wrong to be alive, to open the bank-book, to drive the new car, to see the refrigerator. I mean you can take those things out of a war, but when you drive that car you've got to know that it came out of the love a man can have for a man, you've got to be a little better because of that. Otherwise what you have is really loot, and there's blood on it.

The passage mentioned above is very rich both in its form and content. From the point of view of language we can discuss: the use of phrasal verb 'toss off' and its meaning; the correct use of tense throughout; the use of passive voice in sentences like 'Everything was being destroyed' and 'one new thing was made' in order to show the object of emphasis; the use of adjectives and adverbs; the use of unfulfilled condition in 'a little more selfish and they'd've been here'; use of present participle in 'watching them go down'; use of conjunctions like – and, but, otherwise, and because; use of comparative degree in the word 'better'; use of tone to make the affirmative sentence an interrogative one as in 'You understand me?'; the use of punctuation marks in the whole passage; and above all how the character succeeds in developing his argument step by step and leading towards a thought-provoking conclusion.

Poetry is the rhythmic representation of the language in use. Its rhythm has such a mesmerizing effect that the listener's soul becomes nothing but captive to it. We can remember a piece of verse easily than that of a prose. The words in poetry mean much more than what they say. The use of various figures of speech enriches the language of poetry. So, poems can play a strong role in language learning. By imbibing the new coined words and figures of speech we can render an epigrammatic quality to our language.

A new learner of English language will come in contact with – the figurative language, its use and the meaning it suggests; perfect words for the things; and what a rhetorical question is along with its purpose. With each new line, certainly, he will learn something new. Learning through poetry is like getting maximum output with least efforts because, on the one hand, the new coined words and sublime expressions enrich our vocabulary and language respectively, whereas on the other, our interest makes it easier to memorize them. Who can forget P.B. Shelley when, in his "Ode to Skylark" (1820), he says:

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter

With some pain is fraught:

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Thought is given here; the poet has used his own words to express that. But the thing is that these four or five lines mean much more. Each individual has his own thinking and language. Now, we can ask our students to explain what they have understood by these lines. Obviously, while doing that, they will need words matching with their thinking. And if they do not find, they will look them up in a dictionary. This all goes into language learning.

This paper aims at presenting both theoretical and empirical evidence in support of a strong relationship between Language and Literature and the implication of this especially for using literary texts for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). Welleck and Warren (1973) point out that language is the raw material of literature as stone is for sculpture, paints of picture and sounds of music. There is no sharp line of demarcation between language and literature and it is also difficult to show a dichotomy between these two. Since literature is rooted in a language and language gets life through its literature, language and literature are

therefore, not poles apart, but closely interconnected. In recent years, the role of literature as a basic constituent and source of authentic texts of the ESL teaching programmes has been gaining momentum. Vigorous discussion of how literature and ESL / EFL instruction can work together and interact for the benefit of students and teachers has led to the development of interesting ideas, learning, and improved instruction for all. In this regard, this paper attempts at emphasizing the use of literature as a popular technique for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) in our times to foster learners.

Teaching and learning literature through language demands active involvement of both the teacher and the taught in bringing the literary text to life. Many teachers consider the use of literature in language teaching as an interesting and worthy concern (Sage, 1987, 1). Linguistic and communicative competence of a teacher helps to bring out the fact to their students that literature provides an additional way in which they as learners of ESL are exposed to the elasticity of the language and thus learn a better way of reinforcing language skills. The medium is language and the context and form of a literary work arouse interest in the meaningful use of that medium which is in the opinion of George Eliot is, 'aesthetic teaching'. Here, the role of the teacher is crucial. His/Her role is to support the students' efforts to establish intensive relationship with literary texts without interfering too much in their act of creating meaning. Poetry develops deep and aesthetic way of looking at the language and its expression. It offers a significant learning process. Saraç (2003, 17-20) also explains the educational benefits of poetry as follows: provides readers with a different viewpoint towards language use by going beyond the known usages and rules of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, triggers unmotivated readers owing to being so open to explorations and different interpretations, evokes feelings and thoughts in heart and in mind, makes students familiar with figures

of speech (i.e. simile, metaphor, irony, personification, imagery, etc.) due to their being a part of daily language use.

It is noteworthy that many academicians of today realize the importance of literature in language teaching. The time has come to accept the fact that the ultimate objective of teaching and learning literature is the study of words, idioms and syntax at the highest level of thought and imagination. It is an exercise depicting as to how words and sentences are made and moulded in order to communicate what the writer wants to say. It helps the learners to develop 'out of box thinking'. They acquire the power of language only through the medium of literature. For this purpose, it is not literature through literature that is to be emphasized, but literature through language. This technique teaches all the four skills - LSRW. To illustrate further I would like to bring out some of the beneficial features of the role of Short Stories in the ESL / EFL curriculum. Fiction is a mirror of society and life (Sage, 1987, 43). In short fiction, characters act out all the real and symbolic acts people carry out in daily lives, and do so in a variety of registers and tones. Because of its shorter length, it makes the students' reading task easier as compared with the other literary genres. It portrays the entire world, different cultures and varied characters on those few pages which provide students the opportunity to use their creativity, critical thinking skills. It facilitates students coming from various backgrounds to communicate with each other because of its common language- English. It benefits the learners by their Language Enrichment because literature is authentic and far more superior to any other way of learning English Language. It also enriches their cultural conduct and grammar, like for learners from India, literary works, such as novels, plays, short stories, etc. facilitate the understanding that how communication takes place in their as well as other country.

Though the world of a novel, play, or short story is an imaginary one, it presents a full and colourful setting in

which characters from many social / regional backgrounds are described. Through the make-believe world of literature, reader discovers the way the characters in such literary works see the world outside (i.e. their thoughts, feelings, customs, traditions, possessions). It is through the characters and their situations that the learners learn how to speak and behave in different settings. This colourful created world can quickly help the foreign learner to feel for the codes and preoccupations that shape a real society through decoding undertaken in class room teaching. Literature is the spinning image of real life which makes material of various genres (i.e. travel timetables, city plans, forms, pamphlets, cartoons, advertisements, newspaper or magazine articles) authentic. The valuable authentic material of literature is not primarily designed to teach language only, it is based upon its creator's imagination and experience both therefore, it is free from any kind of Xeroxing, canonical formation and it holds traits of its own. Literature calls for personal involvement of the readers; it holds the power to transit them from the real world to the world of that particular literary genre. The student becomes enthusiastic to find out what next at each level; gets close to certain characters and shares their emotional responses. The effects could be very beneficial upon the whole language learning process. In this process, many times students are able to overcome the problem of the identity crisis and develop into an extrovert personality. Literature helps students to go beyond the surface meaning and dive into underlying meanings and can relate to the stories they have read. To express in one single sentence the role of literature in language teaching is that it helps the students to actualize themselves in a single place and moment (Sage, 1987, 43).

Lately, there have been many upcoming theories and practices on the importance of language teaching through literature. It had been well proved and observed that the process of language teaching changes not only from country to country and culture to culture but from individual to

individual. Structured drills, which are widely used in especially audio-lingual method, make the process monotonous and these boring activities direct the students to look for new tools and materials, other than the textbook. Realizing this fact and to make the learning entertaining and interesting the writers and the publishers have been trying to encourage and to eliminate this boredom by presenting simplified literary passages since 1950s. Since it is a science, as every science does, using language as a tool, making use of literary texts in teaching foreign languages when the study of language is Science, the same can be taught with the help of technology. Therefore literature, in every kinds of written and spoken business, can be seen as expressing a specific subject e.g. literature for construction, literature for medicine, literature for child raising, literature for construction, texts may express the author's style. As seen, using literary texts in language teaching is an innovation, but teaching a foreign language only by using literary passages cannot, of course, be so useful.

Many universities around the globe offer a number of literature courses as part of the undergraduate program. Teachers who teach these courses often use the traditional method of lecturing on topics like theme, characterization, plot, motifs etc directly without giving any emphasis on the stylistic/linguistic aspect of the literary texts that they teach. Of course, students must be taught literature and it must be taught by creating an awareness of linguistic possibilities and sensibility. It is in this context that the idea of literature through language becomes relevant.

To teach language through literature, it is significant to spread awareness and likeability for literature as a tool for better understanding of language. It is the duty of the language teachers to justify the reasons for using literary texts in classroom teaching of English as a Second Language or Foreign Language and to stress the main criteria for selecting suitable literary texts in foreign language classes so as to make the reader familiar with the underlying reasons

and criteria for using and selecting literary texts. There are certain things which can be used to make learning effective and successful. First, the teacher should determine the aim of language teaching in relation to the needs and expectations of the students which will make the entire process more acceptable and relative. Both oral and written tests can be done like giving a questionnaire or interviewing with the students orally, the teacher can set up the aim and the objectives of the language teaching. Second, the trainer should select the appropriate language teaching method, teaching techniques, and classroom activities. Then, the teacher should select the literary texts relevant to the aim and the need of his/ her teaching. While selecting literary texts to be used in language classroom, the students' language proficiency, interests, age, sex, etc should be taken into account in order not to bore students with inappropriate materials. At preliminary levels, for example, students should be given very easy to understand or elementary specially written stories. At advanced levels, however, students are given literature in its original form, without any duplicity so that they can develop their literary competence in the target language. To put it another way, students learn practically the enriched literary and daily use of the target language in the literary texts and encounter different genres of literature (i.e. poems, short stories, plays, etc.) at higher levels. Observing how characters in a play or a short story use figures of speech, such as simile, metaphor, oxymoron, etc so as to express their communicative intention, students learn how to write English more clearly, creatively, and powerfully. Moreover, teaching of language skills through literature of different genres (i.e. poetry, short fiction, drama and novel) encounter some problems by language teachers within the area of teaching English through literature. These problems may be lack of out of box thinking in the teacher of language, that is, lack of awareness on this issue that why literature is taken as a tool for teaching language, lack of groundwork training in the area of literature teaching in TESL / TEFL programs, language teachers' not having

the background and training in literature, lack of newly designed teaching materials that can be used by language teachers in a classroom context are taken into account and most common of all the shortcomings, is the language teachers' poor command over the subject or the language due to lack of higher or proper qualifications. But it is not just the duty of the teachers to spread awareness for teaching language through literature but also that of the ESL syllabus designers and textbook writers to each shoulder. In our country over the period of time there have been many changes and developments in ESL teaching but still there is a vast scope of improvement left. The syllabus must be directed entirely towards the course that should accomplish the most effective way to study language through the medium of literature. ESL textbook writers' and publishers' products must aim to serve as an aid to the teacher and the taught in a bid to teach and learn English practically in a second language milieu.

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In Search of the Eternal Bliss: A Movement from Shri Aurobindo to Charu Sheel Singh.

*Santosh K. Pandey**

Shri Aurobindo, by no means, is a poet of the 'physical' than a poet of the spiritual. Charu Sheel Singh equally continues with the same tradition of impregnating the physical with the spiritual and proclaiming that it is only the latter that can be regarded as the eternal source of happiness. Physical is only a means to achieve the spiritual as discoursed emphatically by Krishna in *The Gita*. Temporal boundaries have never been the apocalyptic vision of human consciousness. The natural 'types' inform the supernatural 'archetypes', and this is why, man finds his redemption outside the physicality of his being. This journey from types to archetypes and physical to spiritual can be perceived in the dialectical process of human life from birth-maturity-and rebirth (rebirth conceived as bliss-full existence in the spiritual world). The poems of Charu Sheel bring out the reality of what man has achieved temporally; they also posit a world of man's cumulative aspirations beyond that temporality. The existential reality of being is subject to causal effects, which gyrate man in the vicious circle of death and destruction. Contrary to causality is typology. Typology inbreeds every part of categorical thinking whose aim is to capture the totality of existence. The fragmentation of the *typos* is mainly brought about by causality, which produces frivolousness of cause and effect, rendering the being as mere, what Northrop Frye calls, *alazon* and *pharmakos* figures.

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The phases of revelation in the poems of Charu Sheel are filtered through from the most ironic to the anagogic. The poems, sometimes, seem to present an improvisation with the material and the spiritual. One can get here the Eliotic irony of death and decay as well as the epiphany of Aurobindo. The movement through phases to the anagogue can be seen in the following lines:

On the global map of crimson thoughts I often paste tiny newspaper clippings of daily interest in order to find myself.

It is not in being like anything that we shall know who we are. It is by the road-side and on the pavement that being awaits us. Let us all go there in order not to go there for that is the only way to drive soul away from all filthy fuse.

(Songs of Life and Death Poem No. xxii)

Shri Aurobindo takes this movement at a different level of benign mysticism that conceptualizes the evolution of self and spirit in a *Vendantic* approach. His theory of evolution is concentrated in the channels of imaginary romances of getting the divine through peace, meditation and emancipation of the mind from the mundane. The paper will carry forward this emancipation of mind from the mundane by analyzing the poetry of Shri Aurobindo and Charu Sheel Singh. Both of them continue the tradition of liberating the self from the material and merging with the super *atman* that is what precisely *Bhagwat Gita* tells about.

The poems of Sri Aurobindo aim at the higher up-turn of the human mind that is always intrigued in the present and more in present's voluptuous luxuries or common adversaries. He wrote: "Man is a transitional being. He is not final. The step from man to superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth evolution. It is inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner spirit and the logic of nature's process."

Sri Aurobindo enacts a supernatural platform on this earth only. He perceives that the agents of spirituality are existent nature and environment itself and through the

agents such as wind, water, *naad*, steeps and heights. He speaks of two central movements in the process of creation: an *involution* of consciousness from an original omnipresent Reality, manifesting a universe of forms, including matter; and an *evolution* of those material forms in creation upward toward life, mind, and spirit, reconnecting to their spiritual source.

There are two types of evolutions Sri Aurobindo talks about- the Involution and Evolution. The surge of the cosmic creation is processed through the timeless, spaceless, ineffable, immutable Reality. The feeling of the reality of existence under such creation is the bliss (*ananda*) which is the result of Sat (existence) and Chit (consciousness). When the consciousness makes a deliberate attempt to absorb itself in the *satchtananda*, the process of evolution begins that ends at the supramentalisation. I would like to quote from his poem "Liberalisation":

I have thrown from me the whirling dance of mind
 And stand now in the spirit's silence free,
 Timeless and deathless beyond creature-kind,
 The centre of my own eternity.

Charusheel Singh's poetry too presents this evolution in its multifold presentations of the divine, human, and natural realities from the starkest to the anagogic manifestations. He looks to have strong negative capability that beautifully balances the Christ, Buddha, Ram and Krishna in their grimmest passion to the blissful divinity. Similarly he presents the human and natural cycle witnessing the 'birth' of spring to the 'death' of 'autumn'. In fact, he reiterates the universal concepts that the 'reality' will always take its own shape quite unaffected by the existential configuration of thoughts, which the empirical mind endeavors to shape into. Charusheel views Earth as the epicenter of all endeavors whether it is divine, natural, or divine. The earth viewed as the mother of all good and evil is the playground of gods fondling with nature, exercising their supernatural powers on humans.

On the rhetorical level Charusheel is largely epical. There is an elevated sense in the application of words and phrases to the thought under consideration. He would employ the diction of science and technology, cults and rituals, human and natural activities with equal height. There seems an implicit message that in spite of the degeneration that has crept in functioning of the universe there are still agencies which relentlessly try for the order of the universe. Of course this 'order' has been viewed in the metaphors of the 'disorders' because the poet believes in a live universe, which is splitting itself continuously for sustaining the creation to its destination, a point where all mire and mirth would be neutralized into the absolute organism. The diction employed by the poet echoes Derrida's 'floating signifier' a process of words creating and filling 'deference' made by itself. The lexicography seems to follow the 'myth of deliverance' through the words. It leads the reader to a desired goal which the poet thinks 'ought to be'.

The crisis in the Indian English Poetry in the past years was largely one of evolving a substantially poetic language, which could signify the conceived ideas.

'If you can get to its essence, even a lowly potato would be poetic. What is remarkable is that poetry can prove it. In India, in the post-independence era, innumerable collections of poetry written in English have appeared from various publishing houses. Certainly more than the volumes of prose that have been published so far. The point is: It is an odd situation, because more bad poetry is being published now than ever before in Indian history. And whereas our fiction has made a decisive impact on literary writing around the world, nothing very significant has been seen in the output of Indian poetry written in English' (Jayant Mahapatra).

Language is the product of perceptions. The way one perceives the same way one writes. The perceptions of some serious idea can never be expressed in a profane syntax, and

if so, it will turn farcical. Similarly it is awkward to be extraordinarily rhetorical on the very commonplace issues. R. Parthasarathy writes: "There is a conflict between language as a simple communication and man's desire for ever greater expressiveness—a conflict between informing on the one hand, on the other, trying through language to put something new or personal in the world, to use words in unaccustomed ways."¹ This is particularly true of the modern Indian poets writing in English these days. They have successfully nativised English to express the local and homogenous issues.

Charu Sheel adheres to 'the myth of concern'. He evaluates the contemporary scenario under the canons of India's glorious past. There is a continuous yearning, in his poetry, to achieve the lost horizon of our insurmountable knowledge of the *Vedas, Aryanyakas, and Puranas*. The poet achieves a unique sense of primitivism and contemporaneity through the use of epic metaphors on the modern scenario. His figures are conditioned in eternal Indian philosophy and culture. One is awestruck at the range of his perceptions and their application to issues of human concern. This is particularly true of his epical narratives of *The Creation Cocktail*, and *Terracotta Flames*.

Charu Sheel does not belong to that tradition of Indian poets who collect the fragments of experience drawn from a saint in solitude to a cobbler on the street and say, "this is our society- Asia, Europe and Africa". He has an epical beginning, middle, and end. He always feels the presence of a greater *Atman*, which is agonized over the current sterility of human perception and execution. This *Parma-atman* is not limited to India only or let me say that India is not known to him as a specified geography in which Hindus live and he as an Aryan scholar limited to Oriental civilization only. In fact, he doesn't believe in any specific geography and so the whole his *play-ground*. His characters are not only Rama and Krishna but Christ and Mohammed too. And why Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Christ alone, He

can refer to Shiva, Vishnu, Jehovah, and Moses also. On the treatment level of humanity under dialogue with these divinities, one finds the entire civilization from Harrappa-Mohanzodaro to Mesopotamia, to Nile and Egypt interlinking with one another like a big family. The criss-cross references make the poetry of Charu Sheel a poetic presentation of world's cultural history. It's a presentation of human civilization in relation to its arch constitutor.

Coming to *Creation Cocktail* (1997, Vishwajana Adhyayan Sansthan, Varanasi) it is probably the most audacious work on the theme of creation and functioning of civilization. The poem is in fact a beautiful narrative, a short epic, interpreting the relations and cross-relations of divine, human and natural agents to define the purpose of creation. Why has the creation become a contamination or 'disorder' as the title suggests has been beautifully presented by the poet. But in *Creation Cocktail* the poet instead of blaming these agents for the failure of creation views such failures as the imminent truth. He considers fragmentation as the catalyst to totality. The poet endeavors to find out the reality of creation in terms of endless attempts and failures. The binaries like life/death, happiness/sorrow, fall/redemption are taken as the cause and effect principle in the sustenance of creation. The poet puts it rhetorically:

There is no use in reckoning
time and grooming stories
without congruence or
shape. Life is a
myriad version of an
endlessly ongoing continuous debate

(*Creation Cocktail* p.18)

Reading *Terracotta Flames* (Wizard Publishing Co. New York, 2003) does not, in fact, understand it at once. It requires a sense of distance from the usual readings of literature especially such literatures where the common motives and themes are too realistic and temporal to warrant any extraordinary approach. Therefore reading these poems

is as good as reading universal philosophy with a least philosophical mind or debating a *raga sangeet* without understanding the *naadtatwa*. The poems in the collection are poems in meditation unleashing strong radiographs transmitting the physical and metaphysical realities of the universe. The poems simply do not involve verse rhetoric on some crude idea and event, rather they weave thoughts together recurring in a thoughtful discourse on human existence in a metaphysically governed universe.

In fact, the first poem is a prologue to what other poems in the collection iterate. The poems are a shocking realization to those pretenders of contemporary history, who view modern history as the full bloomed lotus on the dirty platforms of ancestral mud. They forget that their 'military might', which seized the 'Towers of Infinity', has itself become prisoner under its own 'owling conscience (I, p.1). Such pretenders can only hoot and hoot but never sing. The poet views the modern society and its inhabitants in such metaphors: A swollen house/ empty though struggling/ under the debris/ of history inhabits/ poor people—cultured/ yet exiled (III, p.1).

The undercurrent contrast in all the poems is that between the holy conscience reflecting the terracotta flames and the external tempting environment, which maligns these reflections. The tempting world of Satan chooses the human body and soul the easy conductors for trespassing the lighthouse of the holy conscience. Human beings are charged of this malignity of the soul: 'Are we pumpkins/ of disease encroaching/ upon conscience without/ adequate fees?' (XI, p.11).

The world of disabled images is masquerading before the awakened mind: 'Vituperative images/ clink and cluster round/ wheels that ferret/ round instinctual paradigms/ into the subliminal/ naught of disease' (V, p.5). The poet's anguish is not without the hope of redress. He invokes the glorious past to shape the present: 'Rise O mortals/ beyond your

coffin/ selves to inaugurate/ yesterdays into sanguine/
tomorrows of love./ Let the sea-shells sing/ choral hymns
like/ the eternal dove' (XVIII, p18). The poet discredits the
apodictic concept of culture which is informed by any one
Orthodox idea and belief rather he believes that 'It is a
difference/ between the raw&/ cooked that/ malleates itself,
shapes/ and sides in bi-polarity/ of figures who/ put on the
garb/ of clownish landscape/ on the surface of/ articulated
seasons' (XXIV, p24). The cited lines, further, show the
poet's hold on various schools such as anthropological,
structural and the deconstructive which are involved in
defining culture. Charusheel's poetry, on final analysis proves
to be a sojourn which leads to eternal bliss.

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Bakha and Velutha: A Study in Dalit Psychology

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Bakha, the protagonist of Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, and Velutha, the protagonist of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* present the two faces of the same reality. *Untouchable* was published in the year 1935 while *The God of Small Things* was published in the year 1997. There is a long gap between the publications of these two great novels. One was published in the pre-Independence age when the Indian society was afflicted with a number of social evils. The evil of untouchability was one of these evils. Bakha was the victim of this social evil. But the novel *The God of Small Things* is published in the enlightened period at the end of 20th century. Yet the life of Velutha is no better than Bakha. Even after the independence of our country and the good effort of the government the status of Dalits in Indian society is as miserable as it was in the early times. In the pages of history one can study a system of hierarchal discrimination among the people of the society on the basis of social, economic and cultural outlook. Today we are progressing day by day but our thoughts and expressions are the same. The Dalits and the downtrodden are leading miserable life in the modern times. Our doctrine of equality, liberty and fraternity is totally a mockery because the powerless and voiceless victims cannot speak at all. Since centuries downtrodden people have been denied and largely ignored by the society. In both the novels – *Untouchable* and *The God of Small Things* the cruel reality about the Dalits has been presented with utmost sincerity and honesty.

In the novel *Untouchable*, Anand highlights the social

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evil of untouchability by describing humiliation of Bakha, the sweeper boy. Bakha, the protagonist, is located in a fixed reality in the hope of capturing the essence of the sweepers' existence. The one-day action of the hero is intended to represent a fairly complete sociological experience. An uneducated young man of eighteen years, he was not dull-witted. Like others of his community he was subjected to humiliation and indifference by high-born Hindus. He was aware of his low position and also conscious of his inability to offer resistance against the inhuman treatment ruthlessly meted out to him. He was born in a sweeper-family, so he was never provided proper upbringing to become a civilized man. Bakha's day dawns to the harsh tune of his father's abuses intended to whip him up to work. He does not dislike work and needs no goading.

Bakha accidentally touches a Hindu and this starts off reactions. He was aware of his low position and also conscious of his inability to offer resistance against the inhuman treatment ruthlessly meted out to him. He was born in a sweeper-family, so he was never provided proper upbringing to become a civilized man. Mulk Raj Anand has himself amplified the whole idea thus: "I glimpsed the truth that the tragedy of my hero (Bakha) lay in the fact that he was never allowed to attain anything near the potential of his qualities of manhood."¹

Bakha is not denied touch but also taste. Once when he goes to sweep the market road and the temple courtyard, he is tempted to buy four anna's worth of cheap sweetmeat, after weighing the consequences of doing so both in philosophic and rational terms. Anand has masterly presented this scene, which contains Bakha's suppressed feelings and emotions before buying sweetmeat: "Eight anna in my pocket", he said to himself, 'dare I buy some sweets? If my father comes to know that I spend all my money on sweets; he thought and hesitated, 'but come, I have only one life to live; he said to himself, 'let me taste the sweets; who knows, tomorrow I may be no more".²

Bakha asks for jalebis worth four annas to a Bengali

sweetmeat seller. The shopkeeper weighs jalebis with great alacrity and hurls the packet at Bakha who catches it reluctantly: "He caught the jalebis which the confectioner threw at him like a cricket ball, placed four nickel coins on the shoe-board for the confectioner's assistant who stood ready to splash some water on them, and walked away, embarrassed yet happy."³

Bakha's annoyance knew no bounds at the contemptuous behaviour of the shopkeeper but he finds himself unable to raise his voice against this callous behaviour. The seeds of revolutionary feelings are germinating here in Bakha's mind as a sequel to these insults. This is not the end of these incidents but the worst is yet to come. Prior to this stage, Bakha is seen to have mirthfully accepted his given lot.

Another serious incident happened when Bakha touched a Lallaji. This produces an endless torrent of vulgar abuses from the touched man. Bakha's intention was not to pollute the Lallaji. He feels sorry and begs his pardon but in vain. It collected a big crowd, which continued to scold him mercilessly. In due course of time, encouraged by the crowd, Lallaji at once gave a sound slap on Bakha's cheek as a reward for what he has done. Dr. G.S. Balarama Gupta has rightly observed here when he says:

The climax of the novel, the incident where in Bakha 'touches' the Lallaji, is especially significant for the slap dealt on Bakha's face is symbolic not only of all the cruelty to which untouchables are subjected, but of the scornful treatment meted out to the underprivileged all over the world as, for instance the Negroes in the U.S.A.⁴

Bakha stood still his turban fallen on the ground and his poor jalebis scattered in the dust. At this critical juncture nobody was bit kind to him except a tongawalla who tries to console Bakha. He was also very much angry with Lallaji for his inhuman as well as brutal behaviour. Just after this serious incident, Anand has vividly described Bakha's revolutionary feelings, which emerged in him as a result of

utter humiliation. The following passage shows a radical change in protagonist's personality. :

He stood aghast. Then his whole continence lit with fire and his hands use no more joined. Tears welled up in his eyes and rolled down his cheeks. The cumulated strength of his giant body glistened in him with the desire for revenge, while horror, rage, indignation swept over his frame.⁶

The scene of the cruel crowd and the man who hit him flashes before his mind. Bakha, immediately realizes his actual position in the world. He automatically raises very pertinent as well as debatable questions before us to be sympathetically pondered over:

The cruel crowd: All of them abused, abused, abused, why are we always abused? They always abuse us. Because we are sweepers. Because we touch dung. They hate dung. I hate it too. That is why I came here. I was tired of working of the latrines every day. That's why they don't touch us, the high-castes."⁶

Bakha was highly grateful to the tongawalla for he has been kind to him. In his opinion, the Muhammadans and the Sahib are better than the Hindus because they do not mind touching anyone. After long consideration, Bakha expresses his factual position and worth, in the following passage:

It is only the Hindus, and the outcastes who are not sweepers. For them I am a sweeper, sweepers-Untouchable, Untouchable, Untouchable.

That is the word-untouchable. I am an untouchable. Like a ray of light shooting through the darkness, the recognition of his position, the significance of his lot dawned upon him.⁷

This is not the end of Bakha's insults but another more humiliating event than the previous one awaits him. He goes near the temple-door and catches just a glimpse of the dark sanctuary and its idols. He is moved by the songs of

the worshippers. After some time, he is highly surprised to hear the priest's noise—"polluted, polluted". The priest shouts now from near the temple that he too has been polluted by the contact of Sohini, Bakha's beautiful sister. On being asked by her brother, she hesitatingly told him that the priest, Pundit Kali Nath had made improper suggestion to her when she was cleaning the latrine and held her by her breast. In India, superstition has been playing havoc since the dawn of the human civilization and still our country is in its vicious grip. According to Hindu religion a temple can be polluted by a low caste man coming within sixty-nine yards of it. Bakha went mad on listening to the pathetic story of her sister. His revolutionary feelings, indignation and anger can implicitly be seen in his own words: "He felt he could kill them all. He looked ruthless, deadly pale and livid with anger and rage.... The man must have made indecent suggestions to her. I wonder what he did. Father of father! I could kill that man...Brahmin dog! Bakha exclaimed, "I will go and kill him."⁸

It appears as though Bakha has to live on insults. After sending Sohini home, he goes out to fetch food. There is orthodox housewife shouting with fury that Bakha had defiled her house by contact. She promptly scolds him and hurls some chapaties down from the fourth storey of the building. It came on the ground and scattered in the dust. Bakha picks them up and walks off with disgust overwhelming him.

The last incident, which provokes Bakha's mind, happened when a little child of higher caste was wounded with a stone in the match, which was being played between 31st Punjabis and the 38th Dogra boys. Bakha being an intelligent boy has already forbidden the child to play. Bakha himself took the child in his arms with profound sense of love and sympathy and went to his house. When Bakha carries the child to his house, the Babu's wife gets very much angry with him for he has polluted her son. She even thinks that Bakha himself has hit her boy and so starts abusing him vehemently. Had

there been another person of higher caste in the place of Bakha, he would have highly been admired for this act of kindness. Unfortunately, he deserves only the step-motherly treatment of the woman, which further sours his mind. Prof. R.S. Singh has rightly observed here:

They refused to recognize his sentiments and even his acts of kindness. Even when he saved the child from accident and brought him back to his mother, he was not praised for endangering his life to help the child. On the contrary, he was condemned for polluting the child lifting him in his lap.⁹

The approaching evening presents three solutions with which the book closes. Anand does not introduce any tricky situation, but creates one of the most memorable scenes in the recent Indo-Anglian fiction. Having been turned out by his angry father, Bakha meets three men with different solutions to his deep-rooted problem. First, Hutch-in-son, the padre of the Salvation Army proposes to baptize Bakha in order to remove the stigma of Caste. But Bakha instinctively turns to Gandhi who identifies himself with the untouchable by declaring that he wishes to be reborn as an untouchable. But Bakha feels something mystical about the Mahatmaji's solution. The final solution is of poet Iqbal Nath Sarkar who tells about water closets and main-drainage all over the country, which means a definite destruction of the soulless system of caste. He is of the opinion that the introduction of flush-system will finish all the troubles of both untouchability and untouchables.

The creation of *Untouchable* by Anand is the rejection of casteism as a heinous practice involving man's inhumanity to man. The novel is a crusade not only against the evil effects of caste system, but it generates the element of compassion among readers for the protagonist also. Bakha is a perfect individual whose excellence is flawed by his low caste for which he is definitely not responsible. All the episodes of Bakha's humiliation reveal how unjustly the untouchables are treated by caste Hinuds. Thus by creating

a powerful character like Bakha, Mulk Raj Anand hits at the evils of the society and advocates for the social justice to the down-trodden section of Indian population.

Arundhati Roy's famous Booker Prize winning novel, *The God of Small Things*, apart from dealing with a number of postmodern issues like history, politics, religion and biology, is also concerned with the theme of untouchability. Untouchables exist at the bottom of India's rigid social order known as caste system. Arundhati Roy has very potentially portrayed this problem and has tried to establish the fact that in spite of the development of science and technology in the country, thinking of Indians has not broadened accordingly and they could not easily tolerate the progress made by a Dalit.

The story of the novel *The God of Small Things* is set in the town named Ayemenem in Kerala, depicting the time period from 1969 to 1993. Though the story basically depicts the history of a well-to-do Kochamma family, while describing the socio-cultural milieu of the town, the novelist has laid bare the evil consequences of untouchability in the post-colonial India. The caste described in the novel is Paravan to which the young Velutha belongs. His father, Villya Paapen was a toddy tapper and he too, was the victim of caste discrimination but he dare not speak even a single word against it because during the colonial period the conditions were worse and a very inhuman treatment was given to untouchables. Remembering those days, Mammachi, the mistress of Kochamma family once told about her girlhood days:

When Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom sweeping away their foot prints ... were not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouth when they spoke, to divert their polluted breath away from those whom they addressed.¹⁰

Even now in early seventies of 20th century they are "not

allowed to touch anything that touchables touched" (73). Arrival of Britishers to Malabar worsen their condition as a number of people from the castes like Paravan, Peiya and Pulya converted to Christianity in lieu of a little food and money but unfortunately they were neither accepted by high class Christians nor by the upper caste Hindus. Respectable status remained a dream for them and they were segregated as 'Rice-Christians'. Even independence of India could not prove to be beneficial for them because they remained devoid of the benefits given to the Scheduled Castes as on paper they were Christians. Therefore, they had to bear the curse of untouchability.

Velutha, the protagonist of *The God of Small Things* is committed to be an educated, skilled carpenter, in spite of the handicaps his father faced during educational journey of his son. He got such an innate technical mind that he could easily set all the machines including radios, clocks, water pumps etc., right within a short span of time. It was his misfortune that he was born to a Parvan family otherwise "he might have become an engineer" (75). In a way, his caste proves to be a barrier in the fullest development of his capabilities. Velutha, an untouchable works at the Paradise Pickles and Preserves factory owned by Chacko, Ammu's brother. Ammu, a touchable woman is attracted towards Velutha because of his outstanding intelligence, skills, sudden smile and a touch of humanity he had. Her life, in itself, is a tale of suffering and agony as neither the members of her family nor the relatives and neighbours like her decision of living with her parents after her divorce. She is also the victim of whimsical society. Her marriage to a man of her own liking and the subsequent divorce made her a kind of outcaste. Her presence and the presence of her children Rahel and Estha is avoided by people living around her. Obviously, she begins to feel neglected and gradually turns irritating. In such condition it is Velutha who offers what is denied to her and her children. He gives company to the children in spite of the fact that children are prohibited to

go to his house. Ammu's attraction towards him is quite spontaneous and natural and she used to meet him near the bank of the river in the darkness of night. She does not care about his caste rather looks at his human qualities. Her dreams also have him, though in a disguised form of a cheerful 'one arm man' with which he held a lamp. "He had no other arm with which to fight the shadows that flickered around him on the floor"(215). He swam in the sea but with no "foot prints in sand, no ripples in water, no image in mirror". He was in fact, "The God of Loss", "The God of Small Things", "The God of Goose Bumps and sudden smiles"(217). Here the one -arm man symbolically stands for an incapable man who in spite of his will to fight, is unable to combat against the hostile factors that check his progress in life. He is unable to use the utmost of his powers and only half of his potentials could be utilized by him. The shadows that flickered around him and "the shadows that only he could see" stand for the forces of society which hinder his way only for his being an untouchable. When he dares touch a woman from higher caste, whole of world gets topsy turvy. His godly qualities though retained but he is called "The God of Small Things". In a way his untouchability is such a bane for him that his human qualities appear to be insignificant in comparison to his caste identity. His deeds no doubt are praiseworthy and indispensable for the members of upper caste but he does not get proper respect and congenial treatment in society.

The love affair between Ammu and Velutha develops day by day. The two abandoned souls meet in a deserted house of Kari Saipu on the other side of the river. They begin to derive pleasure of the company of each other from the small things like devout praying mantis, the pair of small fish those bite Velutha and cause a tickling, while he is in the streams of river and also the clumsy caterpillars and the helpless beetles. They laugh at these small things because no other philosophy can justify their love and the pleasure that they are deriving from their meetings.

Eventually, their secret relationship is discovered and its news is first given by Velutha's father himself to Mammachi. Baby Kochamma's reactions, after knowing about the love affair are quite natural and truly represent the established hierarchical order of the society in which the identity of an untouchable is considered negligent. She betrays Velutha to save her family name. In the whirlwinds of circumstances he is proved to be a man who committed a crime. He is charged falsely for being a victim for Sophie Mol's death, attempting rape on Ammu, kidnapping Rahel and Estha etc. Even the political activist comrade Pillai does not come to the rescue of Velutha. The Police Inspector, a representative of higher caste is also against Velutha after seeing the illicit relation between Ammu and him. His attempt to get the statement of children changed to save the reputation of Baby Kochamma clearly reveals that his purpose is not to trace the truth rather it is to protect touchables at the cost of an untouchable's life. Therefore, Velutha was beated brutally by him and his men and with the severe injuries he died. The novelist Arundhati Roy had described very realistically the miserable condition of Velutha:

Blood spilled from his skull like a secret. His face was swollen and his head looked like a pumpkin, too large and heavy for the slender stem it grew from. A pumpkin with a monstrous upside down smile. Police boots stepped back from the rim of a pool of urine spreading from him, the bright bare electric bulb reflected it (319-320).

Thus, we see that Velutha is a character who is socially discarded, politically neglected and physically tortured. His mistake is only that he wants to rise above the established social tradition and convention. Ultimately he becomes the victim of class conflicts and has to meet his horrible end.

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'IT' –A Tool of English Language Teaching

*Roop Kala Sinha**

The powerful nature of IT, expressed in the Report by "National task Force" on Information Technology (1998), appointed by the Government of India is as follows:

Information Technology (IT) modernizes the economy, expands and deepens the possibilities in education, accelerates growth, creates large-scale direct and indirect employment to the educated youth, and boosts exports. If there is one single technology that can be applied right across all sectors of technology, all areas of administration, all levels of education and all types of services, it is Information Technology.

Language is the basic medium of interaction without which social life of humans could not have emerged. The miracles of science and technology arouse the need for a great cementing force –a mutually intelligible language. With its elegance, grace and style, English, the Queen of languages, helps keep the wheels of the world turn. The world-wide garden of English unfolds the folds of a dark curtain of ignorance. It is so adaptable and transparent a language that it can take on the tint of any country. A world language should be free from biological assertive functions, social elite section, and professional elitism. By the number of people using the language, geographical dispersion and vehicular load, English enjoys a predominant position among world languages.

For the past several decades, a great deal of debate has raged on about the pedagogical worth of computers in the

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classroom. On the one hand, computer and software companies often provide mostly anecdotal evidence as to the usefulness of technology in language instruction stating heightened student motivation and more engaging learning. However, a number of researchers have suggested that while technology has grown by leaps and bounds, teachers' use of it often remains very antiquated, limited to simple writing assignments and Internet searches. Some have suggested that this has been due, in part to educators' limited vision of the role of technology in language instruction. Fortunately, educators can be a very chismatic with the right tools and training, and can adapt their teaching styles to new situations. In the field of language education, a great deal of emphasis now focuses on online learning, and it is treated as the great liberator by freeing students and teachers to accomplish learning in new and exciting ways.

Internet may appear to be an easy concept to grasp, but it can be a very unfriendly jungle out there. In simple terms, the Internet is the telecommunication and computer systems that are linked together, just like a great complex water system. Some of it is a new, with big wide robust pipes; other parts are obsolete, narrow and even leaking. Some pipes can handle a large volume of water; others are clogged, and flowing through this pipe system is the content, the files (documents, audio files, graphics, etc.) –that are being requested around the globe. Such a scenario can result in Internet congestion, and going online might be just as rewarding as sucking molasses through a thin straw.

The time has arrived to take the plunge into the somewhat murky and complex world of the Internet. This online playground is home to an extremely vast collection of information, but sifting through it effectively is a more challenging task than we lead students to believe. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is an approach to language teaching and learning in which computer technology is used as an aid to the presentation, reinforcement and assessment of material to be learned usually including

a substantial interaction element. Very recently, the influences of classroom environment started to be recognized in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) research. Until now, most CALL empirical studies have focused on the effectiveness of the medium itself, particularly in comparison with conventional teaching tools and have narrowed down to very specific linguistic features.

Gangalez-Bueno has analysed the effectiveness of using e-mail as a tool to promote foreign language learning in and out of the classroom. The study identifies the following features of the foreign language generated through e-mail:

- (a) Greater amount of language
- (b) More variety of topics and language functions
- (c) Higher level of language accuracy
- (d) More similarity with oral language
- (e) More student-initiated interactions
- (f) More personal and expressive language use

In sum, these studies on learning strategies are notable because they examine the related theories or approaches that apply to classrooms. However, different classroom environmental factors should be considered.

Classroom Environment Condition

It is clear that the study of classroom environment is important to understand learning atmosphere, perception, goals and interaction for optimal language learning. Besides, classroom environment provides various opportunities for students to learn and interact in the learning context. In Spolsky and Chapelle's views, opportunities from learning environment refer to classroom members, experiences from interaction between teachers, students, tools, instructional strategies or goals in classroom environment. Spolsky claims that the interplay between language learner and learning opportunities determines the learner's success in achieving the linguistic outcomes including changes in attitude.

Egbert proposed a set of environmental conditions for

language learning classroom. Environmental conditions for a language learning classroom can be:

1. Interaction: Learners have opportunities to interact and negotiate meaning
2. Authentic Tasks: Learners are involved in authentic tasks
3. Authentic Audience: Learners interact in the target language with an authentic audience
4. Opportunities for Exposure and Production: Learners are exposed to and encouraged to produce varied and creative language
5. Time/Feedback: Learners have enough time and feedback
6. Intentional Cognition, Learning Style and Motivation: Learners are guided to attend mindfully to the learning process
7. Atmosphere: Learners work in an atmosphere with an ideal stress/anxiety level
8. Control: Learner autonomy is supported

Each element of optimal language learning in some way affects the others. For example, authentic task may increase students' motivation and trigger more peer interaction. Naturally, more feedback and less stress cause excitement for learning, and these conditions cannot present all aspects to be considered for language learning. In particular, Moos notes that different subject areas need and have different environments. However, each condition is supported by many empirical studies and is described a lot in learning theories or approaches. Therefore, for this study, these eight conditions proposed by Egbert were used as a framework to understand opportunities from TELL classroom environments.

In English language teaching, technology included are cameras, audio equipment, computer technology, video equipment, overhead projection devices, scanners, printers, CD equipment –almost any device that can access, present,

manipulate and communicate words, sounds and images to enable us to create meaning.

English teachers have always used some technology but the explosion in digital technologies has opened up new and exciting possibilities. There are two kinds of reasons for using computer technology in English. For students, technology can:

- Be very motivational
- Be the source of a significant amount of reading material
- Be fun – and when it's a fun, one learns
- Help students to produce excellent published work

For teachers, technology can:

- Allow for the easy production, storage and retrieval of prepared materials such as certificates and work required sheets
- Free up communication with other teachers
- Help teachers to find information easily
- Assist good-teaching but not replace it

Actually, challenges and opportunities presented by computer technology make it an increasingly important part of English in particular. These include:

- The emergence of new kinds of texts and the consequent need to teach students to create and use these texts effectively.
- Changing social practices associated with communicating via computers and the consequent need to teach students how to make judgments about appropriate use of different avenues of communication.
- The pervasiveness and power of texts created through computer technology and the consequent need to teach

students to be critical readers and viewers of such texts.

Generally it is known that language and literature serves as a gateway to knowledge. Any person having a proper command of language especially English which is a global language, has the advantage of being one step ahead in understanding concepts and meanings in other fields of education. Through English language we are open to the Western world of art and music and several traits and we can infuse our own culture into them. We study Western science and medicine yet we preserve the knowledge of our own traditional medicinal herbs and plants. We are able to read the works of great thinkers all over the world and we try to use that knowledge to help our own societies. We are capable of competing with the best scholars of the land and acquire important posts in the administration of the country. The educated class are gradually finding it easier and of much greater advantage to communicate in the English language.

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ELT Integrated with Android: A New Paradigm with Technology

Nikhil Joshi

Living in 21st century, especially in an era of digital revolution requires coping with the pace of the change. Teachers have to change and update themselves to fulfil the demand of the hour. New age technology is revolutionizing each and every phase of life so rapidly that we need to be a part of this change. The present paper deals with how teachers can create their own Android application as per their own requirements for the subjects and how this can be utilized for going beyond the classroom for teaching-learning with the help of mobile phone OS Android. The paper also shares an example of actual use of Android application created for ELT.

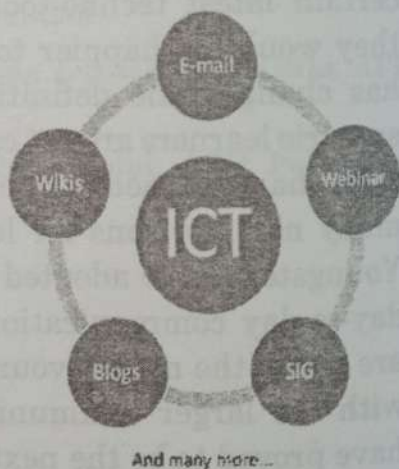
Learners today demand for techno-forms in their learning. If teachers being knowledge facilitator can help them with certain latest techno-tools in teaching their courses, then they would be happier to learn the course. Web technology has changed the definition of education today. In today's scenario learners are not content with only classroom teaching. They have turned to be 'netizens' and have explored lot many new horizons for learning new things in novel ways. Youngsters have adopted even new ways and techniques for day-to-day communication as well. Social networking sites are one of the most favourite tools to share and communicate with the larger communities online. Facebook and Twitter have proved to be the next generation tool for such purposes. Similarly in the field of education, it is highly expected that

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even teachers do use web-tools to go beyond the classroom for teaching-learning.

1. Role of ICT in Education:

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has grown so rapidly that without becoming conscious we have been a part of information revolution today. Technology based on computer, satellite and Internet has accelerated the growth of the nation. Use of ICT has given a new dimension to the current scenario of many professional fields including the field of education. A personal laptop, tablet and a mobile with all hi-fi features have become the necessity of the citizen of 21st century. A small gadget called mobile phone has captured variety of tools within a very small shape and affordable price. It's a kind of revolution in last ten years only. But the question is, are the teachers using ICT properly? Majority of teachers are not doing so. It's not that they are not aware of computer, mobile or Internet but they do not have that instinct to use these ICT tools for the betterment of teaching-learning. Information sharing has become so fast due to ICT that just in a second you can reach up to anyone in any corner of the world. The world has turned to be a global village where everything is at easy-reach. Saxena and Rai say, "ICT plays a significant role in transforming education according to the needs of the society...ICT is not only an essential tool for teachers in their day to day work but it also offers opportunities for their own professional development." (Saxena & Rai, 2010) ICT helps teacher education in following ways:



- ICT enables to interact with the students over a physical distance.

- ICT gives access to online libraries, journals etc.
- ICT provides a platform for quick and easy sharing
- ICT enables to receive quick feedback
- ICT helps to make the subject dynamic one
- ICT enables to expand the boundaries of materials
- ICT helps to creating network-ICT gives multidimensional active learning

In today's digital era, necessity of ICT should not be ranked less in teacher education. It is highly expected that teachers should have sound knowledge of ICT and they should be using it fruitfully within and beyond the class. With the help of ICT teaching-learning process can be more learner focused and need based. It also gives learner's autonomy. It makes it easy to make the textbook a dynamic one by using various types of relevant material and references available online. Wikis, Blogs, Ning, Tumbler, online groups etc. can be used as a part of ICT. Computer mediated communication (CMC) is widely being used for collaborative projects, online sharing and webinars too. Video conferencing and teleconferencing are also being used for interviews and interactions as well.

Following are the details of such online web-tools which can be useful for teachers and learners too. These websites give flexibility of teaching and learning both.

2. E-learning:

Online education has come in vogue in full fledge in 21st century. Many universities are offering online courses and certifying learners for such courses. Moreover, many such websites like Wiziq and many more are providing such facilities where teacher from any corner of the world can teach learners from any corner of the world. E-learning has made learning truly flexible in its true sense. Distance learning programs have been using such e-learning tools for better convenience.

Blogs, Wikis, Moodle, Wordpress, Ning etc. are the sites which can be used and which are being used to go beyond the classroom for teaching-learning. Students and teachers can create their special interest groups on such websites and can share their ideas with lot many online gadgets available online free of charge. So education in 21st century has undergone a vast and rapid shift from teacher centered to learner focused scenario. It enables learners to learn at his/her own ease, convenience and pace. Teachers can use variety of online tools on his/her web page, blog, wiki etc. to make the subject more interesting and to use a wide range of relevant material available online. This truly creates learner's autonomy.

3. M-learning:

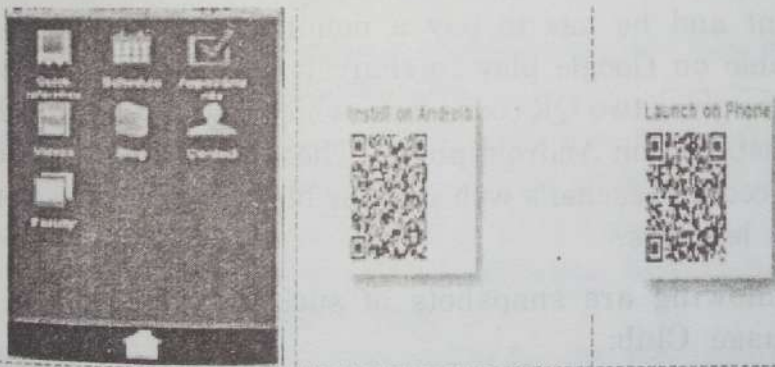
After E-learning, a new phase has already arrived and that is of M-learning. Learning through mobile, that sounds quite interesting. Mobile phone has become a kind of necessity for almost everyone in today's lifestyle. Today's learner surfs lot many websites like Facebook, Twitter and many more almost every day on mobile phone instrument. Things are just one touch away now. They are fond of sharing each new update on their Facebook page every now and then. Especially after the start of Android OS in mobile phones, applications have changed the world. This has, in fact, changed even the way people live today, learn today. There are many educational applications available for Android that can be used for variety of purposes.

A mobile phone can also be used for teaching-learning process with the purpose of easiest and fastest tool for communication. There are many websites like way2sms, fullonsms etc. which give the facility of creating groups of the numbers of your choice for sending SMS in bulk. It can be used for staying connected with the learners' group for sharing important information. Message conveyed on mobile phone gives the sense of personalized message received on the receiver's part. There are many educational Android

applications which can be installed on mobile phone device and can be used for teaching-learning purpose. It's quite pleasing that now teachers themselves can also design their own Android application as per their requirements for the subjects they teach. Any latest information teacher updates on the application is available for viewing on user's mobile phone itself.

4. Make your own Android Application:

To cope with the technological shift in the field of education teachers need to know a little about new technology which is being used by most of the youth. Android apps are such an example. Hereby given one sample of such Android app designed for Language Class along with the QR Code images. These QR Codes can be scanned with QR Code Reader from the Android phone to launch and install the app on user's mobile phone. Teacher can place his/her profile, course details, latest notice, scheduled tasks, videos, quick reference links etc. on this app. Students can access all the updates made by teacher just through their mobile phones.



(Language Club Android Application)

5. Appsbars: A Tool for Making Your Own App:

Appsbars.com is a website where we can create our own Android application. It gives this feature free of charge. Users need to register with the website and then one can

create Android apps. It would also generate a QR Code (Quick Response Code) to launch the application on Android phone. Through this app students can also send a query to teacher and teacher will receive those queries on his/her email address.

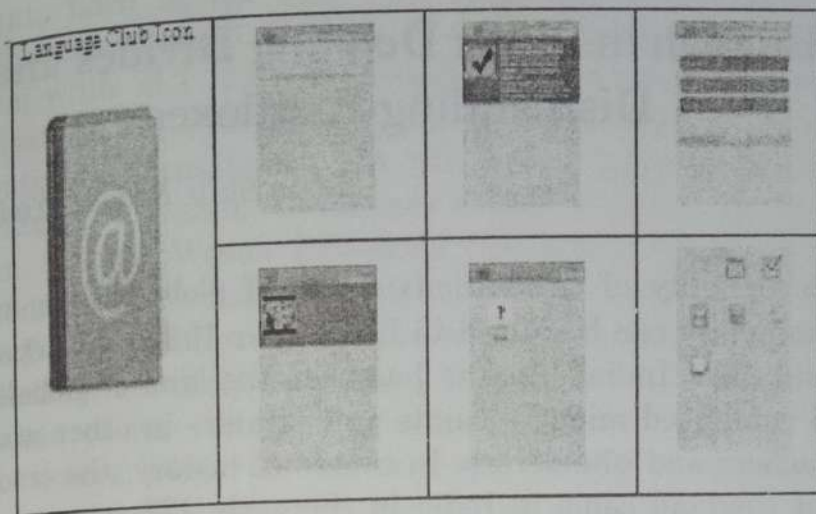
These apps can be very effective tools to go beyond the classroom, to go beyond the textbook. Teachers can also check out two more websites for educational apps.: www.classroom-aid.com, www.mashable.com.

6. What to create on an App:

On appsbar.com one has to just register with the website and has to follow few simple steps to create an app. On this app one can place web page, links for useful web pages, text details, images, videos and even a query form can also be designed on app through which learners can send their query to the teacher through their Android phone itself. Whatever information teacher updates on this app becomes available to downloaded app on learners' app on phone.

After creating such an app developer can publish it on Google play as well. For this he needs to have Google Wallet account and he has to pay a nominal charge to make it available on Google play to share it worldwide. Otherwise appsbar gives two QR codes from which app can be launched and installed on Android phone. These QR code images can be placed on teacher's web page or blog for the convenience of the learners.

Following are snapshots of such an app created for Language Club:



Conclusion

Thus, creating an Android app for English or any other subject can add a techno- dimension to teaching-learning. It becomes an easy-to-reach platform especially to go beyond the classroom for teaching-learning. It can give fruitful results in terms of making subject more interesting for the learners. It also fulfils the techno-demands of 21st century learners.

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English in India: Deleting Divides and Dismantling Paradoxes

*Shiv Kumar Yadav**

The visibility of the various forms of globalization more prominently can be traced in India after 1980s but actually even before 'India', 'Bharat' has been the land of globalised and goblinised minds – saints and satans - in other words, preachers and plunderers. In course of history, the traders from England came to India in the early 17th century and became both the preacher and plunderer during their stay. India was a geographical expression for them, for us it was 'Bharat' with all kinds of heterogeneity and hierarchy. After observing our socio-political heterogeneity and hierarchy, they started to think of a pan-Indian empire. After consolidating their political power, they very systematically ensured their sustainability through various means, and one of them was education, which was quite elitist in nature in our tradition. This elitism in education helped the 'business-turned-bureaucracy' of England to spread English in India very successfully. But the enormous gap between the mass and the class of India, forced them to be ambivalent as to the medium of instruction at school level. For good or bad, (a debatable issue), India till today is ambivalent on this issue despite having an amazing metamorphosis of a 'caterpillar' Bharat into a 'butterfly' India.

Let us have a quick survey of the past. In the first quarter of 19th century, the debate started as to the medium of education at school. It is well known to all of us how Raja Ram Mohan Roy advocated the need of modern education in India, which was available only in English. Charles

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Grant, Lord Moira and T.B. Macaulay (bracketed as Anglicists) favoured English in the educational system of India; while H.T. Princep, (bracketed as Orientalists) was against the use of English as a compulsory language. In the debate, the Anglicists got the upper hand and Lord Auckland, the then Governor-General of India favoured them. But the Wood's Education Dispatch of 1854, though intended to serve both English and the vernaculars, planted a seed of gap and promoted the basic tension between them as well as between the mass and the class. English grew because of its inherent qualities absorbed during the Renaissance while the vernaculars without much curves and verves suffered after the school education and still suffer.

After Independence, India got English as a Hobson's choice to keep heterogeneous social Bharat together under the near homogeneous political India. What were the advantages then and now?

"English is contributing to our presence at a global level, and is a binding factor at home.

Sachin Pilot

..... ..
..... ..

English is not a legacy of the Raj. The Indian National movement consciously adopted English in the early 1900s as a common language to communicate with members who came from different parts of the country. After the British left, we retained English for the same reason. We didn't know that the next superpower would be America – another English speaking country. And we didn't know that there would be something called the World Wide Web whose medium would be English." Ramchandra Guha (1)

Formation of linguistic states to preserve the vernaculars was very much logical in the context of time and space. But Article 343 of the Indian constitution created a new linguistic situation. It accorded Hindi, in Devanagari script, the status of national language (official language of the union). Later

on, after the protest from the different corners, English was recognized as the Associate national official language till 1965. Though in reality 1965 never come on the scene, the real bilingual India since then changed into 'imaginary' trilingual India. It's true Hindi is our national language but only notionally. But still there are many who think that Hindi should be learnt by each and every individual of India.

In the meantime, in absence of a coherent and logical language policy, English became and still is the natural choice of those Indians who were and are conscious of the internal and external realities and exigencies of new Indian as well as global socio-economic and political order. But many formal and informal actions of the union government created a gap between the mass and the class of India. The private schools were allowed to have English as the medium of instruction from primary to higher level of educational system, while the states' schools were left to do with their regional languages. In 1959, Govt. of India established the Central Institute of English, later named as Central Institute of English and Foreign languages (CIEFL) in Hyderabad. Now CIEFL has been changed into the English and Foreign Languages University. Concept of All India Services (I.A.S., I.P.S. & I.F.S.) came into being since Independence. All the centers of higher education controlled and guided by the union government have adopted English as the only medium of instruction. All these measures have created a corridor of power and prestige for the English knowing people inside as well as outside India. The people of the Hindi speaking states have realized this very fact very late (still many don't realize) that India would be governed by English only. The non-Hindi linguistic states were also engrossed with their linguistic chauvinism. All these gaps have resulted into great divides between the creamy layers of India and the bottom layers of Bharat. The illiterate India i.e. Bharat and the educated India without English are not only the sufferers but the latter also make English suffer in course of getting

it within 3-4 months capsule course in the English teaching-learning market. Still the public authorities of education are oblivious of the prevailing situation in government owned schools and colleges.

Even without having any chartered help from the states, English has been growing very steadily and fast. Today India has the third largest English using population in the world. At the world level, by 2015, half of the world population would speak in English comfortably. In a report, titled 'The Future of English', it has been revealed: "English is rapidly becoming integrated so deeply into the curriculum that it will cease to be a foreign language for many, perhaps most, of the world's citizens."²

Pankaj Mishra from Faridabad reports (Hindustan (Hindi) Muzaffarpur, 30 Sept 2008, Pp-16) that people belonging to the age group of 40-60 are the part of English-speaking courses in the town. They have great enthusiasm to learn English. This is to fulfil their social need – bridging the communication gap between the new and its old generation. In 2008, the Law Commission rejected a Parliamentary Committee recommendation to make Hindi the official court language for delivering judgments in the Supreme Court and all High Courts. The Commission found this suggestion very much counter-productive on many counts:

- a) Any kind of imposition will be opposed.
- b) Arguments are generally made in English at higher courts.
- c) Transfer policy of judges would get affected.

Amartya sen, the Nobel Laureate, sharply reacted (The Hindu, Delhi, 22 April 2009,21) against the 'Angrezi Hatao' Campaign of Mulayam Singh. He underlined that banning of English would isolate the non-English speaking from the mainstream. English has effectively become an Indian language. But again the Chief - Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, on 11 Nov 2012, remarked at a

function organized by Dattopant Thengadi Research Organization that "it was necessary to exorcise its (English) ghost. Though only a handful of people speak English, they have shown that nothing could be done without this language." ³ Reacting to Chouhan's anti-English statement, leader of opposition, Ajay Singh, said: "If the chief-minister really wants to demonstrate his love for Hindi, he should begin by getting his sons out of the English medium school and get them admitted to Hindi medium schools." ⁴

It is really painful to learn that such politicians knowingly give statements to consolidate their political constituencies. But, perhaps they don't know how damaging their hypocrisies to their voters (support lease) are!

According to the survey done by HRD Ministry in 2006 "The poor performance of Muslim, SC, ST and OBC students in these two subjects (English and Mathematics) is responsible for the high dropout rate among them."⁵ This kind of dropout among the backward lot of India's population sustains the existence of vicious circle of deprivations. They do not get opportunity to learn English at the primary level just because of faulty attitude of policy makers towards English. Despite growing popularity, inevitability and accessibility of English in every walk of life, it is being ignored by them just to be seen as politically correct. But actually they are not only economically incorrect but dangerously damaging to social harmony in coming time. Like population explosion, English education has been left uncared. As a result of this, the market of English teaching-learning has been harvesting the rich fortunes without enabling the learners even optimally. One of the issues of 'Outlook' (24 March 2008) is a piece of evidence. The cover page states: "For millions of Indians, proficiency in English is their passport to a better life; but they are taught rubbish."⁶

Some reports of this issue can be an eye opener for us:

"A 2006 survey (jointly conducted by Wipro Applying Thought in schools and the Organization Educational

Initiatives) among class 4-8 students in 134 top English medium schools in the five metros found that 80 percent of students even in class 8 make mistakes in Comprehension, grammar and syntax."... " 82-83 percent of non-engineering graduates applying to the IT enabled sector and 65-75 percent of applying engineers are rejected for lacking soft skills, including written and oral English fluency."⁷

Recently, a survey report as to India's proficiency in English has appeared in *The Hindu*. It states:

"While India's slot in first edition of EPE (2007-2009) was 30, it climbed to the 14th place in 2009 – 2011 scoring 10.14 points at 57.49. However, despite this long jump, India is placed in the moderately proficient slot with the top places for very high proficiency being occupied by European countries. Malaysia and Singapore with the highest proficiency in Asia, are examples of how English can be used to bridge linguistic divide among different communities within the same country. In addition to ethnic Malays both countries have large Chinese and Indian communities, each with its own traditions and languages. English has long been a required subject for all pupils starting with primary school, where it is often the medium of instruction."⁸

Both Malaysia and Singapore's approach to English can be helpful in ameliorating India's present scenario. In the same study, "the correlation between English proficiency and exports per capita has been identified. "Countries with low and very low proficiency have uniformly low level of exports per capita."⁹

Now I would like to deliberate on some of the paradoxes as to the English studies of our country. English educated people of non-Hindi background (whom I would call NON-HEE People hereafter) and English-educated people of Hindi background (to be called as HEE People) have different attitude towards linguistic policy and growth of our country. NON-HEE people wish to have exactly and proportionately equal growth of their mother tongue as well as English. This

kind of wish is quite natural and understandable in the context of ongoing debatable philosophy of multiculturalism, multilingualism and multilateralism within the umbrella of universalism. But the question that does arise is if it is practicable in the context of National India and global village? On the other hand HEE people enjoying an advantageous position of having numerically superior language (Hindi), wish to have an 'India' of those people who can speak and understand Hindi in every inch of the country and at the global level. Here again, a question can be placed: Is it possible without the slow death - natural and unnatural - of other languages?

Answers of both the questions are quite debatable. But without jumping into the debate, there is a related question to be discussed. Like bio-diversity, linguistic diversity is also getting depleted and diminished very fast. Preserving bio-diversity is very much related to the survival of mankind; is the linguistic diversity so essential and pragmatic for mankind when the globalization with its assimilating or integrating propensity and force are knocking at the door? Let us look into the post- mortem reports related to the death of the languages of the world and India.

"While there are an estimated 7000 languages spoken around the world today, one of them dies out about every two weeks."

"The eighty three (83) most widely spoken languages account for about 80 percent of the world's population while the 3500 smallest languages account for just 0.2 percent of the world's people. Languages are more endangered than plant and animal species." ¹⁰

"According to the 2001 census, India is home to nearly 100 languages, spoken by at least 10,000 people each. And the list grows to 450 if the parameter of 10,000 or more speakers is not applied."

"With little or no employment opportunities available in these languages, the prediction is that they would die a

natural death as the younger generations from these linguistic traditions join the mainstream."¹¹

"More than half of the world's 6700 spoken languages face extinction and on an average one language a year disappears somewhere in the world, the United Nations warned as it kicked off the International Year of Languages."

"Currently 96 percent of the languages are spoken only by 4 percent of the world's population with globalization placing many under grave threat."¹²

"With 196 of its languages listed as endangered, India, a nation with great linguistic diversity, tops the UNESCO's list of countries having the maximum number of dialects on the verge of extinction.

India is closely followed by the U.S. which stands to lose 192 languages and Indonesia where 147 are in peril.

The atlas classified around 2500 of the 6000 languages spoken world wide as endangered:

200 languages having less than 10 speakers.

178 languages having speakers between 10-50.

200 languages died out over 3 generations.

538 languages are under the category of critically endangered.

502 languages are under the category of severely endangered.

632 languages are under the category of long definitely endangered.

607 languages are under the category of unsafe."¹³

Observing the reports as to the shrinking linguistic diversity of the world, one can easily conclude that the world is slowly and steadily heading towards monolingualism. It may be a distant dream but quite perceptible.

Now let's discuss India's paradox. India's linguistic Atlas is like a slice of world's one. The direction and condition of

linguistic development of India is very much similar to the world. The way English is growing as a very popular language of India and that too without any official help or effort, it is not difficult to find once the joke (that the last Englishman would be an Indian!) Now a reality. In the scenario discussed, still we have learned professors of English like Sumanyu Satpathy (University of Delhi) and Sachidanand Mohanty (University of Hyderabad) belonging to NON-HEE, who advocate:

“Let a hundred tongues be heard.”¹⁴

“English language learning must go hand in hand with multilingualism.”¹⁵

On the other hand, we have former justice of the Supreme Court and present Chairman of Press Council of India, Markandey Katju who democratically persuades non-Hindi speakers to learn Hindi also. “Required, two tongues – English and Hindi have irreplaceable roles in national integration and ensuring progress..... Think rationally about learning Hindi and it will make sense.”¹⁶

We too have another group of Dalit thinkers, who have wisely intervened in the debate, though very late. They advocate that Dalits’ unity and development at pan –Indian level, can only be ensured if Dalits of India start learning and speaking English language. This is the same strategy which worked successfully against British Empire when English-speaking Indians assembled to form Indian National Congress in 1885 in Bombay.

What HEE people prescribe for NON-HEE is being resented by the latter, as it comes as an additional burden of third language without much benefit. What NON-HEE people prescribe for those people who belong neither HEE nor NON-HEE category emotionally, is being resented by the Dalits or Marginals. In this paradoxical ambience, English is growing but without being inclusive and also without having any pan-Indian texture. The authorities concerned at the Union and the states are playing the opossum with

the danger lurking in the forms of social, linguistic and digital divides that will finally culminate into great economic divide, which is still very wide due to many socio-political reasons.

To bridge the gaps and delete the divides, it is imperative to analyze and dismantle the paradoxes without being orthodox and toxic. English is all pervasive and powerful is now a truism. But many of us, though enjoying all the virtues of the knowledge of English, are still reeling from a sense of loss and nostalgia. Identity, culture, language, ego and many more real and imaginary things are in danger for them. The time has already arrived at the pan-Indian stage and scale to discuss the issue of language in the broader context of growing India and growing world. English can be with us (as it is at present) without injuring our identity, culture, history and ego except languages. We can understand the concept of identity in the larger perspective as analysed by Amartya Sen in "The Argumentative Indian.":

"Identity is thus a quintessentially plural concept, with varying relevance of different identities in distinct contexts. And most importantly we have choice over what significance to attach to our different identities. that while we cannot live without history, we need not live within it either." ¹⁷

We are also aware of it that English entered our world as a father language, a language of external communication, but now it has become our relative by alliance, I mean, a wife language. Chetan Bhagat advocates, "Hindi is your Mother, English is your wife, and it is possible to love both at the same time." ¹⁸

Needless to elaborate, the nextgen and netizen of India would have English as mother, may not tomorrow but surely after some tomorrows, as it is a natural corollary that a wife becomes a mother in due course. Further, if Darwinism is applicable to living organism, how any language can get

itself isolated from the forces of Natural Selection? History proves that a language also behaves like an organism, it evolves and dies too. Language meets its death when a community decides that its language is an impediment. The children may be first to do this realizing that other more widely spoken languages are more useful. With little or no employment opportunities available in these languages, the prediction is that they would die a natural death as the younger generations from these linguistic traditions join the mainstream. Thus it is quite obvious that a language that is ill-equipped to meet the requirements of new generation cannot be safe in its hands.

To sum up, I ardently wish that the youths would think about the emerging condition, character and competency of English language and speak up to generate new arguments to reach for the stars and also to reach out to those who are being left out in the path of progress. What is bad in accepting English as a language of our educational system vertically as well as horizontally without any ifs or buts?

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Dissolving Boundaries: A Study of Manju Kapur's *The Immigrant*

Kavita Tyagi*

Manju Kapur today holds a unique place in the Women writers' world- a world of initial rejection, dejection, familial bonds, domesticity and what not. It is amazing to note that she, like most of her contemporaries, has climbed the ladder of success in slow and painful way. Kapur rose to fame with her famous and much acclaimed debut novel, *Difficult Daughters*, which was published by London's prestigious publishing House Faber and Faber in the year 1998. Her novels are a result of extensive research, meticulous attention to details, close observation of life, keen perception and the sustained tone of an academician. Her experience as a teacher for not less than thirty years peeps through all her works. Her fiction invigorates English language to suit representation and narration of what she feels about her women and their lives in Post-Modern India. She expresses herself freely and boldly on a variety of themes, without adopting feminist postures.

Among all the relationships that camouflage the identity of woman it is particularly man-woman relationship which has garnered much interest among the readers and critics alike. Marriage becomes an institutionalized form of domination of woman by man. Because of the patriarchal rules, the institution of marriage in India is heavily tilted in favour of the male partner. In a typical marriage a woman has to surrender her personality and try to merge herself in the personality of her husband. This is largely true even in the case of working woman whose husband resents any individuality of the wife apart from her defined

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image. This becomes all the more unbearable if she outgrows her husband's social status. In a typical marriage the likings and desires of woman are not taken into account. Girls are often treated as objects to be picked up at will. Once a girl gets married, the husband takes complete control over her. A woman is treated as the property of her husband. After marriage a woman sheds all previous associations of her identity and acquires a new one. Thus, marriage does not enrich her individual self but forces her to adapt herself to pre-determined roles. Marriage, thus, in Kapur's novels is generally seen as a hindrance rather than a means of fulfilment for woman.

Patriarchal values have fixed gender roles, and as such it is the woman who is supposed to look after the home while the man is supposed to work outside and take care of worldly affairs. These roles have been so internalized that even when she starts working outside, she is not supposed to shed any of her domestic responsibilities. Strict confinement inside homes may have been relaxed to some extent, particularly in urban India with the opportunities for women's education and job but the freedom is still negligible if we look at it in totality of the scene. Because of the social pressure women are unable to pursue their ambitions. Man's will is imposed on them and they start treating it as their will. Despite all her access to education, various professions and modern ideas, her position in the family remains as subordinate to man. In her novels, Kapur represents the dilemma of modern women in India. De Beauvoir sums it up aptly, "The situation of woman is that she is a free and autonomous being like all creatures. Nevertheless, she finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other". (Beauvoir, 173)

The present paper shows the complexity that underlies man-woman relationship and its consequent influence on the psyche of woman. It aims to bring about a change in the Indian mindset and reveals the hardships that woman faces in the male-dominated society of which she is an

integral part. Her female protagonists jerk the average Indian readers out of their typical mindset regarding gender issues. *The Immigrant* traces the life of immigrant Indians through the portrayal of the lives of Nina and Ananda. It is an insight into man-woman relationship in general and husband-wife relationship in particular. The protagonist Nina, a thirty-year old Indian marries NRI Ananda, a dentist by profession living in Halifax, Canada. The novel is an aesthetic and realistic depiction of their marriage and the complications arising out of such match.

Kapur primarily highlights the theme of husband-wife relationship, concept of marriage, family, sexual dysfunction and Nina's quest for self along with Ananda's similar search for an identity. Nina and Ananda fulfill the primary obligation of marriage much to the satisfaction of all their near and dear ones. A certain maturity is expected of both the partners' heading towards, youthful maturity. The common factor between the couple is their sense of loneliness and distant dream of companionship which they feel will result in happiness and contentment. In his review of the novel, Lesley Mason states, "It is a portrait of an arranged marriage, but one where both the parties are content with the arrangement and are willing to make it work. Both however, will find their own kinds of disappointment within it". (Review of *The Immigrant, Helium*)

The appeal of the novel lies in the fact that it is the story of not one but two immigrants. Nina and Ananda's reactions and consequent changes in their respective identities can be seen in accordance with the differences in gender, profession, temperaments and their attitude towards life in general. The author nudges into the minds of both Nina and Ananda to reveal their innermost feelings which guide them towards their particular overt behaviour in different situations and circumstances. The relationship between Nina and Ananda is a complex one owing to their different temperaments and expectations. A deep, analytical approach is required to understand its nuances. Nina and Ananda are bound in

marriage with their respective sense of loneliness. Their loneliness remains a common thread which gives them a sense of identification in the beginning and which later separates them.

Marriage as well as immigration involves adjustments and compromise pertaining to various kinds and to various degrees. Nina in her marriage to Ananda undergoes dual process of adjustment - adjustment in a foreign country with different cultural and ethical values as well as adjustment to the man, she marries. The marriage moves smoothly on the superficial level as Ananda takes full care of Nina right from patiently cooking Indian food for her till fulfilling all her material needs and giving her a comfortable life in Halifax. He shares household work equally in the true sense of a Canadian and is always a step ahead of her in fulfilling his obligations towards his wife and doing his best to secure happiness for her. Ananda appears to be sensitive towards Nina who does not exhibit any extra effort to make the marriage work. There exists a deep vacuum in this marriage which crops up partially from Nina's discontentment and sensitivity and partly due to her sense of loneliness combined with sexual frustration. Ananda fails to physically satiate Nina, which brings a profound kind of loneliness to this marriage. The chemistry between them can be understood since the beginning of their relationship when even after their first meeting Nina, "hadn't felt the spark of instant attraction". (*The Immigrant*, 71) Moreover, the brevity of sexual encounter leaves Nina heart-broken and dissatisfied night after night, a fact which increases her reserve and lends coldness to the marriage. Nina's sensibilities are highly developed as she is a person who not only interacted with minds for almost a decade but also an avid reader.

The sexual dissatisfaction serves to create a distance between her and Ananda and imposes a feeling of emptiness and a failure in her ability to conceive, as a result of which, Nina feels incomplete. Nina's mindset can be attributed to the principles which govern a woman's life in India. The

same sentiment has been expressed by her partner, Gayatri when she says, "We are conditioned to think a woman's fulfilment lays in birth and motherhood. Just we are conditioned to feel failures if we don't marry". (*The Immigrant*, 233)

The marriage begins to unravel with Nina's growing sense of dissatisfaction, which emanates from her sexual and emotional frustration. She holds Ananda responsible for her loneliness and in her unconscious mind carries hatred for him which governs her indifferent and callous behaviour towards him. She grows to become insensitive and undemanding towards her husband and joins the HRL (Halifax Regional Library) which demanded her time during weekends when Ananda was at home. Nina's suggestion to take medical help in order to discover the root cause of her failure to conceive fills Ananda with a deep sense of insecurity. His guilt makes him feel betrayed in his choice of an understanding Indian wife and much to the dismay of Nina, he reacts strongly at the mention of Nina's mother whom he feels a privy to his sexual inadequacy through her communication with Nina, "She could not understand why mention of her mother should make him so angry. He said all kinds of unreasonable things – he hadn't realised getting married was such a violation of privacy." (*The Immigrant*, 169) As a result, their relationship assumed negativity. As it is depicted in the following words:

Distance grew between them. Nina felt imprisoned by the stress, and assured him there were other things besides sex in marriage. Relationships had to develop, feelings had to be shared, and surely he understood that? It was only her tension about a child and her age that drove her to find solutions, otherwise she knew things took time of course she did. (*The Immigrant*, 185)

Ananda undergoes the same emotional roller-coaster and is filled with hatred towards a sleeping Nina. The sense of loneliness which brought them together in marriage with a deeper loneliness moves on notions of deep-seated,

unconscious, mutual hatred for each other. Secrecy creeps in matrimony. While Nina undergoes medical check-up without the knowledge of Ananda, the latter moves a step further in maintaining the secrecy of his two-week long sexual therapy in California under the pretext of medical conference. He also indulges in sex with a surrogate to improve his performance. The performance undoubtedly improves but instead of strengthening the weak pillars of marriage and withholding its foundations, it serves to break its boundaries and weaken its premises. The timed sexual encounter with Ananda's obsession of performance extracts the feeling of satisfaction and Nina after each encounter emerges more and more dissatisfied till one day she throws away the clock. Unable to understand the insecurities, dissatisfaction and expectations of each other, both the partners drift away from each other silently and gradually.

Kapur has used the problem of sexual dysfunction as a thematic device in the novel. It serves to provide a twist to the novel, where mutual dissatisfaction leads both Nina and Ananda on their respective paths of self-discovery. It infuses in them the quest for their respective identities neither as an Indian or a Canadian nor as an immigrant or as a husband or wife but as essential human beings. Sushila Chaudhary has rightly observed:

In the novel, *The Immigrant* Kapur explores the special challenges facing immigrant wives, the way a young woman's life already pressured in professional and reproductive terms becomes an even more impossible balancing act inside a foreign culture – Kapur explores the adjustments and frustrations of a modern marriage. (Chaudhary, 629)

Marital discord, disharmony, dissatisfaction, disillusionment and disgust characterize Nina and Ananda's marriage. The insurgent feeling to prove him sexual so as to discover his true self, fill the emotional vacuum that engulfs him. Ananda drifts away from his real self, his home, from Nina, from the boredom and monotony of his

married life to find its fulfilment in his assistant Amanda or Mandy, in short. Extra-marital affair provides a new perception of the same old Ananda and explores a new aspect of his identity. Professional success combined with sexual prowess and a respectable economic status in a foreign country is enough to boost the morale of Ananda. He experiences a kind of fulfilment in the frank and practical Mandy who is in stark contrast to his widely read, extremely sensitive and reserved wife, Nina.

The complexity of their relationship can be attributed to various factors, such as their respective backgrounds in India, their experiences in life before and after marriage, their expectations with each other, age, perspective towards their motherland and their 'new' homeland Canada and last but not the least their temperaments. Mutual incompatibility of the two in the background of the continuous process of assimilation into a new culture to arrive at feeling of belongingness exerts much pressure on their already pressurised marriage. Though both Nina and Ananda suffer in this marriage yet the misery of Nina as a woman surpasses that of Ananda's in proportion.

Nina's life gets engrossed as a student of Library Science. Here, she meets Anton and an instant contrast with Ananda strikes her. Ananda fails to understand a single word Nina uttered while Anton deciphers even her unsaid emotions. This chemistry along with Nina's longing for a fruitful emotional and physical bond on the one hand and Anton's matter-of-fact attraction and desire for sexual intimacy with an Asian woman on the other, brings them closer although sexually. Anton, on his part never fails to remind the practical notions behind their (physical) relationship. The author depicts the nuances of their relationship in these words:

Anton and she were not into having a relationship; it was purely a meeting of bodies, a healthy give and take. He had explained everything. He hadn't wanted this to develop into anything serious that is why he has not approached her.

Their Ottawa encounter had made a deeper impression on him than he had expected, and he needed to be careful – After two months of self-control, he had thought what the harm was? Why not just one more time? (*The Immigrant*, 273)

An extra-marital affair is the outcome of distance. Both the partners do their best to hide their affairs from each other however its overt and covert consequences are witnessed in their relationship. Their marriage loses its lustre, indifference towards each other intensifies, expectations take a backseat, feelings of love, trust, respect and affection are lost and their marriage becomes an obligation. It becomes an institution devoid of all essential elements, an effigy of marriage - an entity which provides nothing beyond financial security to Nina and the label of a married man to Ananda. It becomes desperate and shallow as a result of which, suffocation creeps in and makes it unbearable anymore both for Nina and Ananda. The very existence of extra-marital affair proves to be the end of their marriage though Nina and Ananda for different reasons carry its effigy on their shoulders for form's sake. Nina's conversation with her mother about her married life and her relationship with her husband shocks her mother.

Nina and Ananda in their hollow, superficial marital life lose the appetite to crave for and cherish each other's company. Their complex mental make-ups and the reasons stated earlier mark their marriage as not based on love but on compulsion - a marriage based on compromise. This fact shakes the very foundations on which it was built. Nina's indifference and Library Science course give ample amount of freedom to Ananda to comfort himself in the arms of Mandy and later to experience the fun of having sex indiscriminately with white women, just to give a boost to his confidence. The sensitive, sober and lonely Ananda of the beginning gets lost somewhere in a pompous, proud, slightly funny, cunning, calculative and an adventurous Ananda towards the end of the novel. The insensitivity of

Ananda towards Nina assumes such huge proportions that he not only fails to console her at the most crucial moment of her life when her mother dies in India but also brings his sexual encounters to his home and marital bed, in the absence of Nina.

Manju Kapur's novels not only provide an insight into the relationship between man and woman but also comment on the stark realities of married life. They are an eye-opener for society in general and male perception of women in particular. They serve to create an understanding of Indian women, their desires, views on marriage, concept of companionship, idea of freedom and the need to be recognised and revered as a human being with equal rights and aspirations. Her novels assert with emphasis the place of woman in a society dominated by the male ego and ideology. For realising herself a woman will have to go against the patriarchal codes that bind her and deny her any opportunity of taking an individual decision. This requires an extraordinary courage on the part of the woman because going against the accepted and crystallised norms is not an easy task. Women who have the courage to realise their dreams do succeed though at a heavy price. Kapur depicts the significance of the role man and woman play in any relationship. Her novels reveal their gendered roles in their day-to-day lives. Her novels do not preach but also refrain from judgement of any sort. As a novelist, Kapur rather forces her readers to think creatively and move further in the making of a balanced society.

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Using IM as a Tool for Teaching and Learning of English Language

*Sonalde M. Desai**

Owing to its easy access and user friendly interfaces, the worldwide popularity of instant messaging (IM) has grown significantly. IM is a technology which allows two individuals who are separated by any distance, to engage in synchronous, written communication. Like a phone call, it takes place in a real time environment; however its mode of operation relies solely on the written word to transmit meaning.

The first message was sent on Dec.3, 1992 from a computer to a cell phone. The message read only two words- "Merry Christmas"-but changed the face of mobile communication forever. Today it has gained so much popularity that in India as well as in Western countries people are using it more to minimize their cell phone bills. It is observed that IM is being used more by teenagers/ students. This technology gives them access to their friends 24 hours a day. So one can understand the youngsters' fascination for this facility.

Recently IM tools are becoming popular even for formal communication. Take the case of Newgen software. The company uses a host of IM tools, the most prominent ones being MSN and Yahoo Messenger, for all its formal and informal communications, ranging from discussions and query redressal of employees and clients to fix up the menu and venues for birthday parties and get-togethers. CSC India uses IBM's Lotus same time IM tool. Kale consultants, which has a corporate intranet with Microsoft Netmeeting embedded as the IM tool, encourages its employees to use

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it for Intra-office communications. In addition, a large number of the support staff interacts over publicly available tools such as MSN and Yahoo Messenger. Infosys has Microsoft IM based on Microsoft exchange 2000 server, which is used as a communication tool within the organization to exchange short informal messages.

IM tools are considered to provide the much-needed collaboration to simplify process. The advantage of IM is almost a real time communication, which is simple and user-friendly. It is also instantaneous, cheap, easy to use, and helps in multi-tasking and collaboration as many people can chat at the same time with one another. An HR consultant points out that constant communication through IM helps in developing a better understanding. The informality of the tool leads to open discussion on matters that one might otherwise be reluctant to discuss in a formal environment. Presently, IM tools are also becoming a part of other processes such as Knowledge Management (KM), where it is used for instant knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Then why not use IM, a favourite of all students for teaching and learning of English language? It is well established that technology can be successfully integrated to promote better teaching and more learning in the higher education sector. In the context of foreign language classrooms, the use of information technology is proven to be an important aspect for academic language learning. In Taiwan a study project to check the feasibility of using IM for English language learning was taken up, wherein a survey instrument was developed and 182 Taiwanese university students completed the survey. Five statistical analysis methods including descriptive statistics, factor analysis, T-test, analysis of variance and path analysis were performed to test the hypotheses of the study. The study concluded that the implementation of IM in English learning is feasible due to students' familiarity with IM and further suggested that implementation of IM in English language learning may be valuable to non-English speaking countries.

The recent theories of ELT have proved that communication is an important component of English language learning. In today's ELT classes, focus is not on acquisition of grammar but on enhancing communication, which is the end goal of the whole activity. It is evident that students' English ability can be enhanced with the help of regular communication. Due to the easy access and user-friendly interface of the latest instant messaging programmes, it also reduces the anxiety of learning and providing them an autonomous learning environment. Since it is instant and in real time, the person doesn't have to wait for responses. Many people at one time can be involved and make collaboration possible. It also provides a solution to most queries at the same time and by mutual discussion files can be transferred.. People can see who is on line. As queries are resolved quickly, issues don't remain pending which saves time and improves overall learning experience. This may also improve learners' attitude towards English language learning. This will provide them with more authentic input and more opportunities to participate in the targeted socio-cultural contexts. This context may well promote linguistic and also pragmatic knowledge. Motivation, learner autonomy, social equality and identity can also be encouraged through the use of computer-mediated communication inside and outside of the classroom.

However, there is one danger which has been a major cause of worry for many English teachers. Students have developed a new vernacular called 'sms language'. The same can be a possible threat for using IM for English language instruction. Many teachers are of the opinion that due to 'sms' and Instant Messaging they have noticed a drastic change in students' writing habits. Students are integrating the abbreviations that are used in texting or instant messaging into their school work. It is amazing to note how short the messages become. A normal English conversation can be chopped down to several characters in length. Phrases like 'be right back' can be 'brb' and 'talk to you

later'. In a popular commercial advertisement, the mom is fussing at the child for text messaging too much. When asked who she is texting, the response is 'IDK' and then she says 'My BFFF Jill', which means to my best friend forever Jill. Webopedia.com has a page on its site that lists over 900 text/IM/chat abbreviations. Here are some examples:

ASAP- As early as possible

BBFN- Bye Bye For Now

BTN- By the way

HTH- Hope this helps

IMO-In my opinion

TC- take care

AAMOF- As a matter of fact

FYI- For your Information

TIA- Thanks in advance

MGB- May God bless

LSHMBH- Laugh so hard my belly hurts

BFFLNMW-best friends for life, no matter what

DYNWUTB-Do you know what you are talking about

TNSTAAFL- there is no such thing as a free lunch

The effects of texting and instant messaging are becoming so evident that teachers are reporting that some students are using text messaging terminology as they are filling out applications, writing essays and even term papers. It is becoming more and more of a problem as our students create their own short cuts to communicate.

On the other hand, at the University of Las Vegas, English Instructor Thomas Johnson says that he doesn't believe that using text slang is going to "hurt the development of formal English". Instead, Johnson believes that students can differentiate between the use of "text-speak" and Formal English. He also believes that "text-speak" is a part of the natural progression of English language. According to him, "It is what makes English a living language".

A student at Vallabh Vidyanagar says that writing in 'sms slang' saves a lot of time and that she prepares her

notes in this language only because this way she can write faster when the lecturer is teaching in the classroom.

Hence, to conclude it may be said that using IM for English Instruction will be beneficial and especially to the learners of non-English speaking country as it can handle the initial inhibition of learners well and provide an open platform for constant communication where a learner can resolve all his/her doubts without the fear of being laughed at.

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The Poetics of Creative Dynamics in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

Subhash Chander Sharma*

It was Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children* (1981) which marked Indian English novel's tryst with the new and innovative narratology and no-holds-barred experimentation in the usage of English language. The novel proved trend-setting literally and literarily. It tremendously impacted an entire generation of writers; whether new or established. Makrand R.Pranjape aptly sums up the impact of the novel thus:

This momentous book really jolted the very foundation of the Indian English novel. Its energy, its self- effulgence, irresponsibility, disorder And cockiness really shocked the daylights out of the staid form of the Indian English novel... To put it simply, so long the Indian English novel lived inside the whale before this big book! But now all the new novels want, like *Midnight Children*, to shriek and kick up a hell of a row... I can name heaps of novels which bear an influence of Rushdie's liberating touch...

The "liberating touch" of Rushdie's liberated Indian English from the constraints of traditional story- telling or cause and effect sequential narration. Rushdie also showed how the unfamiliar can be portrayed through the familiar by employing (read exploiting) inventive literary devices such as unconventional word- play, deliberate distortion of syntax, spirited use of metaphors and above all, stunning fusion of oral narrative history, fiction, non- fiction, journalism, fantasy, surrealism, stream of consciousness technique et al. Since then, Indian English fiction has not

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looked back. The innovations, effected in the narrative technique by Salman Rushdie's, have only been consolidated and extended by other Indian English novelists. However, in the hands of Arundhati Roy, the art of narratology has scaled new heights. It is in this context that the present paper attempts to explore the poetics of creative dynamics in Roy's Booker Prize Winning work, *The God of Small Things*.

Influenced by the post- modern poetics of subversion and deflation, Arundhati attempts to (de) construct fluid and complex post- colonial Indian reality through mundane memories and filmsy fantasies. Like Rushdie, she does not believe in telling grand tales. As she observes during the course of narration, in one of her many self- reflexive moments;

...They [the Great Stories] don't deceive you with thrill and trick endings. They don't surprise you with the unforeseen. They are as familiar as the house you live in...In the Great Stories you know who lives, who dies, who finds love, who doesn't (p.229).

Obviously; the grand narrative does not fascinate her as far as the creative avenues are concerned. In such a scenario of exhaustion, replenishment of literary imagination with something exotic and startling becomes a creative writer's immediate compulsion and urgent concern. It thus becomes a creative writer's sole mission as how to engineer those tricks and twists in ordinary tales which are bizarre enough to engage the reader's attention and juicy enough to sustain the creative endeavour. A writer's creative dynamics are determined and conditioned largely by this paradox of creating the exception out of the ordinary; the bizarre out of the normal, the interesting out of the dull and the drab. In this process, the literary aesthetics slide down further. The sublime is not rendered ordinary, for that has already been accomplished by Rushdie and his noble descendants; rather it is the ordinary which is taken to grossly subliminal levels of the petty and the petulant.

In Arundhati's novel, the ordinary is ruptured through deft parodic tropes. Since Arundhati does not narrate any heroic tale, the task of parodying the ordinary becomes all the more challenging. It is relatively easier to debunk and deromanticise the glorious and dignified, than to displace the ordinary and the routine. In this sense, Arundhati takes the new fictional credo step ahead of Salman Rushdie. Rushdie caricaturizes the historical, the mythical and the larger than - life, Arundhati parodies the existential and the overtly autobiographical. Rushdie's protagonist is one among the chosen few "Midnight Children", Arundhati's twins, on the other hand, are born in a state Transport bus: "...They were nearly born on a bus, Estha and Rahel. The car in which Baba, their father, was taking Ammu, their mother, to hospital in Shillong to have them, broke down on the winding tea estate in Assam. They abandoned the car and flagged down a crowded State Transport Bus." (03).

Such parodic reversals are sustained with rare aplomb and creative vigour. In this paper, I have chosen to concentrate on one major parodic prop (of pickles and jams) exploited in the novel, to reveal the levels to which contemporary creativity can stoop (to conquer the market). In the days to come, it so seems creativity has no option but to nosedive into those forbidden zones of the private and the obscene, the grossly mundane, and the insignificantly small which no serious writer of the past thought worthy enough to be a source of literary raw material. Creativity can no longer look upward, it has to sink downward, plunge down below (the belt) to achieve what is called "extroversion of the interior".

In Arundhati's novel, pickles and their preservatives provide a pretext for parody. In fact, the novel could be seen as an extended post-modern allegory, in which the whole enterprise of pickles and the minute operations... the squashing, the slicing, boiling and stirring, the grating, salting, drying, the weighing and bottling- constantly and

consistently reflect on various situations and episodes that go into the very formation of the narrative. Pickles in this sense happen to be much more important than the characters, for the characters define themselves through the pickles only; the "giant cement pickle vats" (p.193) and jam bottles outdo and outsmart characters for they happen to be the real lamp-posts or landmarks in Arundhati's narrative vision. Marching on in Arundhati's punctured universe means going "Past floating yellow limes in brine..." Past green mangoes, cut and stuffed with turmeric and chili, ..." Past glass casks of vinegar with corks", "Past shelves of pectin and preservatives, ..." "Past trays of bitter gourd," ..." Past gunny bags bulging with garlic and small onion." Past mounds of fresh green peppercorns." Past heap of banana peel on the floor. Past the label cupboard full of labels. Past the glue, past iron tub of empty bottles. Past lemon-squash, grape crush" (193-194).

"Pickle smelling premises of Paradise Pickles" (193) is perhaps Arundhati's alternative post-culture space to Narayan's Malgudi. It is a micro-cosmic re/representation of the macro-cosmic world. The goings-on the universe are no different from what goes on in Paradise Pickles. The universe too is a place where "red tender-mango-shaped secret was [is] pickled, sealed and put away"(192).

The only space to "Think" or to meditate happens to be situated "between the wall and the black iron cauldron in which a batch of freshly boiled (illegal) banana jam was slowly cooling"(194). It implies that even the so-called private space is no more valid or legitimate; it is occupied by the "illegal" (194).

Estha while stirring the thick jams undergoes moments of epiphanic revelations. In the post-modern ambience of the novel, the divine and the spiritual are revealed in the petty:

As Estha stirred the thick jam he thought Two Thoughts, and the Two Thoughts he Thought, were these:

(a) Anything can happen to Anyone.

And

(b) It's best to be prepared (194).

In Arundhati's profoundly playful world-view, wisdom springs from the stirring of thick fresh jams. A "Stirring Wizard" (195) consequently, could be the most wise man around. The froth on the boiling thick jam makes "dying frothly shapes" (194) that mock at the helplessness and loneliness of human existence:

The dying froth made dying frothly shapes.
A crow with a crushed wing
A clenched chicken claw
A Nowl (not Ousa) mired in sickly jam.
A sadly swirl
And nobody to help (194).

The more Estha stirs the Banana jams the more ideas come to his mind:

...As Estha stirred, the banana jam thickened and cooled, and thought Number Three rose unbidden from his beige and pointy shoes. Though Number Three was:

(c) A boat

A boat to row across the river (196).

A point comes when jam stirring becomes a trope for boat-rowing: "The jam-stirring became a boat rowing. The round and round became a back and forth. Across a sticky scarlet river (196). This flimsy clubbing of thick jelly of banana jam with the sticky and muddy river Meenachal has subtle parodic undertones which the novelist arrives at or gravitates into by the very dynamics of creativity involved in post-modern aesthetics of parody and pastiche. The parodic inversion touches the crescendo when Estha compares his free rowing of jams with the freedom of the self, the ultimate freedom, or the freedom Indian democracy offers to its citizens. The brief conversation between the twins ends with a sarcasm that exposes the phoney promises of Indian democracy thus:

Why're you rowing the jam? Rahel asked

'India's a Free country,' Estha said.

No one could argue with that.

India was a Free Country

You could make salt. Raw jam, if you wanted to (197).

Thus, Paradise-Pickle-products crowd the mental-scale of Arundhati's twin protagonists Estha and Rahel. In things dissimilar and distinctly different they strike resemblances that shock the readers. After all, innocent children as protagonists have to depend on their child-like vision to represent reality. And this vision kiddish as it is, has every potential to slip into the zone of the indecent.

In Arundhati's topsy-turvy world, nostalgia is not a simple excursion into golden subline past. Memories go back to the initial attempt of preparing the pickles for the first time. Mundane memories keep on revisiting the minds of the characters, Mammachi remembers:

How beautiful they had looked! Bottled and sealed, standing on a table near the head of her bed, so they'd be the first thing she would touch in the morning when she woke up. She had gone to bed early that night, but woke a little after midnight. She groped for them, and her anxious fingers came away with a film of oil. The pickle bottle stood in a pool of oil. There was oil everywhere. In a ring under her vacuum flash. Under her Bible. All over her bed side table. The pickled mangoes had absorbed oil and expanded, making the bottles leak (167).

The very fact that the oil spills past the holy Bible reveals that even Bible is under all kinds of threat in this universe of Paradise Pickles. The leaking oil from the pickle jars has potential to turn Bible into a soggy testament. Nothing can (including the Bible) stop the march of leaking oil.

Many more images from the world of pickles and jams are sprinkled consistently throughout the novel. In the end it so appears that novel is not as much a novel of / on the childhood of twins, Rahel and Estha or the history of sleepy Kerala village Ayemenem, rather it is a narrative account

of rise and fall of Paradise Pickles. The much discussed Ammu-Velutha relationship, the caricaturization of E.M.S. Namboodiripad and his entire communist creed or death of Sophie Mol etc. are not primary events or the prime situation of the novel. Pickles are much more important than anything else.

By narrativizing the rise and fall of Paradise Pickle Arundhati, thus, succeeds in Paroding the ordinary. Her immediate target is not to caricaturize an erstwhile Roman Empire or an imperial Mugal empire, her target is to pettify the ordinary empire of Kochamma family. Even the small can also be laughed at. This way Arundhati parodies the parody for ordinary parody involves the "ironic inversion" of the legendary and magnificent. The Small is a parody of the Big, by raising the structure of Pickles and jams, Arundhati's parodies the small as well. This is the essence of Arundhati Roy creative dynamics.

And the contemporary Indian English fiction is moving in this irrecoverable and irreversible direction of narratology invented by Arundhanti Roy.

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CREATIVE WRITING

Clay Dreams

* R.K. Singh

They make my face
ugly in my own sight
what shall I see in the mirror?

there is no beauty
or holiness left
in the naked nation:

the streams flow dark
and the hinges of doors moan
politics of corruption

I weep for its names
and the faces they deface
with clay dreams.

Sangam

The crack in the sky
is not the rosy cleavage
to rape the body

nor is the beast any free
to escape the bloody river
that reflects stony wrath
in doggy position

they all expect their reward

for burying the noise
of sunny free wheeling
in frozen passion
turn beggars they all
search warmth with ash-smeared sadhus
at roadside tea stall
whistle and wash off sins

in sangam muddled
with privileged few soar high
but I'm glad I crawl on earth
my roots don't wave in the air.

* Dr.R.K. Singh, Professor of English, Indian School
of Mines, Dhanbad, Jharkhand.

Realm of Nothingness

**Syed Amiruddin*

It all ended like that
Like a sudden devastating deluge
Leaving the mute symphony of a cemetery

Our loves deep dales.
Pastures green, golden dawns
And twilight rage of ragas
Smothered- and vanished into
The dark-savage sky.

The jingling blues of zenith
The lilting flames of horizon
The smoky rainscape
The resplendent landscape
All turned opaque and
Slipped into white wilderness.

The lyric splendour of our love's
Spiritual glory and ephemeral joy

is twisted, trampled and crushed
 By the hissing hurricanes of horror
 And tumultuous eclipse of time
 into the shrieking realm of vast nothingness.

* Dr. Syed Amiruddin served as Professor, Dept. of English, New College, and University of Madras.

Harsingar

* Amarendra Kumar

Every morning he rises rubbing
 his eyes like the sun
 for the view
 white fragrant flower shower
 under a thick top-heavy slender
 smelly rainy plant

Nose -diving white- petalled flowers
 with small saffron stems
 almost of an ascetic shade
 double colour carpet spread
 for a pick, sweep or tread

Raising them from the dead
 the daybreak beam fondles
 the round wholes left behind
 like the threads of a story
 to pick up the other day
 In the bunches all over
 tiny bud drops swell
 and conical tongues stick out
 almost unseen
 in the booming rain
 sun may linger as nightlight
 to feel the foetal growth

to flowering to fall
that stifles a cry.

*Dr. Amarendra Kumar retired as Professor of English
from R.N. College, Hajipur, Bihar.

Choosing a Place

**Bibhu Padhi*

The urge to move
is at its sharpest worst
when the mind needs rest.
The eyes look empty as though
Every sight were lost;
The evening seems cruelly long.

This is familiar,
but that hardly helps.
What's the use of familiarity
if it doesn't make one feel
secure with oneself
and his appointed place?

It would have been better
if the body had responded
sooner, when things
were easier for it to move
elsewhere, when it was
far less fixed to this place
than it is now.

But then it needed rest too—
just plain rest at its own place .

Today it is different, and much as
other places might invite,
it wouldn't move, having taken
too long a rest to do anything

other than sleep and wait.
Now it seems there is
no question of choosing a place.

* Dr. Bibhu Padhi retired from the Dept. of English,
Ravenshaw College Cuttack and lives in the hilly
town of Dhenkanal in Central Odisha.

Sparrows

** Rudra Kinshuk*
Sparrows stitch the blue
over the Dinarsahi Pir-tala.

Silence, frozen into flowers
get Painting the House
(A tribute to Bibhu Padhi)

Difficult the days of painting a house,
from selection of paint-colour
to that of painters and the season.
Even the de-anxiety can't soothe my nerves.

Painting the house
signifies painting my own self,
painting my own sky.

I've been reading your words
and recollecting those difficult days.

Now the distant trees are getting
drenched to the marrows of silences
collected within my spinal tube.

*Rudra Kinshuk, Professors' Colony, Bolpur, West
Bengal.

On Our Blindness

*Sanjay Kumar

He bears
On his brief back
A cumbersome bag of
Man's burgeoning wisdom

Ravaged bindings refusing
Childish resistance in
Intellectualized insolence
Packaged
In attractive titles

A foul look on
His fair mam's
Pretty face
Sinks his little heart

In hushed smiles
Though
He conforms his
Allegiance to
Correctness of
Civilized decorum

In dark dingy rooms
Where he is taught
Wisdom
He accepts
Silence to be the
Order and
Laughter *a taboo*

Choked
He resigns to

Kindly punishments
 And agrees to
 Incarcerated freedom
 All for looking sinful
 In being so small

Exerted
 He forces despite
 Himself
 To unravel knowledge
 Ever eluding him
 And greatness
 Always invisible to him
 In between the
 Printed pages

His stamped unintelligence-
 A quarterly printed albatross
 Graded in red
 Quietly suggests his
 Failure
 To succeed

Snubbed and subdued
 Punitive and tormented
 He gropes to fathom
 Roots of his guilt
 Making his everyday
 Expiation pedestrian
 Routined and of
 Little effect

The saviour's portrait though
 Puffs his shrinking chest
 On a morning of
 Sad compulsions
 Painful reflections and
 Unhappy resolutions

Gathering courage
In the end
And stuffing
Alien wisdom on his
Familiarly frail shoulders
He-like our Father-
Carries his Cross
For his uniformed
And
Neatly dressed Crucification

* Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Associate Professor of English,
J.K. Lakshimpat University, Jaipur.

Igloo

**Bishnupada Ray*

a low house
with bricks of rock hard ice
preserves the ice queen
as hot as the bikini mannequin
that likes to attract the casual heat
of the lecherous onlookers

it is no tale
of stooping to conquer
but stoop I must
as low as the lcf
of my moral dignity
to a 0 Kelvin
to measure the kinetic energy
of my staying power
with this strange mutation
of a substandard evil.

* Dr. Bishnupada Ray, Dept. of English, North Bengal
University, West Bengal.

Lost Paradise

*Ira Jha

Paradise unseen and unknown
 But seen and known the Earth
 More charming than paradise
 Where saints and martyrs took birth.
 Green fields, golden sands
 Iced peaks covering the barren lands.

Little angels with frilled frocks
 Running Hopping Jumping Bouncing
 To catch butterflies on flower tops
 But lo! What is that?
 The red claws and the lusty eyes
 Grab her, maiming her shrill cries.

The frills torn, the shoes thrown
 She lies unconscious on the ground.
 Her helpless father picks her up with tears in eyes
 Very slow sobs and no loud cries.
 They change her place, her name, her space
 But with no gain – only pain and more pain.

One great poet once wrote
 A thing of beauty is joy forever.
 The other one wrote
 Serenity of nature is soul saver.
 Why then a walk at tranquil hour of night
 Filled our hearts with dreadful sites?
 Where is the mysterious land of prince and princesses
 Which we saw in moon, gone?
 Why can't the sleepy slumberous eyes of little one
 Draw from 'Chandamama', the security of blissful morn?
 They just see thousand devils in moon's nostalgic shine
 Which will ravage them, tear open their intestine.
 Where is the beauty of Nature vanished?

To which barbaric land are our morals banished?
For being the giver of life, fulfilling mother's task
Do we have to pay this cost?
To whom we go and to whom we ask
Why our beautiful Paradise is lost?

***Dr. Ira Jha, Rajrupur, Allahabad.**

BOOK REVIEWS

Naikar, B.S. *Translating Classics: The Vacanas of Sarvajna*. Delhi: GNOSIS, 2010, Price: Rs.300.

Translation of classics written in Indian Languages is the call of the hour. Why is it so that after Tagore, who won the Nobel Prize way back in 1913, no other Indian writer in the last hundred years could bring to India another Nobel in literature? Are our writers not up to the mark or are they simply not available to the global reading public because of the lack of translation of their works? I think the second fact nearer to truth. We as teachers of English gloat over even average Western writers, but never care to read our own better literature with the same gusto. Prof S. Ramaswamy, in his key-note address at the 55th All India English Teachers Conference at Guntur, had exhorted the audience to 'translate, translate and translate' our own classics for their wider appreciation outside. Not only on international scale, even within India translation of regional classics would help us to understand and appreciate fellow countrymen better and that would lead to national harmony—we may have different languages, but the culture and emotion underlying them are almost the same. B.S.Naikar's translation of 302 *vacanas* of Sarvajna from Kannad into English is, thus, a remarkable step in the right direction. We, the faculty of English, should follow the lead provided by Prof Naikar, who has translated other Kannad classics too, like *Fall of Kalyana*, a historical-religious play about Saint Basaveswara, *Sangya Balya: A Tale of Love and Betrayal*, a famous folk play of Karnataka, and *The Frolic Play of the Lord*, translation of a 16th the century Kannada religious epic about Super-Saint, Allamaprabhu.

A wandering minstrel, Sarvajna was a medieval poet, saint, and social critic of Karnataka. A legend and among

the most popular and most quoted poets of Kannad, Sarvajna did not believe in art for art's sake; he rather meant art to improve society and its moral standard. But he was also not a die-hard puritan, and wrote on beauty and physical desires too. His thematic range is as vast as composite human experience itself. His preferred mode of poetic expression is a small stanza pattern, mostly triplet, but it is always pregnant with significant meaning. As he writes about the inherent strength of woman: "Like a thin string bending/ A sturdy bow of bamboo/ Woman, though helpless and weak, / bends the powerful man" (6). His words are simple but the meaning embedded in them is always profound and highly philosophical, such as in these lines: "Like a camphor-consort merging/ With her fire-lord, / The devout fusing with the Absolute/ Will attain eternal liberation" (29). Sarvajna gives primacy to the essential meaning beneath the layers of life and words; this can be understood only by real saints: "The four *Vedas* are udder, / Their meaning, the frothing milk. / The *Sivayogi* alone could taste it/ But a mere juggler of words could not" (40). Sarvajna is all praise for saints who have spiritual strength of a very high order and who are never fearful of worldly temptations and criticism, as he asks pointedly: "Could one riding an elephant/ Be ever frightened by a dog?(39).

Sarvajna's words move as smoothly as the running current of a waterfall; their readability, clarity of concept, underlying wisdom are all captured in the translation of Naikar. At places, there are sonorous, alliterative lines, such as: "Could the water, where frogs and fishes/ Frisk and frolic about, be ever holy? (28). Sarvajna is quite similar to Bihari, the Hindi poet of almost the same medieval period. Both of them used to write pithy verse with, at times, sharp barbs in it, directed against social evils. Bihari used couplets effectively, while Sarvajna used triplets with similar deadly effect. Credit and kudos go to Naikar, who has translated the Kannad poems to suite the English muse and ears. As he confesses himself, it was quite difficult to exactly translate

Sarvajna's Kannad words into English equivalents and to preserve their rhythm too. So, instead of literal translation, he has to opt for transcreation at many places. Translation of poetry poses such problems, but Naikar has come out of this difficulty with remarkable poise and patience. His contribution to the cause of translating Kannad classics should inspire others to emulate him and thus enrich our knowledge of literature from other regional languages. There is, in fact, an urgent need for introducing a compulsory paper, Indian Classics in English Translation, to M.A. (English) classes—it is never too late to mend. We should be thankful to Prof Naikar, who not only has translated well known works from Kannad into English on a large scale, but has also pointed out the path that how in translated form too the poetic essence can almost be kept intact. What all is needed is the interest, insight, ability and commitment of the scholar, who should also have thoroughly mastered both the languages.

Reviewer: Prof. Pashupati Jha, I.I.T. Roorkee, Uttarakhand.

Sarangi, Jaydeep *Silent Days*. Kalindipurram: Cyberwit. India. info@cyberwit.net (2013) 68 pp. ISBN 978-81-8253-396-7.

This slim volume of 50 poems by Jaydeep Sarangi is representative of some of the poems that have been previously published in various magazines, journals and anthologies and is a welcome addition to his oeuvre. Always perceptive, often witty, Sarangi writes with restraint and great care in his use of words. More importantly, he is able to introduce an unusual perspective or unexpected viewpoint that amuses, compels thought or gives new insight. We are told in the first poem "Stop Here, Please!" that light is "cold for sometime / and untimely hot again", as such a phenomenon can be imagined. "Missed Calls" is a more serious poem telling of the annoyance of missed calls on the cell phone – "It's not always possible to call back", the poet warns. "I'm On Your

Side" deals with the beauty of a tribal village while "I Am" takes us to the bank of the Ganges, whose repository of limitless/Thoughts and ideas transfixed my silent days.

Sarangi has us eating from his hand, wanting us to read on. In the longer poem, "A Rose is a Rose". Sarangi becomes everyman, every poet, as he moves gently through the poem, deftly weaving images of brutality, nationhood, protest and the encompassing love and longing which are nevertheless part of our humanity: "A baby from somewhere cries out/In utter disgust/A monkey shows its back/From a tree top/Near the green forest road."

In "Growing Old with Time" he is perhaps laughing at his own faults as he examines himself and what lies beneath the exterior which is shown to the world: Time has become reflection/A mirror and a flame./Of my petty little corner of mind,/The silent underground in the barrels of bones.

The simplicity of the narrative deceives. The searchlight Sarangi turns on himself is one almost all of us shine upon ourselves at one time or another. Sarangi sometimes throws his searchlight on the more unusual – his child painting in "Morning": "The day poisons night's lullabies, / as my little daughter paints / Shiva's poison-green neck." Sometimes he remarks on the fantasy of being like "a home-bound refugee in all stations" ("Refugee") or he contemplates friendship, when he wakes in the night in his poem "Friendship" (for Niranjana Moharty, which opens thus:

There is a door in the deep heart of my private chamber
It opens at times, sometime in midnight when the clock
marks

'twelve'.

With a descent key

When it does, it takes all of me in.

Sarangi's imagery is highly visual and we are glad of the descriptions of the river, the monsoons, the hamlets, village fairs and painted faces of "When You Call". In "Homeless in My Land", the poet makes some concession to

those around him "fighting a brave battle", but he is happy to use his pen as a sword at the conclusion of the poem "My silent pen becomes my sword." It is no surprise that throughout this book, we come to feel close to the poet, the man whose "soul is ever restless", "hurts / Demand to be hurt" and who seeks to "engage with conversation" through his writing. There is clever, controlled writing in his poems about cricket, chess and his family life. Our emotions are engaged in many of these poems. In "Your Name is Shiva", after describing that "The slightest touch of sorrow/Melts you/Your massive presence/Streams down/In a mad urge to cradle/The sinking soul.He concludes -

Your name is Shiva
Your joy supreme
Is in bringing home lost souls.

Sarangi has a modest, almost self-effacing voice. This does not diminish his poetry but is indicative of the precise balance with which he regards life from his daughter to the act of writing, the mystery of life to his house and loved ones. The ability to take a subject, e.g. neglect, and in a very short space transform it into that which has profound implication, is noticeable but perhaps particularly in the poem "The Bawl Call" (a form of Bengali folk music). I quote the entire poem:

The *Bawl* says -

"O heart, wake up
Embrace all to your sweet bosom"
Distrust will be wiped out
From this world one day
The menace of divisions will dissolve
All will bask in the nectar of Bauls

The dove of peace will flutter
From jungles to hilly heights.

True to their titles, these poems analyze such matters as "Flight", "Friendship", "Humble Joys" and "Going to a Holy Place". Sarangi also has the ability to attribute exact measures

- the exact measure of language to the requisite thought or emotion. His lyrics move fluently, illuminating each topic.

Saranghi is developing as a major poet. His craftsmanship is impressive, language honed to be the instrument of observation, humility and humour. His control extends not only to his words but also to the space that he allows around them. The Indian poetry scene is the richer for such a poet in its midst and this is a good introduction to his work.

Reviewer: Patricia Prime, New Zealand

Singh, Ram Bhagwan. *Leisure Pleasure. Scripts in lighter Vein.* New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers.2012. ISBN: 978-81-8435-319-8. Pages: 100.

The saying that literature mirrors society holds true in all ages. The over zealous and ardent lovers of literature most often derive satisfaction in exaggerated comparisons of beloveds with moon and their physical features with beauty and bounties of Nature. There is a heavy upsurge of literature having loads of tropes and chiasmus, fanciful images and fictitious leaps that titillate readers though not for long. Such literature most often does not reveal the truth that gets lost in fanciful ideas. The prime aim of literature is not only to entertain but also to make us realize the truths that often pass unnoticed. For literature to be representative, it must also exhibit the lapses, the hollowness and the ironies that form a part of human lives. Literature that acts as a sentinel must also guard its readers from various challenges creeping in our lives everyday in fast changing world of technical advances and local- global diatribe. Prof. Ram Bhagwan Singh's *Leisure Pleasure : Scripts in Lighter Vein.* fills the void left by enthusiastic writers of today, dipped in reading only awarded fiction and poetry.

Leisure Pleasure, a collection of 21 reflective essays offers to its readers the writer's experiences though in a lighter vein. The essayist begins his collection with the piece entitled "Teacher's Romance" and ends it with "Internet Love" providing a quintessential reflection of a professional life.

While other essays of the book too are eye openers, Prof. Singh stands ready with his sheath to attack the oddities. What lends Singh an edge over the present day writers is his weapon of language which never appears harsh even while dealing with gross inconsistencies and foibles of everyday life. Prof. J.P. Singh in his Foreword has pertinently called *Leisure Pleasure* as 'provocative, pinching, scintillating and thought-bubbles'. The opening essay of the collection makes every teacher realise the glorious illusion of philosophizing in a world of calculated means and goals. The element of truth with some humour offers a delectable dish, much to every teacher's delight: "Hypocrisy is the teacher's choice outfit, their well-tailored tunic. They say something to say something else. Our teachers love hypocrisy in work, spirit and action more than our mullahs, pundits and politicians do." (LP, 4) Like a charismatic shooter, the essayist aims at an individual but takes other wrong doers too to the task.

Leisure Pleasure is rather a treasure trove, which brings out truth in a very poetic manner without hurting anyone. The author, at times, warns mankind and also provides sane suggestions as in the essay entitled 'Husband Hunting': "Men can become good husbands if women are taught man husbandry and human engineering. Similarly, men need to be given lessons in woman husbandry and domestic peace conservation. The poor husband in the institution of marriage loses his bachelor's degree and the woman makes her master's degree." (LP, 10) The author touches upon various day-to-day issues and makes his readers think and look back not in anger but in a reconciliatory and nostalgic mood, such as in the essay on "Selecting a Bride". Singh creates ripples both in the heart of prospective young grooms when he says: "Marriage is a match of matching or mismatching man and woman on the family pitch in which both sides have the chance of winning or losing together." The author chooses his words metaphorically and doesn't fail to take digs at crass commercial ways of the world. The masterly word play

of Singh attains Lawrentian heights while he describes the groom's expectations of a bride. The symbolic and subtle tone of the essayist does work wonders: "She must be a replica of nature's beauty. Thus, the mount must be clear, the groves dark, the elevation fascinating, the sides showing, the upper elevated, the middle moderate, the lower sloppy, the foothills smooth and the plains even. The hills must be warm and the valleys protected, the streams musical and the bushes scented, in a word nature shaped, perfect in shape and symmetry." (LP, 92)

All the twenty one essays of *Leisure Pleasure* are camouflaged with incisive barbs and offer rich food for thought to readers. The sound argument in simple words with suitable and everyday examples lends the collection a distinct mark in the plethora of books coming out at regular intervals. *Leisure Pleasure* is bound to make every one's leisure pleasant in a world of social net(working) resulting in technological fatigue and Internet disorders. The volume offers beautiful gems worthy to be preserved and enjoyed leisurely by bibliophiles.

Reviewer: Dr. Binod Mishra, IIT Patna, Bihar.

Singh, Charu Sheel and Binod Mishra. eds. *Exiled Among Natives: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*. New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors, 2013. XXIV+298. Rs. 475

The *poiein* and its *poiesis* have been a complex plenitude since time immemorial. It has aptly been worked and reworked roughly by idealist school of thoughts, which establishes poetry as an inscrutable means of epistemological formation and an instrument of exploration bordering on ontological realities. Poetry is deeply entrenched into the pragmatic reality of the universe and hence it must respond to the existential concerns of the *homo sapiens* and voice the major sociological questions of the *a priori* and *a posteriori* reality of the world. It is interesting to note that *Exiled Among Natives: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry* edited

by Charu Sheel Singh and Binod Mishra comprises poems that not only traverse through the plenitude of idealist school of thoughts and the realist tradition of philosophical enquiry but they also pass through the sublime domain of esthetic and aestheticism. Charu Sheel Singh, with his intellectual perspicacity, has rightly placed it in his Foreward of the anthology in the context. He has rightly explicated the phenomenological and hermeneutic realities of *poiein*. Apart from Foreward, the book has an introduction which surely enhances the quality of this anthology.

The anthology includes forty four poets who have unpacked their poetic fire resonating the underlying concerns of modernist and postmodernist world. If on the one hand, they expound the infinite panorama of futility and anarchy, on the other, they also delineate the celebration of postmodernist culture. The anthology opens up with some remarkable poems of Abnish Singh Chauhan where he has represented the impecunious predicament of the larger social reality when he scripts in his "Who Cares for Whom":

Borrowing increases day by day

Anyhow my life goes

Daily comes the banker

At my broken door

With his flaring tongue

Everyone worries for himself

Who cares for whom I know! (15-21)

Similarly, the poetic corpus of Amar Nath Dwivedi, Anurag Sharma, Aju Mukhopadhyay, Anjana Basu and many others reflects upon the murky materialist reality of the contemporary world, primarily driven by the physical and crass cacophony of the present day. Further, they touch upon the pragmatic realities of today and respond to them with a sense of nihilism and despondency. Nevertheless, Bibhu Padhi's poems encourage the inhabitants of the waste land to receive happiness even in the prosaic and quotidian realities which are all present around us. His poem "Fences" suggests that:

The field is open even today though
except for weeds and thin branches,
cactus and untended grass.

The words always move across
the roads to the dark interiors
of conspiring neighbors—

sluggishly, without my knowledge,
in sleep diffused company.

Dark words, untouched by the sun
or our children's gentle intentions,
finding their own selfish ends though
the nights irreproachable dark. (9-20)

In addition, the poetic firmament of Binod Mishra and Charu Sheel Singh mirror the phenomenon and noumenon issues of human existence. Their poetic corpus traverses through the world of despair and despondency but finally takes recluse in the illuminated domain of hope and spiritualism. Mishra employs the metonymy and metaphors of 'wonder tree', 'unanswered question', 'saviour', and 'companion' which finally triggers him to compose "A Poem" where he records:

A poem oozes like water drops
bursting from small holes in wet lands.
It strikes those who yearn
And not those who want to earn
the wreath of the heath
where neither the flowers abound
nor words, nor silence make any sound.(40-47)

Charu Sheel Singh places panoply of tropes, metaphors, signs, symbols, signifiers, and signifieds which suture the matrix of his poetic creations. His images not only come from Indian myths and mythologies but also from the world of flora and fauna. He represents 'Sita', 'Radha', 'Draupdi', and 'Holi' in different hues and concepts. He scripts "Holi" and avers:

Holi was drenched in motley
colors while he looked on

At the mortgaged self that
 Bore junk food on mountains
 of thoughts. Prahalad was eternal fire
 Who consumed temporal one.
 The colors combine to cleanse and
 Purify the dross that is often
 Our self's pitiable cross. (1-9)

The poetic world of the anthology is not confined to the crass commercialism of the materialist world of today but it also focuses upon some remedies of the contemporary ills. The poetic texts of Pashupati Jha encapsulate the fact that love, with its various forms, is capable enough to cure even the incorrigible ills of today. He urges the people of the contemporary waste land to delve deeper into the world of human intuitiveness. His poem "Happiness" records the moments of happiness as:

Happiness is also a thousand smiles
 Writ large on the face of rustic kids
 Looking with hope for their days ahead
 With the rising sun in the chirping morn
 Various games in the village greens—
 Munching unripe mangoes and beans
 And guavas freshly plucked for meal;
 Then finally the mother's lap
 Lulling them to sleep of dreams. (20-28)

Similarly, Priya Thareja, Prabhanjan K. Mishra, Punita Jha, R.C.Shukla, R.K.Singh, Sudheer K. Arora, Susheel K Sharma, and Vijay Mishra have also mulled over the socio-pragmatic reality of the world. In addition, there are some other poets who have responded to the inherent and irresolvable *antinomies*, dialectics, *chimera*, and *pharmakon* which lie in-between the physical-spiritual, physical-psychological, and earthly-ethereal world of today. Sony Dalia annotates the antinomies which lie between life and death. Likewise, Sunil Sharma lights upon Descartes' dichotomies and Hegelian dialectics which pervade between

two different poles of social, economic, and political realities of today.

What makes the anthology score advantage over other poetry books is its attempt of explicating the fact that Indian English Poetry is not a mimetic representation of the Western canonical tradition of poetry and *poiesis*. It, in fact, represents the complex cultural, political, economic, and social situations of Indian realities. Moreover, the present anthology has given voice to those unheard voices which have a great poetic potential. It is a candid attempt of the editors to strengthen the viable genre of Indian English Poetry by accommodating some unheard melodies or rather ignored voices. The lovers of poetry will, of course, find a salubrious feast in *Exiled Among Natives* at a reasonable price.

Reviewer: Veerendra Kumar Mishra, Department of HSS, IIT Roorkee, Uttarakhand.

Khatri, C.L, and Sandhya Saxena. eds. *Five Indian Women Novelists : Feminist Vision*. Yking Books, 2013, xi+254, ISBN: 987-93-82532279.

The anthology *Five Indian Women Novelists: Feminist Vision* edited by C.L.Khatri and Sandhya Saxena is an endeavour to concentrate on the works of the major Indian Women writers writing in English in the contemporaneous era. The five sections of the book are meticulously planned to include incisive articles on the works of five leading Indian women novelists- Shashi Deshpande, Gita Mehta, Manju Kapur, Shobha De and Kiran Desai. The biographical sketch incorporated in each section adds to the significance of the book for avid readers and research scholars of Indian English Literature.

The articles of the first section focus primarily on the literary territory of Shashi Deshpande and examine various aspects of her novels; *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence*, *Small Remedies*, *In the Country of Deceit*, *Roots and Shadows*, *The Narayanpur Incident*, *A Matter of Time* and so on. Most of the articles seem to project the

ongoing feminist journey towards selfhood and individuation yet no fixed attitude or watertight compartment for discourse would suffice to ascertain the truth of femininity. A comprehensive vision is to be framed for peeping into Deshpande's fictional cosmos.

The second section of the book concentrates on the creative output of Manju Kapur whose very first novel *Difficult Daughters* stirred the sensibilities of Indian women at large. The detailed analyses of her novels *Difficult Daughters*, *A Married Woman*, *Home* and *Immigrant* provide insight into the stories of marital discord and woman's search for liberation.

The editors have given considerable space to Shobha De who has lent a distinct meaning to the so-called feminist writing by introducing a kind of 'cultural corruption' and 'neo-colonialism' (190, *Five Indian....*) in the guise of boldness and Post-modernism. However, a writer of more than a dozen popular novels, De has skilfully portrayed 'disorderly ordered' (199, *Five Indian....*) India.

The fourth segment of the anthology is dedicated to Kiran Desai's two novels; *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* and *The Inheritance of Loss* which won for her the prestigious Man Booker Prize for the year 2006 and, consequently a global applause.

The last section of the anthology celebrates Gita Mehta's contribution to the arena of Indian Writing in English. The anthology probes into Mehta's Eco-psychological discourse in her novel, *River Sutra* along with an eye on social documentary *Karma Cola*, a collection of sarcastic responses to the West's infatuation with India.

The anthology is different from other anthologies in the sense that it deliberates upon the various challenges faced by women in the present day world. The critical insights into the fictional universe of the novelists under consideration will provide ample food for thought especially to research scholars engaged in their study on women's writing. The

anthology has certain limitations as all the novels of the novelist under discussion have not been touched yet the deliberations are of help and interest to sincere readers. Two comparative studies (Chapter 6 & 11) included in the book, of course, will suffice the interest of scholars busy in comparative studies. The anthology will act as a significant contribution to the women's studies and will prove helpful in igniting fruitful discussions against the subjugation of women in Indian society.

**Reviewer: Dr. Shiva Shanker Jha, Dept. of English,
Jengraimukh College, Majuli, Dist. Jorhat,
Assam.**

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