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# ***Critical Space***<sup>®</sup>

A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal  
in English Language and Literature



**Editors**

**Prof. P. A. Attar     Dr. H. B. Patil**



## ***Critical Space®***

### **A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal in English Language and Literature**

The journal '*Critical Space: A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal in English Language and Literature*' aims at to publish unpublished, original research articles and make available a new platform to the scholars of Language, Literature and Culture. It deserves to promote the young researchers and attempts to cultivate the research aptitude among teachers in the higher educational system. It is a four monthly journal (February, June and October). Each issue of *Critical Space®* will be sent to the members of the journal and the respective libraries.

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## EDITORIAL

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It is our great pleasure to present you the June Issue of *Critical Space*. As usual the academic community has responded well and contributed papers on variety of issues. We hope that you will find it an intellectual journey to different research avenues from Diaspora Studies to the gender issues.

In Indian philosophical and theological discourses music has been seen as a language of Spirituality. S. L. Bhyrappa's *Mandra* deals with this connection as he attempts to incarnate it through his musical language. Dr. Daisy investigates the connection between the classical *ragas* and the *spirituality* depicted in *Mandra*. Nidhi Singh's article "Violence, Terror, Terrorism: Exploring the Fear Factor" deals with the most attended themes of the contemporary period. The article uncovers the psycho-sociological facts that promote the act of violence and make us available the proper context to attain the most probable meaning of human behavior depicted in the stories.

Mohammed Rashid's article "Imperialism in Disguise: (Re)cognizing the Imperialist Attitude of the United States of America in Bangladesh" convincingly demonstrates how developed countries were implementing their imperialist agenda in the name of development. Dr. Dattatraya Khaladkar in his article compares two texts from two different socio-cultural contexts and literary traditions in order to explore the similarities and differences in the human predicament in the age of industrial revaluation. The analysis of the select texts in the premises of naturalism reveals that despite of the socio-cultural differences natural tendencies and carnal desires influence the human behavior.

It is seen that the theories of the West have been adopted to analyze the indigenous literary works, as very few try to find out the substitute indigenous model that can be more appropriately applicable. Sangita Patil's article "Rudiments of Ecofeminism: A Study of Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and *The Coffer Dams*" is an attempt in that direction as she tries to foreground the ecofeminism in Indian context. The feminist point of view is further explored in the article of Sonali Anand, who explores the theme of 'Domestic Violence' in Sahgal's Novel. The analysis becomes more interesting as researcher is a keen observer of Indian societies and the male dominated Indian Families.

Indian point of view to approach the universal notions is further found explored in Divya Shah's article "*City and Body: A Study of Selected Poems of Namdeo Dhasal*". As the researcher selects a specific time and location to explore the notion of body in the context of poetry of Namdeo Dhasal makes it more interesting and significantly adds the socio-cultural connotations to the universal terminologies. The same line of thought can be seen in Roshni Patel's article "Dialogue between Tradition and Modernity: A Study of Krupabai Sathianadhan's *Kamala: The Story of a Hindu Life*" as she tries to analyse Bakhtin's idea of dialogism in the context of Indian discourse. Both these articles adopt the Western model of theory while analyzing Indian texts and throws light on the Indian realities.

Jayvirsinh Rajput's "Gender bias in Mahesh Dattani's *Seven Steps Around the Fire*" explores how human behavior is influenced by the gender bias. The plight of *hijras* in the context of orthodox Indian society is explored in Indian English Theatre. Shrikant Bhandare's article "Quest for Identity in Shawn Wong's *Homebase*" deals with the theme of 'Identity' in the context of fourth-generation Chinese American diaspora. The article is significant as it adds a new dimension of fourth-generation immigrants to the Diaspora studies. It reveals how an immigrant struggles to establish his identity in the age of creolization, hybridization and acculturation. Parag Chaudhari writes on the notion of "Transculturality in History" while analyzing Bharti Mukherjee's novel *The Tree Bride*. In his article he scrutinizes the intercultural issues depicted in the novel and brings forth the fact how the cultural encounters in the colonial India promotes transculturalism. Similar to Sonali Anand, Ujwala Gosavi also explored the theme of violence in Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* (1989) and *Wife* (1975). The researcher is well acquainted with the socio-cultural facts of woman in Indian context and as a result becomes successful to uncover the women predicament depicted in the select novels. The creative segment of the issue contains two melodious poems 'The Rose' and 'The Earth' by Dr. N. G. Wale.

Thus, it is hoped that you will find the issue as an interesting reading material and ready reference suite for the study of contemporary literature. The issue contains the articles that not only explore different dimensions of the available body of knowledge but they also pave new ways of thoughts in the contemporary academics.

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## Editorial

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I feel happy to present the February issue of the *Critical Space*. As usual the articles, contributed in it, interestingly undertake a close scrutiny of the established facts, accepted literary forms, critical theories and responding to the vibrant changes happening into the contemporary arts and other human discourses.

Baby Pushpa Sinha in her article, 'Historical Events and Postmodern Narratives: A Reading of Kurt Vonnegut Jr.'s *Slaughterhouse-Five*' explores how Vonnegut Jr. experiments with time of the novel by displacing the historical facts in order to achieve the surreal literary motif. The article depicts how the author deviates from the accepted generic fabric and fuse different narrative styles in order to create a collage to signify the issues of contemporary world. In '(De/En)-coding Bangladeshi Photo-studio Culture' Md. Zaki Rezwana focuses the dynamics of cultural production. In this case too, the author is keen in depicting the changing scenario of the art of photography as it is influenced by the undercurrents of socio-cultural entities. The logical line of change and re-examination is continued in the article 'Re-Contextualization of the Myth of Ashwaratha in Kamal Desai's *Kala Surya*' written by Dr. Dattatraya D. Khaladkar. It is amazing to understand how the myths are re-contextualized in contemporary literature to signify the present reality.

The literature of contemporary period deviates from its predecessors in the stylistic and thematic concerns. Dr. Umed Singh in his article investigates how Arvind Adiga in *The White Tiger* represents India from different perspectives. Dr. Ravi Bhushan, in his article 'Orality and Feminism: A Study of Indian Oral Traditions,' throws light on how Indian oral tradition reveals the principles of modern theory of 'feminism'. The author foregrounds his research argument in the light of mythical women figures from the great Indian tradition. Prof. Kuldeep Singh J Sisodiya and Dr. Vikas Raval in their article 'Beyond the Classroom: Mobile Learning the Wider World' explore how the mobile technology can be used to enhance the teaching and learning process. Garima Kaushik in 'The Grotesque Body in Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol's *Dead Souls*' analyses the Gogol's novel in the light of Bakhtinian terminology of 'grotesque realism'.

Israt Taslim's article 'Ananta Jalil: Jocker or Croaker?' focuses the media tricks used in contemporary period in order to seek the mass attention for commercial success of the film. The paper analyses the attitude, aptitude and

tendencies of the contemporary audience and the tricks used by the media personalities to make their films viral fame among the young generation. Manik Shantinath Patil, in her article 'Surveillance of Parental Anxiety with Young Adult Literature,' gives critical response to the emerging field of 'Young Adult Literature'. The paper reveals how the young-adult novels are helpful to understand the problem of emotional detachment faced by contemporary parents.

Rajani Moti, in her article 'The Postmodern Dilemma of Identity Crisis in Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*,' deals with how the social and cultural entities generate the dilemma of identity crisis in the postmodern period. However, the logical line of social change due to the postmodern premises is also found extended in Dr. Muktaja Mathkari's article, 'Postcolonial Feminism: The New Ethics in the Globalizing World.' She analyses the undercurrents of the process of globalization in contemporary culture. This contemporary attitude of deconstruction or challenging the established facts can be traced in Vipin Pal Singh's article 'Fanon's Discourse of Decolonization'. The paper is a good critical commentary on Frantz Fanon's theory of 'Decolonization' with appropriate textual references.

Jayant R Salve in his article 'A Room of Her Own, the New Age Woman in Indian TV Ads: A Feminist Discourse' rightly points out the reciprocal relations between advertisement and culture. The paper with appropriate examples shows how advertisement influences the contemporary culture by influencing the habits of the people; however it also focuses how the traditional cultural codes indirectly influence depiction of women in the advertisement. Mrs. Deepa Patil's article 'The Corruption of the American Dream in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*' analyzes the novel in the light of destruction of American Dream. The researcher's knowledge of sociological, historical and political facts makes the analysis convincing. The Issue ends with the poems of Dr. N.G. Wale and Shivkumar Agrawal. The poems selected for the issue are distinct in the use of language and thematic concerns.

Thus the articles contributed in this Issue are from different fields of knowledge and significantly pave a way into the new avenues of research. I hope that you will find the issue interesting and enlightening.

- Dr P. A. Attar  
- Dr. H. B. Patil

**Rhythm of Life: A Study on S.L. Bhyrappa's *Mandra***

Dr Daisy\*

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**Abstract:**

In the Oriental Cultural context the classical music occupies a significant place in artistic expressions. It is generally observed that the classical music has been an inspirational spirit that gave birth to creativity even in other artistic forms. Many authors have also contributed literary art by writing about the music and musician. In the paper S. L. Bhyrappa's *Mandra* is analyzed in order to reveal the multiple layers of Hindustani classical music with typical Indian persona of Mohanlal in the spiritual city Haridwar. The paper attempts to reveal the relations between artistic expressions and interpersonal relations. The textual examples explore how an artistic mind relates his relations with the classical *ragas*. The analysis reveals how the journey towards mastery over the musical art and the salvation for the spiritual enlightenment merge in the context of Hinduism.

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Sound is believed to be the heart of the process of creation. In Hinduism, the sacred syllable OM embodies the essence of the universe and sound in general represents the primal energy that holds the material world together. Since the most ancient times, music in India has been practiced as a spiritual science and art, a means to enlightenment. Indian music tradition which is one of the oldest unbroken musical traditions in the world, has graduated through various strata of evolution - primitive, prehistoric, Vedic, classical, mediaeval, and modern. It has travelled from temples and courts to modern festivals and concert halls, imbibing the spirit of Indian culture, and retaining a clearly recognizable continuity of tradition. Goddess Saraswati, the goddess of music & learning, is portrayed as seated on a white lotus playing the *Veena*. The 'Saraswati Samman', one of the highest literary awards in India, is an annual award given for outstanding literary works in any of the 22 Indian language listed in Schedule VIII of the Constitution of India.

The winner of this prestigious award in 2010 was the highly regarded Kannada novelist S.L. Bhyrappa (Santeshivara Lingannaiah Bhyrappa) who is also recently announced as National Research Professor by the Government of

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India (in 2014). Born in Santeshivara village (Hassan), Bangalore, Bhyrappa had to live his early life as a wanderer (even with *sadhus*) to probe the mystery of death because he lost his mother and siblings to plague when he was a child. Hence, he had to struggle hard to pay for his education by not only doing various odd jobs (like that of a waiter at a restaurant, gatekeeper at a theatre, vendor of incense sticks, a porter at railway station etc.) but also begging. A retired Professor of Philosophy, Bhyrappa has literally traversed the world from China to Peru, from Antarctic to Arctic and from Bangalore to New York to survey mankind so that he can do justice to whatever he writes in his novels which are unique in terms of theme, structure, and characterization. That's how he has a lot of big awards to his credit including National Literary Award and Sahitya Academy Award. He got the prestigious Saraswati Samman for his novel *Mandra*.

*Mandra* is one of the most acclaimed epic novels of Bhyrappa who is a proud author of 25 novels. Originally written in Kannada, the novel has been translated into Hindi, Marathi and English. In English, it has been translated by Dr. S. Ramaswamy and Smt. L.V. Shantakumari. A Fullbright scholar, Dr. S. Ramaswamy is a retired professor of English literature and an expert in Sanskrit. Pursuing his literary passion and love for translation, he has translated four novels of Bhyrappa from Kannada to English. L.V. Shantakumari, a critically acclaimed bilingual writer in Kannada and English, also has been a lecturer in English.

The novel *Mandra* basks in the glory of Hindustani classical music and burns in the lowliness of its great practitioners. 'Music' is ever pervading in the novel with all its subtleties where Bhyappa's genius and imagination give verbal equivalents to the abstract melody of music. It is through *swaras*, *ragas*, *tanas* that the characters are revealed layer by layer in various situations. The technique of narration of the author is a metaphor in itself to the process of development of a *raga* in Hindustani music where he essentially follows a complex and intricate web of stream of consciousness.

The musical novel revolves around Pt. Mohanlal, a connoisseur in Hindustani Classical Music. Mohanlal belonged to the holy city Haridwar where his mother somehow earned bread by working as a charwoman while the 10 year old Mohan added a little to that by begging through singing at Har ki Pauri. A *sanyasi*, Omkar Baba recognizes the musical talent in Mohan and asks him to join his ashram. It is here that Mohan's musical journey starts, but he realizes the limits of the ashram music at the age of 16 when he got attracted towards other singers in a music conference he attended with Baba. Contrary to Omkar Baba who used *swaras* only as a means for *bhakti*, the singers played with *swaras* like lovers by making them elastic by various vibrations. According to Baba, the

*swaras* could never become the means to salvation if one played with them as in a game. Omkar Baba always insisted on Yoga, Pranayama and extra emphasis and concern for abstinence. But young Mohanlal became a fan of that type of singing and ran away from the ashram to learn that. Though the things didn't turn out as he hoped, one way led to another and in the end he met a real guru in the form of Raja Saheb who was 'a sage of musical notes' (98) and knew all the intricacies of classical music. In six years, before Raja Saheb died, he had taught Mohanlal almost everything about music. Mohanlal had to leave the cottage provided by Raja Saheb and Chunni - the woman who brought food for him - his first lover. He had no money but only the tambura which Raja Saheb (his Guru) had given to him. But due to his tremendous sexual urge, Mohan pawns the tambura for 25 rupees to go to the red light area of Bombay.

Mohanlal had his share of ups and downs during his struggle and faces disappointment, anger and dissatisfaction too, but he definitely 'had the talent' of singing, 'had the blessings' of Maa Saraswati, and whatever his circumstances were, he 'practiced hard', and by his *swara sadhana* became the top classical singer of Hindustani classical music. But along with Ma Saraswati's blessings, he probably had the curse of Kamadeva (the God of desire) as well, because throughout his life, very frequently he gets caught in the clutches of the tremendous force of sex and loses sense of right and wrong. Women become *ragas* for him and he shifts them according to his moods. Just as he is intimate with the *ragas*, he has intimate encounters with most of the females who come in his life. Women become inspirational tools with whom he could experiment just as he experimented with *ragas*. That's how the list of his women includes illiterate women to his disciples to great music admirers.

Among his women, he has a childless married field woman who becomes the first woman to satisfy his sexual urge - Chunni, his poor first wife whom he married before becoming a recognized singer, just to control his urge - Ramkumari, his legally registered second wife - manipulating Champa (who fascinated him when he went to teach music to her at her home), top Indian classical dancer Manohari Das (whose dance seemed to him to be more concrete than his singing), Lauren Smith (a fan disciple who inspired him in US and later came to India to learn from him) and Madhumita (a disciple totally devoted to his 'music' who had no option but to offer herself completely to learn music from 'him'). Of course there were many others with whom he had relations and discontinued as per his desire.

Now, a *Raga* is characterized by its own particular *Rasa* or mood. Being immersed in music thoroughly, Mohan calls his women in terms of musical instruments and *ragas*. Thus Chunni, who obliged a tearful young helpless

Mohan at 24, becomes his 'tambura' for the *raga* came without any interruption (the recurring painful sexual urge); very young first wife Ramkumari becomes 'the sway of shyness of *raga Kalyan*' (155); his manager cum wife Champa (the protector of music) becomes *raga Darbari*; Manohari (the classical dancer, as true love could exist only between artists) whose body movements could exhibit the feeling of music in a concrete form (244) becomes *Rati*; Lauren, bright with shining blue eyes and nose the shape of flame of a lamp (129) becomes the emotion of *Raga Bhoopali*; and the selfless Madhumita, the embodiment of devotion and dedication, delicate and tender in spite of having intense *swaras* becomes *Kalyani* (after *raga Shuddha Kalyan*) (187). These are just a few to be named and described, for there's a long list of *ragas* in Hindustani classical music. Here comes the difference between life and music. Music is limitless, but life has its limits. Hence Mohanlal, when he is frustrated with the ways of the materialistic world at 65, reflects and feels a deep void inside thinking about his death,

What would happen if he died? ... Nobody would be affected by his death. Nobody would weep remembering him. Nobody would die in sorrow. Some music listeners would remember for a few days that he was a good singer and he died. ... After that, nothing. When he thought that, that was what his life was worth, he felt a sort of disillusionment. (641)

He remembers running away from all his six children – Giridhar and Poonam (illegitimate from Chunni), Bakula and Kishan (Ramkumari's children), Swarmohan and Shrutimohini (Champa's children). He had not been in contact with either their mothers or the children for almost all his life. As a matter of fact, though he was in his sixties, he never knew the existence of Poonam, had never met Kishan till late and had never seen Shrutimohini till date. He comes to know that he even has grand children from all except from Ramkumari's children who couldn't be married till now because he had been most unjust to her by not even recognizing her as his wife in public.

Mohanlal visits Haridwar incidentally at this stage and decides suddenly that he would revive the Omkar ashram as the ashram was in a bad state after Baba's death. Mohanlal repents that he had never bothered to visit Omkar Baba who had introduced him to music. He returns to Bombay and decides to make amends with all the important women who had been associated with him in one way or the other. But they have not forgiven him, especially Ramkumari and Madhumita. They both insult him and reject his offer separately to live with him for the rest of their lives at Haridwar. Madhumita (young enough to be his daughter and soon to be a connoisseur herself), shows him the mirror when he

proposes to marry her and stay with her the rest of their lives at ashram, 'The courage to invite me to develop and continue your *gharana* and to share your physical and musical connubiality, that courage is also born out of your complaisant self-esteem, isn't it?' (667) As he starts ruminating bit by bit, he reflects about his uncontrollable physical desire with all women who became intimate at various stages of his life,

I started enjoying pleasure, happiness, inspiration obtainable by them, but not being caught by or attached to any female student or admirer. But I did not realize that as a consequence nobody would remain in my old age. (643)

Those who get absorbed in music – not just classical, any kind of music - know it to be a dominant mood enhancer, they get excited, relaxed and healed with music. Though westerners mostly think of music as entertainment, they have also experimented successfully from time to time over the physical, mental, emotional and healing effects of music. Indian classical music, according to the nine *Rasas* – Shringara (romantic and erotic), Hasya (humorous), Adbhuta (amazement), Shanta (peaceful), Raudra (anger), Veer (heroic), Karuna (pathetic), Bhayanaka (fearful) and Vibhatsa (disgust) - has *Ragas* associated with a particular mood. In addition, it is also closely connected to a particular time of day or a season of the year. Thus through the rich melodies and beat of Indian music, every human emotion, every subtle feeling and nature, can be musically expressed and experienced. For those who think it to be unbelievable, it has now been scientifically proved through Electroencephalography (EEG) which is the recording of electrical activity along the scalp.

In Indian aesthetics, the central point is '*rasa*' (joyful bliss). Though there have been different interpretations of '*rasa*' theory by various experts like Abhinavgupta, Bhat Lolat, Shankuka, Sharangdeva, Bhatkhande etc., all ascertain the specific co-relation of music with emotional states. So it is with Mohanlal. The women he becomes associated with become his inspirations and he outpours all his emotions in his singing bringing the unimaginable impact on the listeners. This co-relation of music and emotional states is shown in the entire novel. More so we see it in the end when he sings in the farewell charity concert organized for him by the Bombay fans before his departure to Haridwar. He fails totally for the first time in his lifetime of singing because the utterly loyal



Madhumita, who used to be his inspiration once and who probably curses him now - is sitting before him.

No matter what he did, he couldn't find the pulse of the raga. A raga familiar for fifty years and mastered for forty years. There is no guarantee that when the theory is perfectly understood, the emotion would rise ... She has sat before me, piercing me with her examining, condemning eyes. One should never sing, with an enemy seated in front. There should only be sensitivity and sympathy in front. Without the sympathetic and mild twinkle of the eyes that sprinkle sensitivity, how is it possible to sing? (674)

But even when she leaves, he feels her presence to be more piercing. He changes his *raga*, struggles to bring himself on the right mood, but fails totally, stops singing as the muttering starts in the hall. Ultimately, arguing with a respectful lover of music, Mohanlal throws the mike on the stage and walks away by saying, 'No, I won't sing. No artist will retain his mood after having been dishonored this way (679)'. So, the beauty of the great art relies a lot on the moods and emotions of the artist. Mood of an artist evokes the most pleasant emotion when he himself is experiencing the same and leaves the listener marveling on his art.

There have been and are great connoisseurs in India who unconsciously come to our mind while analyzing the character of Mohanlal. Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar's life for example has been one such. Pt. Ravi Shankar was married to Annapurna Devi (daughter of the country's foremost classical musician and his guru Allaudin Khan) at a very young age with whom he initially performed to get thunderous applause in various parts of the country, but things started to go awry between the duo soon after marriage and Annapurna withdrew completely from the outside world whereas Shankar left for the US with his live-in partner Kamala Shastri (classical musician and singer). Their only son Shubhendra died an untimely, unattended and miserable death in a charitable hospital in US. Pandit Ravi Shankar was having affair with two more women while living with Kamala Shastri and had daughters from them. And though there have been stories about other connoisseurs too, only Ravi Shankar was always extremely, disarmingly frank about his fondness for women and writes about it in his autobiography *Ragamala*, 'I felt I could be in love with different women in different places. It was like having a girl in every port - and sometimes there was more than one!' (Manabarana, Sumedha, 2012) In New York, Ravi Shankar also had affair with his concert producer Sue Jones and fathered her child Norah. Later, he decided to marry Sukanya Rajan when their daughter was 8 years old. Sukanya confirmed it in an interview, 'He was 58 then

[6]



and told me he couldn't change. I realised I was too much in love ...' (Sen Shomini, 2012) Ravi Shankar was lucky to have met Sukanya who accepted him with his flaws and provided stability and the home he never had till his death in 2012.

It is understandable that in this profound journey of *ragas*, raptures are never far behind but one wonders about the 'other' lives which become associated with the lives of these great artists. Padmabhushan awardee Annapurna Ravi Shankar has been living the life of almost an ascetic till now since even before her divorce with Ravi Shankar. History has it that she was much more talented than her husband but she had stopped performing in public by taking a vow because her husband had started having inferiority complexes about himself (The famous Hindi film *Abhimaan* was made on this couple's story). And their son, the highly talented Shubho's tragic life has so much in it that a novel can be written on it. If this is the effect on the legitimate relations, what to say about the many illegitimate ones? Many questions arise in the mind of the reader which Bhyrappa conveys through Gore Saheb, a great admirer of music in the novel,

He thought that most artists were like this, without a clear thinking pattern. Some of them, though they were smart in their professional dealings, were confused in their emotional relationships. (206)... the question arose whether Mohanlal who creates such noble emotion in *ragas* had ever experienced such a noble feeling in real life... where do these feelings come from? Where do they dry up? What is the relationship between the life of the artist and these? Does the life of the artist resemble a mound of sand which is dry in a minute after the rain stops? Questions after questions followed. (213)

The famous English poet W. B. Yeats once said, 'Indian music is not an art but life itself.' (Vishwanath, Narayana, 2012) Of course in one sense 'music' is 'life' for those who get absorbed in it but isn't LIFE more than MUSIC? One can and has to switch over to various *ragas* as per the mood & emotion demands, but is it advisable to do so with human partners? *Ragas* do not have feelings, but human beings do and though *ragas* have the capacity to provide the healing effect to the heart, should hearts be broken by the practitioners of those? No!

No art produces bitterness, but artists more often do and that too by being bitter to the noble souls who put their lives at stake for them. The famous dancer Manohari in the novel hurts all her dear ones too. Does their art makes them inhuman? Never!

The set of seven notes (swaras) comprising a musical scale in Indian classical music - Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni - is called a 'Saptak'. 'Saptak' is called an 'octave' in west because the usual scale of Indian music spans from 'Sa' in the Madhya Saptak to 'Sa' in the higher, Taar Saptak. This makes eight notes instead of the seven in each Saptak. There are three octaves. The basic saptak is called the 'Madhya Saptak'. For notes with lower frequencies, the artist may use the 'Mandra Saptak', which is a lower octave than the 'Madhya Saptak'. For notes with higher frequencies, the upper octave or the 'Taar Saptak' is used. The correct knowledge of these 'swaras' and practice is of utmost importance in voice-training in Indian Classical Music. This process of getting control over the musical notes is called 'Swara- Saadhana'. *Mandra* saptak is the deep and almost meditative scale in which most Indian musicians do their practice and it is called *Shadaj Sadhana*. The title of the novel *Mandra* seems to indicate that a connoisseur who attains various heights in the music world by descending deeper into the *Mandra* of music, more often also descends into life's '*mandra*' (lowliness) by being totally irresponsible, unreliable and unpredictable in human relationships.

It is said that Indian classical music is more of a spiritual experience rather than just mere entertainment for the enjoyment of the senses. The *Natya Shastra* (known as the fifth VEDA) by Bharat Muni, which written on stagecraft, including music, dance and theatre, was claimed to be directly inspired by the God Brahma. And according to Indian philosophy, the ultimate goal of human existence is spiritual enlightenment (*moksha*) and the worship of sound (*nadopasana*) is taught as an important means for teaching this goal. Then again one wonders about how the connoisseurs enjoy the highest musical experience (*maha ananda*) and still run after the worldly pleasures, that too by tormenting other souls? Or these worldly musicians are like Mohanlal in the novel who ignores and rejects the philosophy of *Yoga Sadhana* which Omkar Baba had taught him when he was 17:

There are two kinds of energy – storage and release. They are called aadho-retas and oordhva-retas. He who descends to the level of the former becomes weak and loses his strength. Nothing great can be achieved by him. It may be in a dream or it may be in the company of a woman or even artificially. Only he who can sublimate his energy in the upward direction which is the oordhva-mukha can achieve siddhis. All the sages are like that. Is not music also a form of meditation? When you direct and concentrate your mind towards the goal steadily in all the three states – waking state, dream state and deep sleep, then the upper movement of the seminal energy takes place. Remember that.

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Even if one drop is wasted it is the wasting away of the power of sadhana. (80)

But naturally Mohanlal was attracted to worldly music which according to Baba was without inner enlightenment of 'spirituality' which is an inseparable component of Indian Classical Music. Tansen's Guru Swami Haridas in Hindustani classical music, others in Carnatic music (Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri) and some other saints sang out of devotion to God. It came from the depth of their hearts. They did not compose those songs for making money. Through their compositions they exhorted people to conquer the six inner enemies of uncontrolled lust, anger, greed, attachment to worldly objects, egoism and jealousy. Mohanlal remembers Baba also having said, 'No matter how perfect the taal and the patterns of the swaras were and the complete knowledge of where he was and reach the saam wherever he wanted, it was like squeezing out the juice by twisting a sugarcane. Was this all that music meant?' (82) How true was Baba! Mohan realized this when he listens to a *saadhu* meditating in Swami Hardas's temple for the whole night. 'It was firmly rooted in his mind that the *saadhu*'s power of rendering was deeper, more profound and sublime to summon the infinite than that of his own practice – past and present.' (512) Now Pandit Mohanlal understood the difference between Tansen (who became famous musician) and his guru Swami Haridas (who was not just a musician, but a *yogi*). He perfectly understood that no miracles can be wrought in music unless one is a yogi and he felt dissatisfied that he could never attain it. That's how Mohanlal's musical journey seems to become a spiritual journey too and he decides to live the rest of his life in Haridwar.

Of course it's not at all necessary that all musicians must be *yogis*, but surely the ones who devote their precious 10-15 years to master the art under the guidance of a guru and dedicate their whole life creating and recreating ragas can attain not only incomparable heights, but salvation too. Yes, it's with music as it's with life – the ultimate goal is the same. And if one is too much near the goal through music, why lose the chance by indulging too much into worldly attractions (rather distractions) which are inevitable.

And it's not only Mohanlal's journey. It becomes the journey of every reader of *Mandra* too as Bhyrappa's descriptions become word pictures and music is sung on the pitch of prose. The most important aspect of '*rasa*' is that it lingers on long after the stimulus has been removed. Just like one often ruminates over a concert for days and savour the joy of its memory, so does the reader does meditate over the novel. For a person not introduced to music, the descriptions might seem exaggerated but he definitely understands through all the details given in the novel that 'Singing is a very serious art, more serious

than meditation.' (101) And an admirer of Hindustani classical music becomes that divine fish which delves deep into the depths of the ocean of music, shooting up all the way to the surface enjoying itself and 'the spiritual emotion of how minutely the manifest emerges from the unmanifest begins to flow around.' (97)

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## Violence, Terror, Terrorism: Exploring the Fear Factor

Nidhi Singh\*

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### Abstract:

In contemporary times competing interests engender violence-generated terror that can take different forms targeting individuals and also collectivities communities and nations. Paradoxically, conflict resolution within a community and between communities has the potential to get distorted into acts of intimidation. Goodwill, peace, progress and prosperity are casualties of fanatic idealism, vengeful desperation, failure and urge for personal glory through sacrifice of the self and others. Ambiguity arises when convergences and divergences between terrorism and state sponsored repressive measures are studied. National movements too become problematic when seen comparatively.

With violence, terror and terrorism challenging the humanitarian value system and undermining the bed-rock of ethics and morality, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish the victimizer from the victimized. Competing ideologies and systems that develop exclusivist stance to the point of rigidity invariably become oppressive, taking recourse to violence and terror to silence the voices of dissent: patriarchy, despotisms, autocracy have all proved to be repressive and exploitative structures. The resultant experience of injustice in social, cultural, political or economic arena becomes the motivating factor behind the rise of terrorism. Failure to integrate radical groups in the main-stream may lead to alienation and encourage acts of transgression. The political and systemic solutions have so far proved to be ineffectual in coming to grips with the spiraling violence and its upshots.

Indian and Australian writers have come together and contributed to the collection of stories titled *Fear Factor: Terror Incognito*, in their shared concern over the politics of fear that has come to force with the nexus of violence, terror and terrorism. Through these stories the writers attempt to comprehend the implications of terrorist acts against the backdrop of deprivation, violence and fear.

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Since times immemorial conflict has preceded change, for better or for worse. Destruction of existent structures is conceived as a prerequisite for the emergence of new order. The establishment and disintegration of civilizations

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and empires, ascendance and decline of cultures and religions, the two world wars, the rise and fall of colonial powers, struggle for both political and personal freedom are all marked by intimidating acts of terror-generating violence and terrorism. Violence has emerged as an inescapable aspect of human experience. It is encountered in day to day life where the senses are assailed by noise and pollution, and well-being challenged by home grown violence, rape and murder. Violence within a society is further reinforced by extraneous factors. Eruption of wars, riots, communal and racial conflicts and cross-border terrorism produce a ripple effect, adversely impacting both humanity and environment across the globe.

In a world where borders and boundaries are progressively emerging as contested sites owing to the political, economic or socio-cultural antagonisms, modern development models and advancements made in the field of media and communication have further contributed to the marked escalation in conflict situation. The competing interests engender violence-generated terror that can take different forms, physical as well as psychological, targeting individuals and also collectivities like communities and nations. The interface of communities, cultures and nations give rise to the dialectics of opposition. At times, personal is in conflict with community, or gets subjugated to the collective will. Paradoxically, conflict resolution within a collectivity and between communities has the potential to get distorted into acts of intimidation. Goodwill, peace, progress and prosperity are casualties of fanatic idealism, vengeful desperation, failure and the urge for personal glory through sacrifice of the self and others on the altar of a cause or terrorist ideology.

According to Walter Laqueur, an American historian and political commentator, there have been a number of definitions of terrorism. He holds, "No all-embracing definition will ever be found for the simple reason that there is not one terrorism, but there have been many terrorisms, greatly differing in time and space, in motivation, and in manifestations and aims". Terror has been used by dictatorial leadership against its own citizens for absolute control. At the time of the French revolution in 1789 the violence used by the French government to impose the new order on the people of France was recorded by the Académie Française in 1798 as 'system or rule of terror'. Ambiguity arises when convergences and divergences between terrorism and state sponsored repressive measures are studied. National movements too become problematic when seen comparatively. Freedom movements have a strong motivation and justification to employ whatever means possible at ones disposal for the redressal of the perceived wrong. History is rife with movements that are deemed as rebellion by one, and struggle for freedom by the other.

September 11 brought the focus to bear on terrorism and violence perpetrated in the name of ideology grounded in religious fundamentalism. The first five years after the 9/11 attacks saw a number of researches on terrorism being carried out. A multidisciplinary approach spanning a number of fields including political science, psychology, criminology, sociology, history among others was adopted. Various aspects of terrorism have been studied in recent years, including radical group affiliation, civil violence and suicide terrorism. Researches and studies are targeted at active terrorist groups and present threats with an emphasis on adoption of 'asymmetric warfare' by the weaker section to compensate for their limitations. Amartya Sen's *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, Sudhir Kakkar's *The Colours of Violence, Terror and Performance* by Rustom Bharucha and *Tabloid Terror* by Francois Debrix engage with issues related to violence, terror and terrorism.

Media has emerged as an important interpolator between society and terror-mongers. On one hand it highlights the pressing need to harness the wide-spread violence and acts of terror by creating awareness, on the other, media and communication portals are being effectively used by terrorists to generate a general atmosphere of fear and unrest. Assassination, favored by anarchists, hijackings, a popular tactic in the late 1960's, bombing, sabotage, kidnapping and abductions are widely used by terrorists for collection of funds as well as to draw attention to their political ideology. Bruce Hoffman, author of *Inside Terrorism* analyzes the changing face of terrorism, pointing to the fact that it is often viewed as a means of communicating a message and using violence as a way to assert the triumph of their cause. The more brutal the terrorist act, the wider will be the media coverage resulting in greater sense of vulnerability, fear and intimidation.

With violence, terror and terrorism challenging the humanitarian value system and undermining the bed-rock of ethics and morality, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish the victimizer from the victimized. Violence, be it physical, psychological, verbal or in any other form, has as its corollary the debilitating sense of violation. The trauma of violation arises from the existence of unequal power relation between the oppressor victimizer and the oppressed victim. The dynamics of the empowered and the powerless elicits reactionary and retaliatory acts of terror from victimized sensibility with radical leanings. The delusion of absolute power as well as fear of marginalization, both unleash terror as a tool for the realization of the ideal state being aspired for. A cycle of violence is initiated fomenting a general atmosphere of terror. Conversely, terror-mongering is itself rooted in fear of one kind or another and relies on acts of terror and violence to counter it.



Competing ideologies and systems that develop exclusivist stance to the point of rigidity invariably become oppressive, taking recourse to violence and terror to silence the voices of dissent: patriarchy, despotisms, autocracy have all proved to be repressive and exploitative structures. The resultant experience of injustice in social, cultural, political or economic arena become the motivating factor behind the rise of radical approach. When weaker sections feel that the system is depriving them of socio-economic opportunities, negating their cultural identity, or excluding them from political process, it leads to unrest that may turn violent, culminating in acts of terror. The discontent arising from uneven income distribution and the absence of opportunities relative to expectations is seen as rooted not in absolute deprivation and poverty but in relative deprivation that emerges as a greater threat and challenge.

Globalization facilitates heightened awareness of opportunities available whereby skilled and educated individuals hampered by limiting prospects within an unsupportive system feel marginalized and frustrated. Excluded from opportunities and upward mobility, they seek alternative support system for self-empowerment in their aspiration to become agents of change. Though there is a palpable correlation between deprivation and rise of radical ideology, it does not go to prove that all radical thinkers are necessarily terrorists. Nonetheless, failure to integrate radical groups in the main-stream may lead to alienation and encourage acts of transgression. The political and systemic solutions have so far proved to be ineffectual in coming to grips with the spiraling violence and its upshots.

Indian and Australian writers have come together and contributed to the collection of stories titled *Fear Factor: Terror Incognito*, in their shared concern over the politics of fear that has come to force with the nexus of violence, terror and terrorism. Through these stories the writers attempt to comprehend the implications of terrorist acts against the backdrop of deprivation, violence and fear. The collection has creative pieces that present sensitive and discerning delineation of the challenges and dilemmas, the struggles and victories of characters combating terror and surviving in a social milieu rife with violence and terrorism. The stories portray the psychological as well as socio-cultural compulsions and politico-economic positions that drive individuals to paddle in terror and perpetrate violence. The collection also has stories of men and women holding on to normal day to day routines and the strategies used by them to survive increasingly violent society under the shadow of terrorism. For some, terrorism is seen as single most effective way of self-assertion and for others a back-handed opportunity for self-actualization. The characters inhabit the grey area wherein the line dividing the victim from the victimizer blurs. Violence and fear become tools for self-aggrandization. From anarchists to anti-



colonialists to those who use terror for drawing attention to social issues, invocation of fear through unleashing violence is seen as an attempt at redressal of existent inequities.

The collection *Fear Factor* interrogates violence and the problematics of combating fear through characters whose lives are wittingly or unwittingly impacted by terror and terrorism. The book is divided into five sections: the first section is titled 'Betrayed Ideals'. It has four stories that question terrorist ideology and leadership that negate the humanity of those drawn into the web of violence. Cause-inspired violence of terrorists has the added advantage of commitment and justification that allows for greater sacrifice as well as violence to the self and others. Parochial altruism emerges as the popular underpinning of terrorist approach. The trajectory of sacrifice within a society may lead to contradictory views about the value of an altruistic act. Within an organization too power dynamics determine the fate of its members with the weaker ones being used by the powerful. The stories question the leadership that plays upon the weakness and vulnerability of the members of its own organization.

The story 'Packing Heat' problematizes the act of self-destruction: a desperate act of self-assertion by a woman suicide bomber in a bid to take control and empower herself. It not only implicates patriarchy but also highlights the impact of poverty and how terrorist leadership exploits it. 'Child's Play' by Malouf contrasts the teeming life of people unaware of the looming violence from mercenary terrorist living among them who in turn is acutely aware of barrenness of his own existence. The story titled 'In Search of Essar' reverberates with the need to send out the message to the world through assassination of Rushdie. The act is seen as a religious duty to be performed by the protagonist. Doctrine inspired "sacred mission" is insensate to the destruction and suffering caused and is closely bound to the overweening identity determined by ideology which does not allow for other affiliations. Amartya Sen in his work *Identity and Violence* asserts "Violence is fomented by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people, championed by proficient artisans of terror."(2)

The second section titled 'Under Duress' has stories that explore the role of oppressive governance in curbing freedom and spreading fear. 'Sheriff's Story' echoes the novel *Nineteen Eighty-four* by Orwell. There is an organized and legally sanctioned fear generating governance to silence the possibility of dissent. The absence of constitutional liberties in addition to socio-economic decay, adds a 'political' dimension to the experience of deprivation. Improving educational standards sans employment prospect, or lack of outlet for political and social participation create a combustible situation. Weak and failed states

where deleterious social, economic, and political trends converge create ungoverned spaces which become safe havens for terrorists and acts of terror that at times can prove to be self-defeating. 'Sonny' by Temsula Ao tells the story of rise and fall of local hero, of defeated ideals, failed love and loyalty ending with assassination by fellow fighters living up to the saying that those who live by sword, die by it. In a situation of mortal conflict personal interest is sacrificed in favor of the shared cause.

The third section 'Ruptures' has stories that highlight communal violence and opportunism of those involved in it. The stories 'A Good Riot' and 'Compensation' use morbid humor to highlight the opportunism of characters who stand to gain politically and economically from the violence perpetrated. Mutual suspicion and clashing interests too are explored. Embracing the role of victim of longstanding historical injustices and grievances may serve as a justification for terrorism and is used to defend dehumanization of the enemy and to sanction atrocities. 'An Eye for an Eye' by Sujata Sankranti highlights the ideology based on revenge that justifies brutality. The story reveals how humans become both target and tools of violence. Terrorism is seen as a tool that offers the possibility of achieving considerable political impact with limited means to counter the hegemony of the empowered center. Movement to replace foreign regimes with a more legitimate government which represents the interests of people may adopt terror tactics to achieve its goal. Many national liberation movements that have sought recourse to terrorist activities enjoy support and legitimacy among its own people as well as that of international bodies. The existence of grievances is a precondition exploited by a charismatic leader to evolve a political agenda leading to emergence of terrorist organization. The translated story titled 'The Veiled One' is about terrorism in Kashmir from where Hindus were forced to flee and become refugee in their own land. Muslims too are not safe from the insidious motives behind the acts of terror. The thrust of the collection of stories is to interrogate the conditions that advance terrorism, and not to demonize the terrorists.

The fourth section 'Estrangement' has stories that examine the dilemma of Muslim community within the context of immigrant experience and ethnic stereotypes. The psychological impact of violence and terrorism on the perpetrator as well as the sufferer is interrogated in stories like 'There and not There' and 'Khauf'. The final section 'The Point of no Return' has stories set in future to reflect upon the violence and atmosphere of fear of present era to relay a note of warning. The root cause of terrorism and violent radicalism are extremely complex, multifaceted, and often intertwined. There is a general agreement that lack of democracy, civil liberties and the rule of law are preconditions for domestic terrorism. Rapid modernization and urbanization

resulting in high economic growth cause dis-connect between the traditional and the modern leading to the emergence of ideological terrorism. As repressive political systems and authoritarian governments become more repressive, a vicious cycle of violence and counter-violence is activated. All stories touch upon some or the aspect of fear and violence generating terrorist ideology. The stories point at the need to realize that when violence and terrorism become a way of life, it is humanity that stands to lose with the hunter becoming the hunted and vice versa.

Government action can evoke both negative as well as a positive reaction. The face-off between terrorist organizations and counterterrorism could lead to realistic approach only when open minded review is initiated on both sides of the line. Alternative strategies are needed to address radical terrorism arising from fear of threat to identity and survival of community. It is therefore important to acknowledge that members of terrorist groups cut across different strata of society: while terrorist leaders tend to come from professional classes, the followers are often poor and uneducated. The high level planning and implementation of terrorist activity requires organizational skills and knowledge. Nonetheless without societal support terrorist movements cannot survive. Unfavorable socioeconomic dynamics, ungoverned spaces and pockets of poverty serve as fertile grounds for terrorist recruiters. The poor and less educated can be recruited and used as tools for spreading terror. In all such instances a utopian countercultural community evolves based on a vision that seeks to redress what it sees as unfair or unjust.

The paper points at the need for institutional changes promoting empathetic governance, political participation and human development. The opening up of the system through greater transparency and accountability-according citizens political rights, voice and stake in the system. There is a need to evolve new approaches to find ways of promoting democratic processes and comprehensive economic development aimed at the construction of an egalitarian society. Since poverty and ignorance often provide a breeding ground for terrorism, socio-economic development keeping in view the weakest and the marginalized sections of the society should be encouraged. Only a long-term, multipronged inclusive strategy, aimed at strengthening the institutional underpinnings of development, democracy, and security can hope to achieve effective results. The focus should be on human growth and not just economic growth. The development agenda is as much for terrorists themselves as for those most susceptible to the goals and messages of terrorism.

The collection of short stories *Fear Factor: Terror Incognito* highlights the proactive role of writers through creative endeavors aimed at a powerful

indictment and sensitive interrogation of acts of terror at different levels. The stories from this collection attempt to bring about a shift of perspective through fresh insights to activate empathy and understanding. In a bid to develop the concept of an egalitarian society free from the thrall of fear factor, creative writers present a critique of violence generated terror, be it by the agency of government or by terrorists. Writers can make a positive contribution by interrogating the politics of fear, where stereotypes come under the scanner of sensitive creative mind and the line dividing the aggressor and victims gets blurred, reductive images are questioned, alternative approaches are highlighted and the established is questioned. The writers draw attention to the duty we have as responsible citizens and concerned individuals towards humanity and the world at large since, to use a much quoted maxim said to have originated from Native American saying: "We have not inherited the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." The greatest challenge for creative writers today is to extract and harness the synergy from the seemingly irreconcilable discourses generated by violence, terror and terrorism that undermine hopes of peaceful co-existence.

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## **Imperialism in Disguise: (Re)cognizing the Imperialist Attitude of the United States of America in Bangladesh**

Mohammed Mizanur Rashid\*

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### **Abstract:**

This research paper examines the various class-room training projects and developing ventures facilitated by the Embassy of the United States of America in Bangladesh and investigates the prevailing colonial and imperialist aspects which dominate the scenario. The paper demonstrates the Imperialist attitude of the United States and how it is affecting Bangladesh. Imperialism as we know it is the formation and/or maintenance of an uneven economic, cultural and territorial relationship, usually between states and often in the form of an empire, based on dominance and subordination. Imperialism is usually autocratic and sometimes monolithic – which is having a massive unchanging structure that does not allow individual variation. The imperialism that prevails in Bangladesh, motored by the United States Embassy is slightly different from the direct form of the concept and I would more like to call it as – “Imperialism in Disguise” as will be portrayed in my paper. The training programs which are facilitated by the U.S. Embassy are full of imperialist strategies as are the development programs. These training programs also have an economic and socio-cultural impact on our country and this paper will focus on that issue as well. Therefore, this research is an attempt to depict the United States of America’s imperialist forces at work in Bangladesh and similar Asian countries.

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### **1. Scenario**

The training programs facilitated by the Embassy of the United States of America in Bangladesh are thought to be just attempts to enhance the aptitude of our country’s law enforcing agencies and also the army. But there is much more at stake here than what meets the eye. This paper will try to demonstrate how the U.S. Embassy carries out their imperialist agendas in the name of Anti-Terrorism training programs and many development plans.

In 1983, the United States Congress authorized the Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program as a major initiative against international terrorism. The office of Anti-Terrorism Assistance and Bureau of Diplomatic Security (BDS)

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provides training and related assistance to law enforcement and security services of qualified countries worldwide. The State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism provides policy guidance for the ATA Program. U.S. Embassies play a continuing role in the development, implementation and oversight of all ATA provided assistance. Embassy assessment of program effectiveness and selection of training candidates are usually spearheaded by the embassy regional officer. The assistance is designed to meet identified needs and enhance recipient's Anti-Terrorism capabilities by providing valuable training in a wide range of law enforcement skills, relevant support equipment, and technical advice.

ATA's goal is to provide the best possible training. Every effort goes into developing the most comprehensive, informative and intelligible curriculum. Using the needs assessment from each country, a committee of experts, curriculum developers, subject matter experts and course instructors determines the purpose or the goal of the course. This process provides exactly the type and level of training a country has requested. Once the goal is decided, the committee determines the activities in which one should participate to show that one has gained the knowledge or abilities set as the goals.

Since the program's inception, more than 41,000 security and law enforcement officials from over 130 countries have received Anti-Terrorism training. Although these officials are now better prepared to fight terrorism and protect their citizens in times of crisis, some facts if brought to the vanguard, tells us that the intention of these training programs sum up for only one major objective and that is world dominion.

Apart from the training programs, there are a few development programs facilitated by the U.S. government through the U.S. Embassy and these development programs include building schools in rural areas by U.S. Marines or Army and installation of radio-active portals in the Chittagong sea port by the U.S. Government. Likewise, these actions have a greater effect when judged closely and looked at by the standards of imperialism.

## **2. American Imperialism**

By the term American Imperialism I understand the cultural, economic and military influence of the United States of America on other countries. The idea of American Imperialism came in to mind for the very first time during the Presidency of James K. Polk. He was the one who guided the United States into the Mexican American War of 1846 which eventually led to the annexation of territories such as California. While the United States does not take a form of the traditional empire, in the late 20th and early 21st centuries it nevertheless

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exerted tremendous power over other countries, sometimes through the use of military force, but more often from behind the scenes, just as in the earlier phases of many if not most of the previous empires. In 2005, the United States had 737 military bases in foreign countries, according to official sources.

### **2.1 American Exceptionalism:**

American Exceptionalism is a notion that holds that the United States of America resides in a special recess compared to the other nations of the world because of its national doctrines, historical advancement, political foundations and traditions along with its religious genesis. Philosopher Douglas Kellner traces the identification of American exceptionalism as a discrete occurrence which goes back to the 19th century French observer Alexis de Tocqueville, who concluded by agreeing that the United States uniquely, was – “proceeding along a path to which no limit can be perceived.”

American exceptionalism is nevertheless admired among people within the United States although the legitimacy and the consequences of the incident are confrontational. A monthly British review editorial discourses on the phenomenon, “in Britain, empire was justified as a benevolent ‘white man’s burden’. And in the United States, empire does not even exist. ‘We’ are merely protecting the causes of freedom, democracy and justice worldwide.”

### **2.2 U.S. Foreign Policy and Military Bases:**

Imperial behavior for the United States dates at least to the “Louisiana Purchase” which was an imperial acquisition. By imperial the finger is pointed towards the forceful infringement of one people upon the territory of another, resulting in the subjugation of that people to alien rule. The United States policies towards the Native Americans were designed to remold them into a people more appropriately conformed to imperial desires.

Early twentieth century writers like Charles Beard and Andrew Bacevich conversed American policy as being driven by self-interested expansionism going back as far back as the writing of the Constitution. Some politicians although, do not agree on this matter. Pat Buchanan claims that the modern United States’ drive to empire is – “far removed from what the Founding Fathers had intended the young Republic to become.”

Andrew Bacevich argues that the United States did not fundamentally change its foreign policy after the Cold War, and remains focused on an effort to expand its control across the world. As the surviving super-power at the end of the Cold War, the United States could focus its assets to new directions, when the future being “up for grabs” according to former Under Secretary of Defence



for Policy, Paul Wolfowitz in 1991. Then again, Sidney Lens calls American exceptionalism a myth which allows any number of – “excesses and cruelties, though sometimes admitted, usually regarded as momentary aberrations.”

In *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, the political activist Naom Chomsky argues that exceptionalism and the denials of imperialism are the result of a systematic strategy of half truths, to – ‘manufacture opinion’ as the process has long been described in other countries. ‘Domination of the Media’, according to Chomsky, allows an elite to fix the premises of discourse and interpretation, and the definition of what is newsworthy in the first place.

Some intellectuals, however, preserve the historical function of the United States. Other well-known political figures, such as former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, for example, argued that – “The United States does not seek empires. We’re not imperialistic. We never have been.” Imperialism is more often the name of the emotion that reacts to a series of events than a definition of the events themselves. Where colonization finds analysts and correlation, imperialism must compete with crusaders for and against. Political theorist Micheal Walzer argues that the term ‘hegemony’ is better than empire to describe the United State’s role in the world. Political scientist Robert Keohane agrees saying that – “a balanced and nuanced analysis is not aided by the use of the phrase ‘empire’ to describe United States’ hegemony, since ‘empire’ obscures rather than illuminates the differences in form of rule between the United States and other Great Powers, such as Great Britain in the nineteenth century or the Soviet Union in the twentieth”. Other political scientists, such as Daniel Nexon and Thomas Wright, argue that neither term exclusively describes “foreign relations of the United States”. The United States can be, and has been, simultaneously an empire and a hegemonic power. They claim that the general trend in the United States foreign relations has been away from imperial modes of control.

Chalmers Johnson states that America’s version of the colony is the military base. Chip Pitts argues similarly that enduring United States bases in Iraq advocate a vision of “Iraq as a colony”. United States government officials have also made conflicting reports on how many military bases actually exist outside the country. While territories such as Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana, American Samoa and Puerto Rico remain under United States control, the U.S. allowed many of its overseas regions or occupations to gain independence after the World War II. Instances of countries like this are the Philippines – liberated in 1946, the Federated States of Micronesia in 1986, Marshall Islands in 1986 and Palau in 1994. Most of them

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still have United States bases within their territories. In the case of Okinawa, came under United States administration after the battle of Okinawa during World War II and this happened despite local popular opinion. As of 2009, the United States of America had bases in over 43 countries worldwide and growing.

### **2.3 American Imperialism – Munificent or an Aberration:**

Many critics today defend United States and their imperialism. Max Boot is one of the many of these critics who shield this observable fact by asserting – “United States imperialism has been the greatest force for good in the world during the past century. It has defeated communism and Nazism and has intervened against the Taliban and Serbian ethnic cleansing”. Boot willingly used ‘imperialism’ to describe United States policy, not only in the early twentieth century but since at least 1803.

British historian Niall Ferguson argues that the United States is an empire, but believes that this is a good thing. Many critics have drawn parallels between the British Empire and the role of the United States in the 20th century and early 21st century, though they describe the United States’ political and social structures as more like those of the Roman Empire than of the British. A central point of argument from these critics is that all these empires have had both positive and negative aspects, but that the positive aspects of the United States empire will, if it learns from history and its mistakes, greatly outweigh its negative aspects.

Another point of view believes United States expansion overseas has been imperialistic, but this imperialism as a temporary phenomenon, a corruption of America ideals or the relic of a past historical era. Historian Samuel Flagg argues that Spanish-American War expansionism was a short lived imperialistic impulse and “a great aberration in American history”, a very different form of territorial growth than of earlier American history. Some reviewers argue that the United States does not pursue world domination, but maintains worldwide influence by a system of mutually beneficial exchanges.

Liberal internationalists argue that even though the present world order is dominated by the United States, the form taken by that dominance is not imperial. International relations scholar John Ikenberry argues that international institutions have taken the place of empire. Others think that United States’ power is more based on ‘soft power’, which comes from cultural hegemony rather than raw military or economic force. This includes such factors as the widespread desire to immigrate to the United States, the prestige and corresponding high proportion of foreign students at United States universities, and the spread of United States styles of popular music and cinema. Thus the

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United States, no matter how hegemonic, can no longer be considered to be an 'empire' in the classic sense of the term.

### **3. Training and Development Programs in Bangladesh**

The training programs facilitated by the United States Embassy in Bangladesh come in many shapes and forms. As we have stated before, there are the training programs under ATA which aid other countries to fight terrorism and which we will later see greatly ridiculed in Baraka's poetry. Then there are several supplementary training programs like training the operators who will look after the installed radio-active portals in the port of Chittagong. There are also some development programs under the United States Embassy like building schools, hospitals and other projects. Now let us have a closer look on what actually happens in an ATA training program.

The training programs take place mostly in the Police Staff College in Mirpur, Dhaka. It is a class room training program facilitated by 3 to 4 instructors and is attended by 20 to 25 participants. These participants are already part of the Bangladesh law enforcing agencies such as the Police or the Army. The trainings go on until the course is completed and the span or duration of the course depends on the course's content. The training is provided by Instructors who were themselves former law enforcers such as working for the FBI or the NYPD (New York Police Department) etc. At the beginning of the training, each instructor greets the class and provides some relevant background information about himself or herself. And then each participant is asked to stand and introduce himself or herself to the class. Next the instructor describes a process that determines the class leader who musters the class before start time and after lunch, who assists in maintaining classroom rules of conduct and acts as a point of contact between instructors and participants. The instructor then reveals the subject matter of the training program and these training programs are all related to fighting against terrorism. A few training programs are –

- Investigative Information Management (IIM)
- Investigating Terrorist Incidents (ITI)
- Forensic Examination of Terrorist Crime Scenes (FETCS)
- Border Control Management (BCM)
- Investigating Terrorist Suspects (ITS)

All these training programs begin with a common introduction and that introduction states, "we are here to help you, and we are the good guys unlike those terrorists". The issue of 'us' and 'them' are evident here as the trainers in

the very beginning launches what the whole training program is all about. Let us focus on one particular training program to study the politics of United States' imperial attitude.

The Investigating Terrorist Incidents (ITI) course is designed to enhance the police investigator's ability to investigate, identify and prosecute suspects responsible for terrorist incidents and activities. The participants receive an overview of criminal investigation techniques, including – crime scene investigation, interviewing, case file management, processing and analyzing investigative information etc. This particular course is a 10 day course and beginning with the introduction and ending on the tenth day with the Final Exercise and Graduation ceremony. Each participants receive a certificate for completing the training program. The schedule of the training program is provided –

<b>Course Schedule for ITI Program</b>	
<b>Day 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course Introductions</li> <li>Human Rights and Community Engagement</li> <li>Investigations Overview</li> </ul> <b>Day 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current Trends in Terrorism</li> <li>Overview of Worldwide Threats</li> </ul> <b>Day 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Study Introduction</li> <li>Crime Scene Management</li> </ul> <b>Day 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crime Scene Management (Continued)</li> <li>Interviewing</li> </ul> <b>Day 5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviewing (Continued)</li> <li>Case File and Leads Management</li> </ul>	<b>Day 6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Study Update</li> <li>Elements of a Successful Terrorist Investigation</li> </ul> <b>Day 7</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elements of a Successful Terrorist Investigation (Continued)</li> <li>Processing and Analyzing Investigative Information</li> </ul> <b>Day 8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processing and Analyzing Investigative Information (Continued)</li> <li>Working with the News Media</li> </ul> <b>Day 9</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperation and Collaboration</li> <li>Final Exercise</li> </ul> <b>Day 10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Exercise (Continued)</li> <li>Graduation</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Course Schedule for ITI Program**

Now among these focuses the Human Rights and Community Engagement topic of the first day and the Current Trends in Terrorism of the second day are the areas where the learners are made to think what the instructors want them to think. This is mostly done by using images and also by teaching the learners what the instructors have to say about terrorism and the terrorists. For example, in the section of Community Engagement there are three images. The first image is of a 'white' male police officer from NYPD. The second image is about the people, the community. And the third image is of a terrorist.

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And the striking part is, the terrorist is an Arab. The terrorist is not American, not from any other white country but from an Arab country most probably to reaffirm United States' affair with the current Arab world. The learners soon get used to these images and internalize the idea that the United States is good and the Arab countries are bad therefore whatever United States is doing in the name of fighting terrorism is fair enough.

The next part where this problem is more severe is the topic of the second day, which comes under the headline of Current Trends in Terrorism. In this section the definition of Terrorism is provided but it should be kept in mind that who is offering the definition. Terrorism is termed here as a global threat and told that no country is safe from it. Instantly, the example of September 11 terrorist attacks in United States is drawn into the discussion and United States is particularly focused. The total scenario looks like as if United States is the only country who suffers from terrorist attacks and it is their duty to fight terrorism taking other countries along them even if they do not want to.

The next part gives paradigms of terrorist attacks all over the world. The first instance of terrorism is the Madrid train bombings in March 2004 and they claim that investigations determined that Al-Qa'ida were responsible for this. The next one is about the Beslan school massacre in September 2004, when a group of armed Chechen supporters took more than 1200 school children and adults as hostages. The next example is about the London mass transit system attacks which is also Al-Qa'ida's doing. The next instance is about the 13 September 2008 Delhi bombings by the "Indian Mujahidin". The last example is about the Islamabad Marriott Hotel bombings in September 2008 which is done by a group who call themselves the "Fadayeen Islam". Taking a closer look at these incidents what do we find common in all the attacks? The groups that caused the terrorist attacks or claimed that they have are all Muslims. Not one example is given from terrorist attacks done by fanatics or rebels from other races and religions. So what does the United States want to affirm? No other country has any terrorist activities and all terrorist acts are done by either the Arab world or the Islamic nations? Another instance can be found in the section of Overview of Worldwide Threats. Here, trying to define the worldwide threats, most of the spotlight is cast on the Muslim countries. The statement reads, "Because extremist Islamic fundamentalist groups with a goal of overthrowing secular regimes in largely Muslim populated countries have dominated the international terrorist scene in the past two decades, much attention has been focused on these groups. However, you should not lose sight of the fact that there are many international and national terrorist groups, with no ties to those extremist Islamic fundamentalist groups, which are spreading their brand of terror throughout the world". In these lines, the United States have condemned

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the Arab World for its own 'brand of terror' and at the same time left the door open to other possibilities for they have to use those words to the actions that best suit their own gains. The question still remains open for debate that why is the United States attacking the Arab countries one by one on the name of fighting terrorism even when there is no terror? One possible explanation could be the domination over Arab countries for the consumption of the mass amount of oil that they generate and the other one is the economic system of the United States that depends much on war for its own excellence.

One may ask these questions sitting on the chair of a trainee if he is wise enough to ask a question. Otherwise he or she will ultimately internalize these ideas and his or her views will ultimately change which is exactly what the United States wants. So these training programs are not only training programs in the sense that they train you how to resist or fight against terrorism but they also train you how to become an ally of the United States and see the enemies of United States as your own adversaries.

The imperialist attitude of the United States is also evident through the development programs facilitated by the United States Embassy in Bangladesh. One such instance can be given by the Radio-Active Portal Installation Program in the Ports of Chittagong. The United States government has taken an initiative to build portals which can trace radio-active substances in countries all over the world in an attempt to end the worldwide danger of smuggling radio-active substances from one country to country to another. Bangladesh too had these portals built, at the United States government's expense but what lies underneath the whole program is what is striking for all of us. The operators who are to maneuver the whole project are chosen from the men working at the port's custom office. But these men are bound to report any information regarding radio-active materials directly to the United States and the action taken by the United States government is considered final regardless of the decisions of the Bangladesh authority. This is rather a back draw for Bangladesh than taking a step forward. What will be done with the radio-active materials depends entirely on the United States authority and so is the picture of all the other countries that have had portals built in their ports by the United States. United States, it seems, are in for a mass consumption of radio-active substances from countries all over the world by building these portals for free.

Analyzing and scrutinizing the events that are taking place in Bangladesh and the various incidents that have come under the spotlight thanks to the United States Embassy's imperialistic schemes, it has become quite clear that certainly the existence of imperialism is still in attendance in our country. Despite thinking that after so many years of colonial rule under the British

Empire, we are at last free, the real portrait gives us a very different view. We are still under imperial rule and of course this imperialism is even more treacherous because, it is imperialism in a new form. It is imperialism in disguise.

#### **4. Termination**

To sum everything up it can be said that by emphasizing on the fact that the United States Embassy assists us by giving the best possible advantage a third world country can even imagine of having, we cannot avoid the fact that some of the skills they instruct, are sturdy to practice in our territory. The dissimilarity between a country like America and a country like Bangladesh never enables the trainees to apply what they have learnt from the training programs into full appliance. The gulf of difference in many perspectives is to be blamed for this and it remains a big question, how much help the learners actually get from these training programs. Though they show us professional techniques, they are amateurish in some instances. They try to advertise and publicize their equipments on the first chance they get, which are in most cases unaffordable for a third world country like us. It is a sheer economic strategy which they use in an anticipation to sell us their products of high class vigilant instruments and paraphernalia. Whichever strategy they seem to choose, be it economic, social, law enforcing, religious or political, the complete picture and the eventual outcome remains the same and that is to create dominion and control over other countries of the world which is a perpendicular act of imperialism in disguise by the United States of America.

#### **End Notes**

1. In 1983, the United States Congress authorized the Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program as a major initiative against international terrorism.
2. The idea of American Imperialism came in to mind for the very first time during the Presidency of James K. Polk who was the one who guided the United States into the Mexican American War of 1846 which eventually led to the annexation of territories such as California.
3. American Exceptionalism is a notion that holds that the United States of America resides in a special recess compared to the other nations of the world because of its national doctrines, historical advancement, political foundations and traditions along with its religious genesis.
4. Why is the United States attacking the Arab countries one by one on the name of fighting terrorism even when there is no terror? They might

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dominate over Arab countries for the consumption of the mass amount of oil.

5. Baraka's poem is the theory of American imperialism than the projects of the United States Embassy in Bangladesh is the practicality of that theory in actual existence.
6. Whichever strategy they seem to choose, be it economic, social, law enforcing, religious or political, the complete picture and the eventual outcome remains the same and that is to create dominion and control over other countries of the world which is a perpendicular act of imperialism in disguise by the United States of America.

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## Naturalistic traits in Wharton's *The House of Mirth* and Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*: A Comparative Assessment

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### Abstract:

The present research paper deals with Edith Wharton's novel *The House of Mirth* (1905) and Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi* (1969) (Marathi Novel) in terms of Naturalism. Wharton's novel *The House of Mirth* is the naturalistic masterpiece in the American literature likewise in Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*, for the first time naturalistic aspects are fully expressed. Wharton in *The House of Mirth* explores the lives of New York ruling class people in a naturalistic manner. She places Lily Bart, a tragic heroine, in a society that she describes as a "hot-house" of traditions and conventions." In the novel Wharton excoriates the relation between sex and money in turn-of-the-century upper-class New York life, and reveals the tragic effects of a society of this kind upon a sensitive young woman by using naturalistic principles. Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi* depicts the Mahim Slums people's lives in Naturalistic manner. Karnik uses this novel to raise Mumbai's consciousness of the desolate conditions present in city's slum area. *The House of Mirth* and *Mahimchi Khadi* are the novels, set in two different cultural traditions, countries and languages and ages (periods). Yet, they have the same perspective of the human predicament that provides a great significance and relevance to these novels. The moral ideals and ugly facts for human life are brought together by Wharton and Karnik in order to present contrast between them. They have thus, presented the predicament of human life in an aesthetic way in their novels. The novels thus, are thought provoking and disturbing the readers' perception of human life. Man's quest for the ideal, moral, and comfortable life and his involvement in the ugly, criminal, and immoral activities are highlighted in the novels. This understanding and predicament of the human life constitutes the comprehensive vision of the two novelists—namely Edith Wharton and Madhu Mangesh Karnik.

**Key words:** Naturalism, Marathi Novel, Slum, Upper-class etc.

### I

The present research paper deals with Edith Wharton's novel *The House of Mirth* (1905) and Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi* (1969) (Marathi

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Novel) in terms of Naturalism. Wharton's novel *The House of Mirth* is the naturalistic masterpiece in the American literature likewise in Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*, for the first time naturalistic aspects are fully expressed. The paper is divided into four parts. The first part of the paper discusses the theoretical background that is concept of naturalism and method of analysis, which is necessary for the assessment of selected novels. Analysis of Wharton's novel, *The House of Mirth* is made in the second part of the paper. In third part *Mahimchi Khadi* by Karnik is analysed and fourth part of the paper is devoted to the comparative assessment of selected novels of Wharton and Karnik.

Naturalism is late 19th- and early 20th-century movement in literature that was inspired by adaptation of the principles and methods of natural science, especially the Darwinian view of nature, to literature. In literature it extended the tradition of realism, aiming at an even more faithful, unselective representation of reality, a veritable "slice of life," presented without moral judgment. Naturalism differed from realism in its assumption of scientific determinism, which led naturalistic authors to emphasize man's accidental, physiological nature rather than his moral or rational qualities. Individual characters were seen as helpless products of heredity and environment, motivated by strong instinctual drives from within and harassed by social and economic pressures. For naturalistic writers, human beings are, in Emile Zola's phrase, "human beasts," characters can be studied through their relationships to their surroundings.

Characters in the naturalistic fiction are frequently but not always, ill-educated or lower-class characters whose lives are governed by the forces of heredity, instinct, and passion. Their attempts at exercising free will or choice are restricted by forces beyond their control. Setting of such fiction is usually an urban setting and techniques and plots are as Walcutt says "clinical, panoramic, slice-of-life" drama that is often a "chronicle of despair". (21) Survival of the fittest, determinism, forces of heredity and environment, violence, and taboo are the key themes in naturalistic fiction. For Binford, "The main criterion for naturalism is the idea of determinism, that humans (and animals) are capable of acting only within pre-determined environments." (72)

## II

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Edith Wharton excoriates in *The House of Mirth* the connection between sex and money in turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century life of upper-class society in New York and its tragic effects on a sensitive young woman. In 1953, Blake Nevius observed that Lily Bart, in *The House of Mirth*, is "as completely and typically the product of her heredity, environment, and the historical moment ... as the protagonist of any recognized naturalistic novel" (57). The novel has the naturalist plot of individual decline, with its concern for the pressures of environment and circumstance, and its focus on forces (both inner and outer) beyond the control of the characters. The heroine, Lily Bart, has been brought up to see herself as a fragment of decoration for men of wealth and power. She hates it, deciding that if she allows herself to become the property of one of these men, she will be bored to death. When she tries to exercise her freedom and choose a man more to her liking, she is ostracized as immoral and commits suicide.

Lily Bart is both a victim of her upbringing and her society and a shaper of her own sorry destiny. While being careful to show Lily as a person conditioned by her upbringing to use her beauty and charm to attract men for marriage and to marry only for money. Lily is put by Wharton in such society that determines the fate of Lily. Therefore, Lily is deterministic character of social environment and naturalistic victim of her world. The economic position of women at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the central concern of *The House of Mirth*. Edith Wharton has placed Lily Bart in such society, where a woman rears to use her beauty for the economic gain—'exchange of sex for luxury'. Lily is aware this 'exchange of sex for luxury' practice in the society, and the "beauty is only the raw material of conquest." (Wharton 32) She identifies with the money values of the society and is willing to work hard to acquire a secure place in it. In such society when she tries to make a room the social morals and her own fate destroys what she wants and what she wants to be.

Chance plays an important role in Lily's life. When she tries to attract wealthy Percy Gryce to live a luxurious life Selden (to whom she really loves) comes between them and she rejects Percy as saying he is a bore. It is her own fault that she cannot make right choice between Selden and Percy. But with Selden she cannot marry because he is not rich. As a Lily's fate, she is antagonized by Bertha Dorset, who recognizes that Selden has turned his attentions from her to the lovely Lily. Bertha undertakes a campaign to spoil  
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Lily's name (and preserve her own). She spread rumours that Lily has affair with her husband Mr. George Dorset; as a result Lily loses her status among the upper-class people. In this way Bertha succeeds in cutting Lily off from the society and also from an expected inheritance.

On his own part, Lawrence Selden resolves to ask Lily to marry him. He also sends word to Lily asking her to let him dine with her at evening, but when he gets to his club he only finds a note from Gerty. When he gets home, he finds Lily's note and feels excited about the meeting the next day. He goes to find out Lily to the Trenor's house, he sees there Lily Bart emerging and getting into a cab and Mr Trenor standing in the doorway seeing her off. It hurts him deeply and he now suspects that Lily is indeed having an affair with Mr Trenor. Thus, Lily's another chance at escaping the life of money grubbing among the rich is also closed off in this incident.

Lily spends her lot of money on gambling and travelling as a result she becomes penniless. Her patron aunt Mrs Peniston refuses to pay the bills and her spending on gambling. So, to take help she goes to Mrs. Trenor, but Mrs. Trenor avoids her. Then she decides that she must use the legacy she got from Mrs. Peniston. However, when she inquires at the lawyer's office, she finds out that she is not likely to get her inheritance for another year. After that Lily decides to go to Grace Stepney, her cousin, and to ask her for an advance on her inheritance. Grace greets Lily cordially, but refuses to lend her money.

Lily becomes even more distressed and upset by bankruptcy, but she still refuses to consider marrying Selden. She waits for his arrival, but Selden, disgusted by her dealings with Trenor and not wanting to have anything to do with her. In such desperate condition Rosedale appears at Lily's house and proposes marriage. He says has too much money and he desires to get a wife and make her rich. He tells her "I want my wife to make all the other women feel small." (Wharton 164) Lily thinks that Rosedale knows too much about her and that he will use it against her if she rejects him outright. She, who still dislikes Rosedale, asks for time to decide, whether she should marry with him. Here, she again loses the chance to take firm decision of marriage and to solve the economic problem. When she sees the lines on her face more than ever, she goes to the writing table and addresses a note to Rosedale, but she can't because she thinks about Selden.

Book 1 ends on a most despairing note. Lily has nowhere left to turn but a marriage that is clearly a polite form of prostitution. Wharton brings out this aspect of marriage incrementally. At first the allusions to Lily as being on a sort of job market, the marriage market, are sardonic and light. By the time Gus Trenor attempts to rape her in exchange for giving her so much money and Simon Rosedale baldly proposes to give her an unlimited budget in exchange for her hand in marriage, it is clear that marriage in the elite circles of New York's wealthiest citizens, and is an economic arrangement. In this arrangement, women are items of exchange, like money. Lily thinks about marrying Simon Rosedale but carefully avoids thinking about what marriage to him would mean for her. In highlighting this avoidance, Wharton makes the reader think about it. It is clear that Lily is on the verge of a kind of prostitution. She does not love Simon Rosedale, she finds him repulsive. Yet she still considers marrying him. But here again chance and her fate plays a crucial role against her. She tells Rosedale that she is now willing to marry him. Now, he colours and tells her that he no longer wants to marry her because of the things he hears about her and George Dorset. He says he is even more in love with her this year than he was last year, but now things have changed since she has lost her good standing in society. He bluntly tells her that he would drag him down from his position in the society, but he still likes her as a friend.

Since Lily has done nothing but what was expected of her in her position, her exile from family and social friends is shown to be completely arbitrary. She has no control of her fate. Lily is such a protagonist who can see clearly what her position is. Since she has no money, she is not recognized as a social being. These people operate according to a money value system that determines all social ties, family and friendship. Lily has tried to play according to their rules, but in losing, she will enter a world she has never wondered much about.

Lily's descent into poverty is now painful, accompanied by her realization that she is unsuited for real work, even trimming hats. After nights of tossing and turning, Lily resorts to chloral to help her sleep. One night, she takes a little too much and dies. Lily's death confirms the theme of pessimistic determinism in the novel. Lily's suicide with the overdose of chloral which represents her inability to overcome her socially determined fate.

Darwin pointed out that every living creature exists according to pre-determined characteristics; therefore life is simplified to survival of the fittest. Lily struggles to maintain her own status in the society but in this attempt she fails because she cannot make right decision and her fate plays cruel role, its result is her suicide.

### III

Madhu Mangesh Karnik's novel, *Mahimchi Khadi*, was published in 1969. In 1970, the novel won 'State Literary Award'. It was the first attempt in Marathi literature, after Dalavi's *Chakra*, to depict the naked realism of slum area. It describes the lives of Mahim slum people. Karnik uses this novel to raise Mumbai's consciousness of the desolate conditions present in city's slum area.

When the story starts, Abbas, a son of Sakina and Dadu, wakes up by the sound of Airplane. At the morning he goes to buy the bread, and an unknown boy cheats him by taking his ten paisa. Then story moves towards the main character of the novel, Jaya, a beautiful young daughter of Ganga and Kisan. Her father is a handicapped man and mother is an only earning source of home. As a young, Jaya fascinate by the fashionable world of Mumbai. She always thinks to live life as it is shown in the movies. As a result of it she is in love with Shamu, a loafer youth of Mahim slum. To escape from the poor slum life, she elopes with him, he also gives her promise to fulfill her all desires. Her mother tries to bring her back to home, but Jaya refuses to go back and lives with Shamu as his wife. Neither Kisan nor Bhika, her brother, tries to bring her back; instead they help Jaya to live with Shamu. Bhika also develops the love affair with Dadu's niece, Roshan, an innocent country girl.

Shamu does not earn anything since his marriage. Economically he is totally dependent on Chander. As a result, after few days of their marriage, Shamu forces her to sleep with Chander. Thus, Chander sleeps with Jaya as a first customer. When Chander dies in an accident, Shamu forces her to be a prostitute. Shamu became agent of Jaya and brings customers for his own wife Jaya.

Saraju, a so called Don of the slum, gets angry with Shamu for his sinful behaviour in the slum. He brutally beats Shamu by some local gunda. Shamu becomes injured and so he goes to hospital. In his absence Bhika becomes her

agent and both go daily at Kamthipura for the business. Thus Jaya becomes a real prostitute. Even in the absence of Shamu she earns the money by offering her body for the money. Bhika also enjoys with another prostitute and suffers with a disease, Syphilis, like his father Kisan. Jaya gives him some money for the medicine but Ganga refuses to accept it. At the end of the novel, Mantu, Bhika's friend, suggests the remedy, that he should rape on any virgin girl, to cure his disease. Unfortunately, Bhika applies this remedy with his own little sister Ratan. In the dark evening he holds her but she cries loudly and people of the slum beat Bhika, mercilessly. His mother also curses him, in the fits of agony, she throws the photo of Saibaba on the road, and a truck goes by smashing the photo. (Karnik 144)

Karnik shows how the environment shapes human lives regardless. Jaya, Bhika, and Roshan are the representative characters of the novel. They are the victims of their environment. Each character of the novel blames to environment and atmosphere of the Khadi, for their destruction. As heredity and environment determine the action of all the characters, their natural instincts are also responsible for their personal destruction. Their behaviour is determined by their physiological, inherited constitutions. Though, Jaya's tragedy is an effect of environment, she herself is too responsible for her own destruction. Her sexual desire overcomes on her actions; she could not control her desire and becomes victim of it by falling in love with Shamu. Her desire of standard life imposes her to accept Shamu's proposal and elopes with him.

Subject matter, characterization, setting, use of the slum dialect, and even style of the *Mahimchi Khadi* exemplified the novel as the unique product of Naturalism. Karnik, then, is a naturalistic in the sense that he believes that environment and circumstances mold human lives. But he is much more than this, for his primary concern is not an unflustered, cynical tracing of inevitable forces but a satiric attack on weakness in social condition. He seems to be saying that though we may not control our destinies, we can at least destroy those systems of society which uncritically assume we can. If we do this, a Jaya will at least be saved from denunciation and devastation by overwhelming poverty and social ill.

#### IV

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Both Wharton and Karnik belong to different countries, different literary traditions, cultures, and languages. But they have some similarities. Both writers are the significant writers in their literary traditions. Man is merely a higher order-animal, whose life and fortunes are controlled, determined by the heredity and environment. This is the common theme in both the novels. The brief analysis of Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* and Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*, show that both the novels are about young girl's fall and destruction in cruel society and have many of the distinctive elements of naturalistic fiction. Both novels have one more similarity that is both have a woman as the central character. In *The House of Mirth*, Lily is forced to live in such society that makes her near about a prostitute and ultimately commit suicide. In *Mahimchi Khadi*, Jaya, attracted towards the glamorous world and became a prostitute. In both the novels natural instinct that is desire plays an important role for fall of major characters. Lily's desire to live the luxurious and fashionable life and for that purpose to marry wealthy person leads her ultimate death. She can live a peaceful life by marrying with Selden to whom he really loves but her passion for luxurious life makes her to do this. The same passion to live fashionable life like presented through the films, Jaya elopes with Shyam and eventually destroys her own life by being a prostitute. Lily is also prostitute but in a different way. She decides to marry with such person who can spend more and more money for her. In this pursue she decides to marry with Rosedale, though she does not love him. Even people also suppose that she exchanges herself (sex) for money. Selden sees her with Gus Trenor at night in the Trenor's house. She may give him sexual satisfaction in turn of money that Lily has spent earlier. In this case, both, Lily and Jaya are the prostitutes.

Heredity plays the more important role in shaping the lives of both woman—Jaya and Lily. Ganga, a double married woman and Mrs. Bart, extravagant woman, failed to make their children morally descent person, because of environment and they themselves are the victims of that environment. Both Lily and Jaya are fed up with the overwhelming poverty and eccentric atmosphere of their home, therefore both try to keep their selves away from it. To avoid lives in poverty both rush to live a fashionable lives and untimely meet their tragic destiny.

Both, Wharton and Karnik unwaveringly focused on the determinism of social and economic forces on the lives of individuals. As literary naturalists,  
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both are interested in depicting the social ills of their times, showing that despite an individual's best efforts the forces of the society will overcome and determine one's fate.

There is little emphasis on plot in Wharton's *The House of Mirth* and Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*. Plots of these novels are simple and have a linear progression. This is because it seems that both are more interested to depict the inner struggle. Their aim and purpose is to study the working of human mind. For them, the exterior was not so much important as the study of internal response and reactions of a person. A neglect of plot was not uncommon in the naturalistic fiction and the same thing happened with these novels. The plot is reduced to a minimum in a cinematographic way—cut, select, and pieced together by a kind of rapid and essential montage, which is more evocative and suggestive than descriptive.

The naturalistic universe falls under one single explanatory theory of all events. In such a universe one can either internalize the laws determining natural and social focus or be their victim. Wharton and Karnik also fall into this grouping of writers and support this view in their novels. Both Lily and Jaya have given two options upon arrival at the mental crossroads in their life. They can either submit to the social norms ascribed to their class or venture forth and fight them. Each choice comes with a consequence.

Though there are some similarities in both the novel, there are also differences. It seems that Wharton's technique and method is that of oblique and indirect. Lily herself, though she supposed a prostitute, is strangely untouched by her physical environment. She functions as an almost expressionistic symbol of inner purity uncorrupted by external foulness. Of course, none can prevent to a naturalist from using irony and expressionistic symbolism in his fiction, just as we cannot prevent him from introducing a deterministic theme into a slum setting. But as we observe, in practice, the naturalist is usually direct to his depiction. Wharton only suggests through the dialogue and description that Lily became a prostitute. On the other hand Karnik in his *Mahimchi Khadi* clearly shows the fall of a girl into prostitution of the slum. He describes Jaya's prostitution business in the very straightforward manner. Jaya's relation with Chander and her intentionally visit to Kamthipura to flatter more and more customers, Roshan and Bhika's secret meeting and their sexual intercourse, all

these events Karnik has described objectively and boldly. His theme emerged clearly and ponderously from his full description of the inner as well as outer corruption of Jaya and from his “realistic” symbolism. Karnik uses many narrative and other devices to construct his fictional world. The main function of this device is to make plainly clear before our eyes the events and characters. The picture-like descriptions in colour present us the reality as perceived by the character or participant in an event. Karnik splashes his fiction with colour-strokes which gives us an impression of looking at a master’s canvas.

Wharton’s technique of presenting characters is as types. It creates the sense in the reader’s mind, that the problems, faced by characters, are as faced by people of their class and status. Karnik, on the other hand tries to present each event in more details. He introduces all the characters with the details of their past and present life. He also used the documentary film technique like Wharton, but his narration never goes out of the Mahim slum. He does not present the city life scene like that of Wharton.

Most striking difference between two novels is, in *The House of Mirth* social code of morality played vital role in determining Lily and other characters’ behaviours and actions. It controls their lives. The tragedy of Lily is not only because of environment or surrounding in which she grown up, but social morality is more responsible. The moral values, held by her family and society are drawn almost entirely from an upper class ethic. When she is accused as adulterous woman and ostracised from the upper class society by Mrs Bertha Dorset, Lily’s family members and her friends avoids her to help. She is cast out by Aunt Mrs Peniston and relatives for desecrating their social status. Thus, social code of morality helps Lily’s tragedy along with unhealthy familial and economical environment. On the other hand, in *Mahimchi Khadi* economical forces played most important role than social moral. Jaya becomes prostitute, Bhika accepts to be her agent, Kashiram becomes eccentric, Shamu allows Chander to enjoy with his own wife, etc. are the result of economical situation. These economical forces are beyond their controls. He at the very beginning of the novel makes clear that in the slum there is no moral person. Thus, the economical forces are responsible for Jaya’s tragic condition along with slum environment and her natural impulses rather than social code of morality.

In *The House of Mirth*, Lily's aunt rejects her to help her and her cousins, Jack and Grace Stepney discards to support her when she falls in the eyes of society, they avoid even to speak with her. But on the other hand, it is so because in India, the familial ties are more compact than in America, Jaya's mother again and again tries to bring Jaya back to home, though she is now a prostitute. She scolds Jaya, only for Jaya's immoral behaviour. As we may examine and can accuse, that Lily's aunt and cousins are responsible for Lily's destruction by not supporting her in due time. But again, we cannot say Ganga, Jaya's mother spoiled her daughter. This is the cultural difference in Indian and American family life that becomes obvious throughout the novels.

Wharton's writings depict what she believes are the norms of the world. Though this example of Wharton's work is realistic, offering an accurate, detailed, unembellished depiction of life, it is written within a frame that can only be deemed as naturalistic. During the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Emile Zola was a powerful influence on the American Literature. Zola's Naturalistic philosophy of literature seemed to be more applicable to writing dealing with the growth of slum areas as a result of great industrial development. This philosophy of scientific determinism which laid emphasis on environment was may be in Wharton's mind when she wrote her novel *The House of Mirth*.

This is not case on Karnik's side; he is not belonged to any movement or the group of the writers. The term 'Naturalism' comes from France by and through Zola's writing and spread all over the Europe and the U.S.A. But it did not affect Indian writers much. Nor any movement emerged in Marathi literature for that purpose; even it seems that Karnik has not read any naturalistic novel before the writing of *Mahimchi Khadi*. But the detail study of the novel shows, that *Mahimchi Khadi* is pure naturalistic novel. It's slum setting, subject matter, plot construction and overall impression of the story makes the novel true naturalistic piece of literature. It makes obvious that Karnik has written this novel out of his own desire to write something about the poor people of the Mahim slum, where he himself lived for a few years.

Thus, the moral ideals and ugly facts of human life are brought together by Wharton and Karnik in order to present contrast between them. They have thus, presented the predicament of human life in an aesthetic way in the selected

novels. The novels thus, are thought provoking and disturbing the readers' perception of human life. Man's quest for the ideal, moral, and comfortable life and his involvement in the ugly, criminal, and immoral activities are highlighted in the novels. This understanding and predicament of the human life constitutes the comprehensive vision of the two novelists—namely Edith Wharton and Madhu Mangesh Karnik.

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## Kamala Markandaya's *The Coffe Dams* as the Modern Juggernaut

Patil Sangita Sharnappa\*

### Abstract:

Kamala Markandaya is one of the most prolific Indian Women novelists. *The Coffe Dams* (1969) is the sixth novel of Kamala Markandaya; the novel has been studied in terms of human psychology, feminine sensibility, social problems, complex cultural values, and so on by various research scholars. But, the novel is not studied in the perspective of ecofeminism, this paper is an attempt to study Markandaya's novel in the perspective of ecofeminism, focusing especially on the key feature of ecofeminism such as how the colonial and androcentric attitude mar the Indian flora and fauna on the name of development by constructing a dam. The paper explores the impact of dam construction on tribal people and then gives a brief overview of ecofeminism. Further, the novel *The Coffe Dams* is analyzed by using the ecofeminists lens. The concluding section tries to say that there is a need to stop the modern juggernaut in order to save the nature and tribal people.

**Keywords:** Ecofeminism, Colonization, Androcentric Attitude and Development

*"The big dams are being constructed everywhere in tribal or hilly areas. The people of these regions are being uprooted to provide power to big cities, industries and irrigation water to comparatively more prosperous areas. This is unethical. The locals are affected by sudden rise in prices of essential commodities. Their scarce resources of water, fuel etc. is exploited leaving nothing for them,"— Sundar Lal Bhauguna*

Kamala Markandaya is one of the most prolific Indian Women novelists. *The Coffe Dams* (1969) is a sixth novel of Kamala Markandaya; the novel has been studied in terms of human psychology, feminine sensibility, social problems, complex cultural values, and so on by various research scholars. But, the novel is not studied in the perspective of ecofeminism, this paper is an attempt to study Markandaya's novel in the perspective of ecofeminism, focusing especially on the key feature of ecofeminism such as how the colonial and androcentric attitude mar the Indian flora and fauna on the name of

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development by constructing dam. The paper explores in general the impact of dam construction on tribal people and then gives a brief overview of ecofeminism. Using the ecofeminists lens the novel *The Coffe Dams* is analyzed. The concluding section tries to say that there is a need to stop the modern juggernaut in order to save the nature and tribal people.

### **Impact of Dam Construction on Tribal People:**

Pt Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India said that dams are 'the temples of Modern India' there by referring to their many benefits such as to store rain water, to irrigate farmland, generate electricity, supply drinking water and save land from floods and draught. But this is one side of the coin; the other side has necrophilic impact on environment and human beings. The basic and major problem is displacement or rehabilitation of tribal people, who lose their lands, homes, jobs and property. The indigenous people or tribal people are not only deprived of their culture and kinship activities that affects their whole socioeconomic and ecology based texture, but also lose their intimate relationship with nature. Further, there is also the loss of inherited knowledge and experiences of the local people about the plants and animals of that area, which is their source of livelihood thus leading to further confrontation and multifarious agglomeration of ecological crisis and shifting of valuable biological and cultural diversity. Such adverse impact of dams on environment as well as on living beings is witnessed by two the most controversial dams such as Tehri and Sardar Sarover.

Speaking about the campaign against the project by Tehri people, noted activist Sundar Lal Bhauguna, the inceptor of Chipko Movement says, "We in Himalaya are facing crisis of survival due to the suicidal activities being carried out in the name of development...The monstrous Tehri dam is symbol of this. There is need for a new and long term policy to protect the dying Himalaya. I do not want to see the death of the most sacred river of the world- The Ganga-for short term economic gains." Commoners' concerns is echoed. "There's no means to live here anymore," said Mooni Devi, a 42-year-old farmer from the village in the Tehri Valley. "What is left here now? What do we eat? They have made us all into beggars. All the good farmland is gone. We just do our work, what else is there for us to do?" in this context Vandans shiva's anxiety sounds alarming who states that Fifteen million people have been uprooted from their homelands in India during the past four development decades. They, and their links with soil, have been sacrificed to accommodate mines, dams, factories, and wildlife parks. (Shiva 99)

Operationalizing undemocratic development projects was based on a similar false notion of the 'national interest', and every local interest felt morally

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compelled to make sacrifices for what seemed the larger interest. This is the attitude with which each community made way for large dams in post – independent India. It was only during the 1980 when the different ‘local’ interests met each other nationwide, they realized that what was being projected as the ‘national interest’ were the electoral and economic interests of a handful of politicians financed by a handful of contractors and industrialists who benefit from the construction of all dams such as Tehri and the Narmada Valley projects. Against the narrow and selfish interest that had been elevated to the status of the ‘national’ interest, the collective struggle of communities engaged in the resistance against large dams started to emerge as the real though subjugated common interest. (Shiva 10)

### **Introduction to Ecofeminism:**

The concern of women towards ecology and nature has been sensitive in all cultures around the world. Women and ecology thus seem to be intertwined. These aspects have strongly influenced the birth of ecofeminism. Ecofeminism, the new term, coined by French writer, Francoise d'Eaubonne in 1974, which was first used in her book, *Le Feminisme Ou la Mort*, was never translated into English. Her core objective is an ecological revolution to save the planet.

Ecofeminism, an umbrella term, focuses on philosophical and practical analytical study of exploitation of women and nature. It is a new approach to feminism and environmentalism. Feminists study why women are exploited and marginalized whereas environmentalists studies why nature is treated as inferior to culture and ultimate goal of these movements liberation. Philosophers, activists and thinkers in various fields from science, anthropology, sociology, history, economic and politics began to critique traditional attitudes to the environment from feminist perspective. It is multifaceted interdisciplinary movement, which paves a new way of thinking to nature, politics and spirituality. It addresses a broader range of contemporary social and political problem from pollution, extinction of animals due to globalization, economic development, militarism, racism, colonization, sexual violence and development of science and technology, so it is called as biocentric environment movement on the basis of oppression of women and degradation of nature.

### ***The Coffer Dams: A Colonial and Androcentric Attitude:***

The present paper aims to use Ecofeministic lens to analyze Kamala Markandaya novel, *The Coffer Dams*. *The Coffer Dams* projectiles the impact of the construction of a dam by a group of British and Indian technocrats on a south Indian River. The novel can be studied as colonial and androcentric attitude which is represented by the British engineering firm partnered by

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Clinton and Mackendrick and many other assistants and Indian engineers like Krishnan, Gopal and local technicians like Bashim and laborers. The paper tries to encapsulate a deep association and intimate relationship of women with a holistic approach towards the world and is even focused on exploitation and subordination of both women and Nature.

Kamala Markandaya deconstructs the concept of wilderness by giving sketches of wild life especially birds, impenetrable greenery, interlocking tribal and nature, and more deeper level alienated and paranoid state of the tribal. The colonized attitude is espoused by Warren and Karen's words, "Mother Nature is raped, mastered, conquered, mined, her secrets are "Penetrated" and her "womb" is to be put into service of the "man of science". On one hand, pastoral peace rapidly gives way to catastrophic destruction of ecology. World view in which nature was reconstructed as dead and passive, to be dominated and controlled by humans." (Warren 1990: xvi)

Kamala Markandaya's novel is epitome of ancient traditional pastoral life of tribal people and impact of dam construction on them, and its multilayered effects on animal, nature and women. The pioneer and the mother of ecofeminism Francoise de Eaubonne expounds, " The progress in the stature of Western women begins with a veritable liberation and is balanced against social injustice, the exploitation of poor countries, the exploration of deadly armaments and nuclear industries, and devastation of the environment as ends to productivity. ( d'eaubonne, 1990:1)

How West can uproot a tribal community is better depicted in case of Bashiam, an Indian hill tribe's man, skilled with the traditional craft of wood cutting. He has inherited knowledge of forest, river and hill- country side seasons, but gets influenced by White people and starts working with strange powerful turbines for the incentives given for his work. Due to this glamorous world, he is uprooted from his family, ancestral profession and his village and he starts learning to repair and dismantle machine. With mechanic power, the man wanted to tame the river and cage it like an animal: "At night when machines and men were silent one heard the river. Like a heartbeat: insistent, unceasing, soft when you took no notice, loud when you listened." ( P 27)

Bashiam, the hill man is called jungleewala or even considered as civilized jungleewala. 'Jungle' and 'wala' the first word means forest and the later word means the one who looks after or savior of forest. The phrases shows Indians' intimate relationship with nature and oneness with them but these tribal men like Bashiam was influenced by colonial and modern technology which is the underline part of The Coffor Dam. It can be witnessed as, "the precision that man had imparted to metal, the extreme functional beauty of each

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working part, the powerful action of steel tongue in oiled groove, of whirring flywheel and cog, all these soothed and satisfied his own brand of wanting, the void each man creates in himself and spends his times filing, cramming his industry like a sop in the face of the life that has come to him with such terrifying unknowingness of goal and intention." The introduction of machine in Indian tribal context paid very heavy price with the machines having taken toll of tribal people and also causing extinction of birds and animals. At the secondary level deforestation ultimately has resulted in women's degradation. What modern machine- man does to the earth will eventually be felt by all; everything is connected. 'Unlimited Progress' is dangerous myth because it suggests that we can rape and destroy living nature, of which we are an integral part, without ourselves suffering the effects. As White Man has for centuries treated nature like an enemy it seems that now nature is hostile to us. (Shiva: 93)

Bhasiam, enticed by modern form of work which gives him money and recognition, quits the traditional profession of relying on forest. This shows that men are easily attracted to new development. Peace and secure life they are getting from former life is untraced and without understanding the hovering darkness in the form of the dam, the concept echoed, "but they did not dispel the horror that dwelling on them infused in his mind". The main stream of Bhasiam's memory was preoccupied with a direct negative concept of hill and nature's fury, but he failed to understand man's rootlessness and indirect negative impact of machine for longer run. Bhasiam is not the only prey to fall. The colonisers caught like wild fire and in a very short of time they won some Indian technicians like Krishnan and Gopal in their gulf. "Krishnan fed on bitter aloes, said the British had eaten it away during the centuries when they were the rulers and Indians the ruled: it would take a century to form again. But Gopalrao, who had suffered only minor modification, had a more hospitable explanation." (P 71)

Kamala Markandya very vividly projects the colonial and androcentric stance, which has never given any attention to animals. This becomes clear in case of Clinton. "When we leave", Clinton said, "There are going to be hundreds of labor out of a job. Are we going to pension them all?" It gives us picture of colonial attitude and impact of dam construction on illiterate tribal people because they lost their livelihood by rehabilitation. Moreover the women are dislocated from their basic amenities, like water resources, fuel for cooking and many more While; few tribal young people left their ancestral profession and joined the team of dam constructor, without being farsighted. They are unaware that once dam construction is over they are going to lose their livelihood and what next is big question mark. But these simple innocent tribal men like Bhasiam failed to understand the long lasting impact on life.

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Dams thus become the sites of destruction. In the eyes of capitalist patriarchy, among the last colonies these sites of creative regeneration are transformed into 'passive' sites where the expert 'produces' and value. Nature, women and non-white people merely provide 'raw' material. The devaluation of contributions from women and nature goes hand-in-hand with the value assigned to acts of colonization as acts of development and improvement.

Two contrast ideas are suggested here on the name of development by constructing the dam- suffering and victimization of tribal people whom they consider, 'half naked coolies', 'jungleewala', which is the symbol of uncivilized and under developed people, " the village, upriver, felt the on slot most, the hill at whose base the tribes men were encamped acting as peculiarly effective baffle board, bouncing sound and shock waves of the shallow, boulder- strewn basin where they had pitched their huts." (P106) and "but downstream the ramifications of building requisition the river banks until the terrain grew untenable. Upstream beyond the sheltering hill, they and their huts would be in the path of the south wave monsoon winds. Those fragile huts that would take off like kites at very first puff. Backs against a mountain, she thought, they had been pushed as far as they could go." (P107)

### **Conclusion:**

The construction of such coffer dams that act as modern juggernaut should be stopped at any cost. How "the casualties of war" between man and machine curiously and ruthlessly uproot tribal people who are engulfed by machine, and the British: Clinton, Hinderson, Jackson and Mackendric and some Indian technicians are sensitively portrayed in the novel. Such people who are all set to build coffer dams are least bothered and very inhuman to other living beings. Men were only killers and influenced by the killer machine with which they wanted to tame the nature. This attitude is promoted by Francis Bacon and his followers, the fathers of modern Science and Technology. For them, this dependence was an outrage, a mockery of man's right to freedom on his own terms and therefore had forcefully and violently to be abolished. Western rationality, the west's paradigm of Science and concept of freedom are all based on overcoming and transcending this dependence, on the subordination of nature to the (male) will, and the disenchantment of all her forces. (Shiva 18) Bailey and Wilkins the main performers in the novel, met their ends. In reality, the simple, nature lover and real developer, ecofriendly are tribal people and this concept is very beautifully given, "the simple graves, in the shadow of towering jungle, where suddenly forlorn and pathetic." (P124)

Thus, the cumulative displacement caused by colonialism, development and the global market place has made homelessness a cultural characteristic of

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late twentieth century. (Shiva: 98) The contrast ideas- village and town, in real terms who is civilized and who is uncivilized? Who is towards development? And who is towards maldevelopment? – are big unsolved mystery. According to civilization and modernisation, development is in the form of blazing lights. Constructing dams is the bright side of colonization and the company's labor mustered their strength to watch the display of their technological supremacy in India. Markandya very vividly depicted vagaries and varieties of India. Once India was rich in bio diversity of birds but androcentric attitude changed the scenario as a Western, male oriented and patriarchal projection has destructed the flora and fauna on the name of development.

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## Domestic Violence in Sahgal's Novel

Sonali Anand

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### Abstract:

Home is the pivot around which husband and wife rotate to run their household affairs. Family is an institution that works for social aims, as family is the basic social unit. Healthy atmosphere in the family produces citizens with healthy attitude and mentality who work for the advancement of nation. Domestic violence makes the family atmosphere poisonous and children learn the same behaviour from their parents and repeat in their life. In Indian society husband-wife relationship is stained with domestic violence due to the male superiority. The misinterpretation of the religious texts has given primary position to husband and secondary position to wife in the society. Glorification of man has filled him with ego which becomes encased within several shells and impenetrable. Enlightenment of women, suffragette movement and Feminist movements have made women aware towards their rights. She has taken initiatives to oppose the violence inflicted on her. Though she has been continuously fighting against the male domination yet it will take time to break the lifelong chrysalis of narrow and rigid social codes. The presented research paper aims to depict Domestic violence in husband wife relationship in Sahgal's novels. Her two novels *Storm in Chandigarh* and *Rich Like Us* are discussed in the research paper.

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In a male dominated society gender equality and elimination of sex discrimination have always remained a utopian dream. Sahgal being an enlightened novelist and a feminist has successfully championed the women rights in her novels by means of the predicaments in which her women characters are posed. Sahgal weaves the warp and woof of her novels from the upper middle class and elite society. Higher status is more hidden ways of domestic violence. Concerning more about their status, these higher class characters are not presented with eloquent speeches indicating the domestic violence faced by them. Though domestic violence has not been highlighted by the novelist yet we cannot overlook the tormenting and torturing mental agony of some of her women characters who suffer from emotional, verbal type of abuse. These type of examples in her novels indicate that domestic violence is present in Indian society irrespective of the economical class and status.

Sahgal believes in the equal partnership between husband and wife. Their relation should be based on understanding, faith, love and respect for each

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others attitudes beliefs and flexibility in the relations. What she believes is only a virtual form of relation and available in a very less percentage in the society. Two out of three couples are a victim of domestic violence in our society. Sahgal belongs to that category of Radical feminists who think that "the basis of women's oppression lies not in social organization or physical domination but in a male control of culture, religion, language and knowledge that limits the ways in which we can think and causes patriarchal assumptions to be internalized by women as well by men."<sup>1</sup>

"Domestic abuse, also known as spousal abuse, occurs when one person in an intimate relationship or marriage tries to dominate and control the other person. Domestic abuse that includes physical violence is called domestic violence....Domestic abuse often escalates from threats and verbal abuse to violence. And while physical injury may be the most obvious danger, the emotional and psychological consequences of domestic abuse are also severe. Emotionally abusive relationships can destroy your self- worth, lead to anxiety and depression and make you feel helpless and alone....Many men and women suffer from emotional abuse , which is no less destructive .... Emotional abuse includes verbal abuse such as yelling , name calling, and shaming. Isolation, intimidation and controlling behaviour also fall under emotional abuse."<sup>2</sup>

In Indian society husband-wife relationship is stained with domestic violence due to the male superiority. This male superiority is the result of male control of culture. They have misinterpreted the religious texts for becoming the hub of power in the society. The religious texts like *Manusmriti* and many more interpret that husband is the lord and wife is his servant. She has to live in his subordination and servitude till her last breath. Though the Women Suffragette Movement, Feminist Movements, All India Women's Congress and many feminist texts have tried to change the scenario of Indian society yet domestic violence is traced in our society. Despite of their economic independence in the outer world women have to subordinate to their husbands in choice of career after their marriage, budget of household expenditure. In many cases husbands snatch the money earned by their wives and they don't have any right on it. These types of relations between husband and wife are a social stigma which gives rise to unpleasant atmosphere in the family where wife and children feel insecure and they don't have any freedom of expression. The future of such families is always in dark. The children of these families learn the same violence from their parents which they show in the form of aggressive behaviour towards others and when they grow up they follow the same practice. They also give rise to domestic violence or they become depressed and psychologically unfit for running a family. "In abusive relationships, violence is posited to arise out of a

need of power and control of one partner over the other. An abuser will use various tactics of abuse in order to establish and maintain control over partner.<sup>3</sup>

"Our culture has been a prisoner, bound hand and foot by religion our women are the frogs in the well, constricted in their conduct by tradition... The Vedas Upanishads, epics, the Smrithis constitute the foundation of Aryan culture. These have been the determining factors all along upto this day. A woman's life has been moulded for ages by their influence."<sup>4</sup> When a man takes a woman as his wife she loses her identity; she becomes Mrs. 'so and so'. He treats her as his property, which he owns exclusively, like his land, farms, factories, gold and other material possessions and this right of possession is absolute, unachievable. He possesses her body, mind and soul and his right is there of none to dispute. She has no volition of her own. She has to submit to his demands and desires without a murmur of protest, even if such demands are unjust and cruel. He dictates and she obeys. "Even the economically independent woman's lot is no better. She has to bear the double burden of job and household responsibilities. At home her contribution is seldom recognized while at working place many times she is treated as inferior or is harassed and exploited".<sup>5</sup> If he desires her body, she has to submit even if she is not physically or mentally prepared for it. There is such a thing as 'marital rape', now a punishable offence in some countries. Man is the breadwinner of the family and his wife is economically dependent on him. His resistance to change and refusal to help with domestic chores may be natural from his standpoint but is surely unfair. Woman's domestic work is unpaid and thankless and can be regarded as a source of male oppression. The heavy workload turns them into physical wrecks. It is so exhausting and nerve-wrecking that it saps all of their strength and vitality leading to serious health problems. They grow thin and anaemic and develop diseases for lack of health care.

Barring stray cases of male support and use of domestic appliances in some families, there is no escape from the monotony and misery of their lives. Man benefits from present arrangement in terms of domestic comfort while women are handicapped. They lose their capacity for creative work. They are no better than bonded labours, consigned to a bleak and unjust and insensitive social order, doomed to life-long slavery since hope of redemption. Thompson saw it as based on men's selfishness, "whatever system of labour. Whatever system of government... under every vicissitude of Man's condition, he has always retained woman his slave."<sup>6</sup>

While man considers himself, free as a bird, he denies this freedom to woman. He imposes restrictions on them, on their movements and actions, their speech and relationships but regards himself to be above such restrictions. Such



dual standards of morality by which delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated but deemed of little account to man. He may be indulging in amorous dalliances or having illicit relations with other women, going to red-light areas; on returning home late at night in an inebriated state, he does not consider it necessary to offer any explanation to his wife or to admit lapse. The wife may fret and fume and make protests but he brushes them aside as if they are of no consequence. But he sets up a code for the woman. He may abuse her or subject her to physical torture even on a frivolous matter. As for himself, he is free from all reproach. Neena Arora exposes the double standards of the society:

While a traditional society insists on Pre-marital virginity and marital chastity in women men are allowed sexual liberty. These double standards are reflected in different practices allowing sexual liberties to men. (Arora 61)

Such duplicity creates misunderstanding, leading to embittered relations-discontented wife, suffers in silence, losing peace of mind and rest of body, sulking and licking her wounds. If however she makes an issue of it, she is maltreated, abused and beaten blue. She must remain behind an iron curtain, virtually in chain while he is free to move freely as a predator, and become a social stigma. This is male arrogance, abrogating to himself, the right to castigate and punish his wife for fall from standards, set for her by him. This tendency is universal and is the main cause of domestic violence. In her novel *Storm in Chandigarh* Sahgal truthfully portrays the superiority of male ego in the character of Inder that destroys the married life of Inder and Saroj. Saroj confesses her fault to Inder by disclosing her past to him. This shows her honest nature. Inder does not spare a moment when he starts burning with jealousy. He becomes bitter with Saroj for her relation with another person before the marriage. Inder tortures her and hurts her self-respect by keeping on taunting her and making her realize that it was her fault to choose physical relations before marriage. Sahgal exposes the hollowness of male ego:

‘The scream that night came not from his victim but from Saroj in the next bed. Inder was shocked awake. He was lying face forward, one arm flung heavily across her throat and grasping her pillow on its far side. He sat up and switched on the lamp.’

“What happened?” he asked tensely. “I thought I was being strangled,” she laughed shakily.

“I was so frightened”. His dream flashed back to him. “Were you? But you weren’t frightened when you gave yourself to a stranger.”



His voice, always the first sign of his transformation, chilled her. After an interminable pause she said, "I've told you all about it. He was a friend, not a stranger."

"A friend ? To go to bed with ? How many times did it happen?"

"I don't know. I can't remember" <sup>7</sup>

Inder's attitude for Saroj's premarital relationship is a piece of treatment of women by their husbands in the Victorian age "Chastity , perfect modesty, in word, deed, and even thought is so essential, that without it , no female is fit to be a wife. It is not enough that a young woman abstain from everything approaching in decorum in her behaviour towards men... she ought to appear not to understand it , and to receive from it no more impression if she were a post".<sup>8</sup>

"Female virginity is the trigger of many forms of violence against women. In many parts of the world the social expectation for a bride to be a virgin is extremely strong, and if the husband has sex with his wife after marriage and she does not bleed, this can end in extreme violence, including an honour killing."<sup>9</sup> Saroj suffers from mental trauma because she has shared her past with her husband Inder. Inder could not bear that his wife had been involved in physical relations before their marriage. Tradition in Inder compels him to accept only one facet of man -woman relationship i.e. husband wife. Inder considers Saroj as his possession because she is his wife. Mara teaches him the difference between 'love' and 'possession,' "bed" and "no-bed" relations. Inder is totally traditional in his attitude towards Saroj for her pre-marital experience of sex. Saroj discusses the reason of her emotional trauma with Inder. She finds her husband trustworthy to discuss her pre-marital affair. She forgets that ultimately Inder is a typical male and he can never tolerate this affair. Inder begins to torture, torment and taunt Saroj:

That's what I can't get over. You always make such a point of trust, about the way you were brought up, how close were you to your parents and all that. But you didn't mind cheating them. You knew perfectly well they would have been horrified if they found out. Or would your father have approved of his only daughter behaving like a tart?".... Good God. Didn't you have any inhibitions, any sense of modesty? Couldn't your curiosity wait till you got married? (SIC 131)

The last statement spoken by Inder is indicative of the moral codes for a woman according to Indian tradition. It lays stress on the need of being a 'virgin' and preserving chastity as it was in the Victorian times in England.

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Inder's attitude for Saroj's role in the home is typical of a Victorian male. For him; "A wife was one half of an enterprise, the compliant business partner who presided over house and children and furthered her husband's career. Saroj had no interest in any of it, and not because she was gifted with any accomplishment that took her time. It was her pre-occupation with herself that unnerved him " (SIC 53-54). "Inder, her husband, can never think of her as a person with ideas, feelings and emotions, and therefore, cannot understand her need to be deeply involved in things happening around her. He is a businessman and can think of her only in business like terms".<sup>10</sup>

Sahgal bravely and skillfully attacks on the institution of marriage in which physical relations are the foremost requisite for the establishment of this relation whether the two persons related are not emotionally, intellectually involved. Such is the relationship between Saroj and Inder:

She responded to his (Inder's) laughter and impulsively stretched her hand to his. It felt warm and strong. Are all the warmth and strength of a man contained in his hands, she thought. Does desire begin and end with this body? For if that is so then this my hand in his, what I can see, what I can hold - is the solid ground between us. On this I can walk safely and nothing will go wrong. On such ground men and women build shelters and bring children to birth and grow old in the comfort that they will live on in future generations. Perhaps the rest - the mist of longing for all that remains unanswered lies this cycle. Saroj knew she could not tear away the blinds between herself and Inder or take him her thoughts. In the labour of living together there had been that intimacy between them. Perhaps, she thought desolately, it was not meant to matter. (SIC 94)

Sahgal explores the helplessness of a woman who tries to forget her dreadful past in order to live a happy married life. She is unable to survive because her truth has not strengthened her nuptial bonds but broken them. Her husband Inder is sicker than she is and he never makes her forget her dreadful past. He says to her, "A woman never forgets her first man.... you should be ashamed of what you did. Aren't you" (SIC 96-97). A man always wants that, his wife should be obedient, obliging and dutiful to him. Furthermore he wants her character stainless. Inder indulges in extramarital relations with Mara but expects Saroj to be pious and transparent. Sahgal exposes his fake character:

He had hit out at treachery not hers, but at something between them that had no right to be there. When he got up to go he realized this was the afternoon he was to spent with Mara. (199-200)

Whenever Inder used to accuse her and torture her mentally for her premarital affair "Frenzied sobs she hardly recognised as her own dragged through her ,until a gleam of sanity within spoke lovingly to herself as if to a child . The sobs were not her own. They were part of the self that surrendered to make living with Inder possible.... She wanted to cry each time, "I don't want forgiveness .I've committed no crime." But she had stopped saying it. She yearned to penetrate his inflexibility. "Look at me ! I am clean and whole and your's !"" (SIC 97). This tells though Saroj's inner self respect urged her to say that she does not want forgiveness yet the submissiveness of a traditional woman prohibited her to do so . For the submissiveness and inaction of Saroj, Sahgal writes, "One of the ills at the heart of society that we cannot pin point the responsibility inaction, for insensitivity, for non-performance".<sup>11</sup>

The novel *Storm in Chandigarh* reveals the emotional alienation of Saroj in the company of her husband even after they have lived together for a long time. Saroj says, "I'm used to it. It's not being alone I mind. I enjoy that. It's the loneliness. I'm alone even when Inder is here"(225).

Here we find that Saroj becomes a victim of 'emotional abuse' in Inder's house in Chandigarh. She tries a lot to maintain her relations with Inder because she had three children from the marriage. When she finds her efforts fuming in the space she searches solace in the company of Vishal Dubey. Though we see that in the case of emotional abuse "constant criticism, name calling and making statements...damage the victim's self esteem ..." <sup>12</sup> Yet Saroj didn't allow Inder to dominate on her psyche . She always knew that she is morally chaste and a pure woman from her heart. This type of emotional abuse in the husband-wife relation of Inder and Saroj make an abyss between the spouses . Though Saroj takes time to leave Inder yet ultimately she leaves Inder's house with her three children. Thus emotional abuse becomes a causal factor in breaking a nuclear family.

One of the major themes with which Sahgal deals with in her novel *Rich Like Us* is Polygamy. Polygamy is an evil practice for society, which was practised, formerly in Indian society. But now according to the Hindu marriage act it cannot be practised. Though there are laws, they are practised in society. In the novel *Rich Like Us* Ram marries Mona a westerner, though he is already married and has a child named Dev. His wife, Mona, opposes his marriage actively by his father and mutely. Ram who is already married with Mona and has a child begins love making with Rose, an English lady in London. "And one afternoon he told her, in a natural everyday voice, that he had a wife and an infant child. Her shock was so great she couldn't speak. But after some seconds' silence she had begun asking questions about them in what she hoped were her

natural voice, while her brain grappled with this new turmoil, and a man who could talk about a courtship with her when he was already married and a father." Furthermore Ram befalls Rose by saying that, "My religion lets a man have more than one wife". "She had to marry him, as same a desire, she knew, as walking blindfolded off a gang plank into the deep blue sea".<sup>13</sup> Rose very well knows that her marriage is not legal one according to the ideals of Christian religion she revolts against the desires of her parents and marries with no reason but for love. She leaves her country. Rose revolts against Ram's wishes for having physical relations with her.

Though Rose could have revolted against Ram by taking divorce after the discovery of his love affair with Marcella, she never seeks for divorce. When Bugs suggest Rose to take divorce she said, "The only thing I couldn't bear in any circumstances would be a divorce... I could never bear to lose Ram" (RLU 245). Love is the passion which has paralysed Rose to her very roots. She could not injure her love. Though Rose is not an Indian but she behaves like a traditional Indian Pativrata, just as Mona. Mona is a victim of the traditions and customs of her society. She does not revolt against her husband Ram but finally accepts friendly relations with Rose. Thus we find that Rose and Mona both are the victims of the narrow and rigid social codes of the society.

According to 494 section of Indian Penal Court " it is a provision if any husband or wife would marry in the condition when other life partner is alive then the second marriage will be regarded zero and the person involved in second marriage will be jailed for seven years and would have to pay penalty. In section 495 it is given if a person is involved in second marriage by betraying former husband or wife then according to section 496 it is a punishable crime."<sup>14</sup> (Translated by me from Hindi) Tradition and Indian culture had stopped Mona from making Ram punished for the wrong done to her. She suffers a lot in her marriage and maintains her living in the same house with Ram's second wife Rose. Both Mona and Rose pass through mental agony because they had to share Ram. This type of violence is called sexual violence. Mona suffers from this violence because Ram passes most of her time with Rose. Thus Mona's physical needs remain unfulfilled. "Mona's protest was far from silent calling upon the Almighty to spell out what she had done in this or past lives to deserve such outrageous treatment, she had wept with vigour....some nights she got so carried away that Ram, tossing and grumbling in his bed, would finally get up and go down and Mona would reclaim her husband for a few minutes, an hour or a night." (RLU 63)

Thus domestic violence has been traced in Sahgal's novels *Storm in Chandigarh* and *Rich Like Us*. Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh* has been presented as

a sensitive and bold character. She endures a lot of agony in her relation with Inder. She puts endless efforts to come out of that painful relationship and ultimately succeeds in breaking the cocoon endowed to Indian *pativrata* women. She herself tries to pacify the storm in her married life by urging Inder that she is pure. When Inder doesn't understand her innocence then she doesn't allow him to hurt herself respect anymore and quits his house. Thus emotional and verbal violence becomes the cause of breaking of a family which might have been a happy family on the basis of understanding and endurance.

On the other hand Mona in *Rich Like Us* has been presented as a passive sufferer who endures the sexual violence inflicted on her by her husband Ram. Mona doesn't want to spoil her family life by divorcing from Ram or filing a case against him. She chooses a rotten life by living with Ram and Rose in the Same house. Though legally Mona has not broken the relation yet the vital relation of husband wife is reduced to a compromise and become hollow.

In order to provide legal aid to women "...a commission for implementing legal aid services was set up in 1979 along with legal aid structures at the state and District level all over the country. The Legal Services Authorities Act 1987 created structures for aid to specific categories entitled to free legal aid, including women District level committees. All states and Union Territories have been advised to consider setting up of committees for the protection of women's Right at all stages from their registration, investigation, prosecution and find disposal. The Government of India enacted the family courts by the states in city / towns with a population exceeding one million. These courts are to make an endeavour to effect reconciliation or a settlement between the parties of family disputes which is not adversarial".<sup>15</sup> *Parivarik Mahila Lok Adalats* are to provide alternate dispute resolution mechanism in civil cases concerning women to ensure speedy justice for women and been held by the National commission for women.... Special police cells and all- women police stations to deal with acts of aggression against women have been established in 12 states and Union Territories.

Though a lot of legal support has been provided to women in order to come out of their wretched condition yet a lot of awareness is required regarding their rights so that they can live a peaceful and fearless life without losing their self respect.

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Valerie Bryson, *Feminist Political Theory* ( Paperback Books) n.d 222

<sup>2</sup> Jeanna Segal and Melinda Smith. "Domestic Violence and Abuse". *Helpguide .org* Feb 2014 web

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<sup>3</sup> "Power and Control in Abusive Relationships".en.wikipedia.org.22 May2014 (in Domestic Violence) Wikimedia Foundation

<sup>4</sup>Malladi Subamma, *Women Tradition and Culture* (New Delhi, Sterling Publishers Ltd.,1985) 15

<sup>5</sup> Neena Arora, *Nayantara Sahgal and Doris Lessing a Feminist Study in Comparison* ( New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1991) 71

<sup>6</sup> Thompson, *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race* ( London: Virago, 1983) 196.

<sup>7</sup> Nayantara Sahgal, *Storm in Chandigarh* (New Delhi:Penguin Books,1998)96. Hereafter cited as SIC in the text.

<sup>8</sup> William Cobett , *Advice to Young Men and (Incidentally) to Young Women* ( London: Peter Davies Ltd. : 1926) 96.

<sup>9</sup> "Verbal Abuse" . en. Wikipedia .org 22 May 2014 (in Domestic Violence) . Wikimedia Foundation.

<sup>10</sup>Lakshmi Sinha, "Nayantara Sahgal's Storm in Chandigarh : A Search for Values" , ed. G.S Balram Gupta, *Studies in Fiction in English* ( Gulbarga : Jiwe Publications, 1987)

<sup>11</sup> Nayantara Sahgal, " A Search for Answers ", ed. K. Ayappa Panikar , *Indian Renaissance* ( Delhi : Sterling Publishers , 1983) 85.

<sup>12</sup> " Emotional Abuse ", en. Wikipedia .org. 22 May 2014 (in Domestic Violence) . Wikimedia Foundation.

<sup>13</sup> Nayantara Sahgal, *Rich Like Us* ( New Delhi : Harper Collins Publishers India , 1999) 41-42. Here after cited as RLU in the text.

<sup>14</sup> " Provisions of Indian Penal Court from Domestic Violence with Reference to Women Conservation Act 2005 ". Counseling Skills ( Reference Material for Councilors in Family Counseling Centres) ND 7.

<sup>15</sup> Mrs. Daljeet Kaur Singh and Dr. Manjula Chakravarty "Women's Empowerment-Strategies and Governmental Interventions", *Training of Trainers on Promotion and Development of Self Help Groups of Women through RMK* ( New Delhi : National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, ND) 14.

## Beyond the Classroom: Mobile Learning the Wider World City and Body: A Study of Selected Poems of Namdeo Dhasal

Divya Shah\*

### Abstract

It is significant to study the notion of body as the notion has got changed from dualistic approach to the discussion of body through ontological approach in twentieth century (Larsson 2-3). Similarly, rejecting the binary between biology and culture, Grosz in her essay "Bodies- Cities" argues how "the city is one of the crucial factors in the social production of (sexed) corporeality (242).

Furthermore, both these notions are very much part of modernism in the context of India as Supriya Chaudhri argues that the period from 1955 to 1975 is significant as the literature shifts from modernity to modernism marked by "new modernist oeuvre, densely allusive, rooted in the experiences of urban loneliness, the body, and sexuality" (Chaudhri 957). City emerges as an important phenomenon in the study of modernism as Gyanprakash argues, "Modernism was a uniquely metropolitan phenomenon" (Gyanprakash 3).

Taking into consideration the above arguments, the present paper attempts to study the notion of body in the context of the Bombay city from 1955 to 1975. It attempts to study the selected poetry of Namdeo Dhasal. In the larger context, it attempts to study how the body gets constructed in the context of Bombay city in the poetry of Dhasal. Furthermore, it also attempts to study how this body is affected by caste markers.

**Key Words:** body, Bombay, city, caste

The present paper attempts to study the notion of body in the context of Bombay city from 1950 to 1980. Analyzing the selected poems of Namdeo Dhasal, the paper discusses how the body gets constructed in the context of Bombay city. The selected poems are "Kamatipura", "Their Eternal Pity" and "On the Way to Dargah". Two of the poems are selected from Dhasal's collection entitled *Golpitha* published in 1972 and one is taken from his collection *Tuhi Yatta Kanchi* translated as What's Your Grade?

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The paper uses the poststructuralist notion of body and especially focuses on Foucault and Butler's ideas on body as Larsson states, "bodies are of central importance in the poststructuralist project" where the binary notion of the relationship between mind/subject and body/object was rejected (Larsson 5-7). The paper focuses the specific interpretation of Foucauldian notion of body as Johanna Oksala in her article entitled "Anarchic Bodies: Foucault and the Feminist Question of Experience" argues, "Foucault did not present a theory or even a unified account of the body anywhere, and thus his conception of it has to be discerned from his genealogical books and articles that aim to bring the body into the focus of history". She further argues that Foucault's notion has been largely interpreted in three different ways and among them one which is approved by Butler and which Oksala herself considers as "strong reading" is "we can only understand as well as experience our bodies through culturally mediated representations, but bodies themselves are also shaped in their very materiality by the rhythms of culture, diets, habits and norms" (Oksala 105-6). Taking into consideration these arguments, the paper attempts to study the concept of body "as material reality which has already been located and defined within a social context" (Salih 74) in the selected poems of Dhasal.

Before discussing the notion of body within the poems, it is important to understand the general theme of the poems and its significance in the context of body and city. The title of one of the poems *Kamatipura* suggests the location of Kamatipura in Bombay which according to Susan Dewey is, "the biggest and the oldest area dedicated to prostitution in all of Asia" (Dewey 131). The poem divided into seven stanzas depicts the dark and hideous world of Kamatipura as the speaker says, "This is hell. This is an ugly agony" (Dhasal Kamatipura 74). Using the metaphor of porcupine, the poem unfolds the plight of prostitutes. The deceased bodies of prostitutes are like "potassium cyanide" baring the "pain of whoring" and waiting for "lotus to bloom" (74). The other poem *On the Way to Dargah* discusses how these "numbed ball of flesh" grow up on the shit and pass their entire life on the road. One more poem *Their Eternal Pity* marks the sharp contrast between the life of these people on road and that of the wealthy people as the speaker addresses them as "Lords of wealth, they are" (Dhasal Pity 98). All the three poems reveal the dark world of Bombay city, the world of Golpitha, the world of Faulkland road that is the "world of days of night, of empty stomach, of the pain of death, of overflowing gutters, of pimps, of naked knives, of opium" (Tendulkar 23). Vinay Dharvadkar in one of his article "Dalit Poetry in Marathi" argues that Dhasal's poems represent the life of "urban untouchables usually living in street side slums, setting up house on the public sidewalks in a metropolis like Bombay" (Dharvadkar 319). In order to understand the theme of these poems, it is important to discuss rise of Dalit



literature and contextualize Dalit panther movement within the political history of Bombay of 1950s to 1980s.

These almost three decades are significant in the history of Bombay city as Sujata Patel argues that it is a period “of redefinition of Bombay, both “politically and in imagination” (Patel 5). In the essay “Bombay and Mumbai: Identities, Politics and Popoulism” Patel discusses various socio political events occurred in Bombay after independence and how they brought major shifts in the city. One of the chief movements that captured “city’s emotional space” (Patel 14) is growth of Dalit literature along with its political manifestation, Dalit panther movement started in 1972 (Patel 15). According to Anupama Rao, term Dalit refers to “A broken to pieces” and it was “first used by Ambedkar around 1928 in his newspaper *Bahishkrit Bharat*, the term gained new visibility in Maharashtra during the 1970s in the context of the literary and cultural efflorescence that saw the birth of Marathi Dalit sahitya” (Rao \_). Discussing the significance of Dalit Literature, Dharwadkar argues, “the rejection of the past that flows through the heart of Dalit politics and identity also constitutes the Dalit literary and poetic bloodstream” (Dharwadkar 321). Dalit literature according to Hovell, “enter into a centuries-old history of both poverty and vitality” (Hovell 65). Especially, Bombay became major site of Dalit movement as it provided many reasons like “rapid pace of industrialization” and “diminishing availability of public utilities and resource” for their affliction (Gavaskar and Rodrigues 142). In this context Anupama Rao’s argument is significant as she says, “Dalit sahitya, the literature that emerged from this transformative period in Maharashtra’s politics in the 1970s, was deeply identified with the neighbourhoods and the working class ethos of Bombay” (Rao\_). Some of the significant names associated with the movement are Namdeo Dhasal, J.V. Pawar, Arun Kamble, Prahlad Chendwankar, Umakant Randeer, Daya Pawar, and Waman Nimbalkar (Zelliot 451).

According to Zelliot, Dhasal is “the political maverick and always creative poet. In the opinion of Chitre, Dhasal is the poet whose writing is “extremely sophisticated or avant-garde” (Chitre 93). Discussing Golpitha, Dhasal’s first poetry collection published in 1972, in the essay “The Architecture of Anger: On Namdeo Dhasal’s Golpitha” Dilip Chitre argues, “The anger of Golpitha rises to the level of architecture because it both systematizes disparate images from an authentic world hitherto invisible in literature, and uses the energy of anger to encompass a whole range of negative feelings and positive visions” (Chitre 94). Anupama Rao also argues that Golpitha is “the iconic text of insurrectionary speech, and the power of renaming and resignification” (Rao \_). Commenting upon Dhasal’s connection with Golpitha Mane in her article “Recent Marathi Writing” writes “Golpitha is a lowly red light area of Bombay and Dhasal has

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seen its life from within" (Mane 99). In Dhasal's *Golpitha* 'leprous women are paid the price and fucked on the road, where children cry nearby, where prostitutes waiting for business sing full throated love songs" (Punalekar). Thus, it is possible to say that all three poems give "voice to voiceless", "oppressed and downtrodden" such as prostitutes, pimps, beggars and all those whose life is futile as the speaker in the poem *Their Eternal Pity* says, " it is nausea to be human" (Dhasal 98).

These poems not only have similar theme but they also share a common city and the city which is centered around in these poems is Bombay. Especially, *Kamatipura* and *Their Eternal Pity* directly refer to the Bombay city as they discuss the area of Kamatipura and Faulkland Road located in the city. It is possible to analyze these poems with the help of Elizabeth Grosz's essay "Cities-Bodies" where she provides "interface" relationship between body and city (Grosz 248). According to her, "the city is one of the crucial factors in the social production of (sexed) corporeality" (Grosz 243). Moreover she argues, "cities help produce bodies and organize familial and other social relations, through domestic architecture, the arrangement of rooms, the divisions between public and private space (Grosz 241-253). It is possible to discuss these poems such as "Their Eternal Pity", "On the Way to the Dargah" in the context of Grosz's argument as the bodies of pimps, prostitutes, beggars and orphans are brought forth on roads and pavements as the speaker says, "In this life carried by a whore, not even sidewalks are ours" (Dhasal Pity 98). The place like Kamatipura produces the bodies suffering from "whoring" and the consequential diseases such as "syphilis" (Dhasal Kamatipura 74). In one of the poems entitled "Their Eternal Pity" the speaker discusses how the architecture of the city such as "high pavilion" and "vaults shining with lights" produce "their body" which is wealthy and safely "locked up in their vaults" in contrast to "our body", which is "beggarly", "in crumpled rags" and located "on the shit in the street" or "on a pavement" (Dhasal Pity 55). The metaphor of our body refers to the bodies of pimp, prostitutes, beggars and downtrodden for whom survival is a challenge. For depicting their struggle for food, the speaker writes how they are unable to fill their "shriveled gut" "even with dirt" (Dhasal, *pity*, 98). In this context Grosz's argument is significant as she argues cities "produce... inequalities of power between otherwise unrelated bodies" (Grosz 243). In *Dargah* poem also Dargah is the place where these two bodies intersect, one (their body) throws money and one (our body) accepts it.

Moreover, these poems break the elite version of sexuality enclosing within style, celebrity and beauty with circulation of the magazines like Femina (Gyanprakash 7) in Bombay by revealing the flip side of Bombay depicted in the poem *Kamatipura* where love gets transformed into "potassium cyanide" with

deceased body and “poisoned wombs” of exploited prostitutes as the speaker says, “Taste this Potassium cyanide! As you die at the infinitesimal fraction of a second, Write down the small ‘s’ that’s being forever lowered” (Dhasal Kamatipura 75). Using the metaphors of death and poison for these prostitutes suffering from syphilis and many other deceases, the speaker depicts the miserable condition of prostitutes. Sujata Patel in one of her essays discusses how on the one hand, the growth in trade and economy during late nineteenth and early twentieth century led Bombay towards modernity and on the other hand, this modernity was challenged by approximately ten million inhabitants facing crisis like poverty, slum dwelling, collective violence and urban crime (Patel xiiv, xiv).

Now taking into consideration Bombay city as the focal point in all the poems, it is possible to analyze the body-city relationship. Along with the common theme of city; these poems are also linked by their interest in body. The poem *Kamatipura* discusses the body of Bombay city which is antithetical to the “cosmopolitan” body of the city. Using the apostrophe in the last stanza, poem embodies Kamatipura. Depicting the body of Kamtipura which is “squatting in the mud” and suffering from the pain of assault, the speaker shatters the image of cosmopolitan body of Bombay city where the term cosmopolitan is used in the elite sense as it does not include slums, poverty and deprivation (Appadurai 32). The speaker describes Kamatipura as “pain wearing dancer’s anklet, hell, ugly agony and as swirling vortex” (Dhasal 74). The metaphorical representation of prostitute as porcupine can be interpreted as socially constructed body of prostitutes which resembles the body of porcupine. The body of prostitute is not attractive just as that of porcupine as Anupama Rao argues that in Dhasal’s work the prostitute is constructed “as a symbol of detritus life, her body sucked dry and left to shrivel, and die” (Rao\_). The poisonous quills of porcupine can be compared to poisonous body of the prostitute “wearing the syphilitic sores of centuries”. The quills of porcupine get lodged into the skin and are difficult as well as painful to remove and sometime cause death. Similarly, the deceased bodies of prostitutes work like potassium cyanide which cause death as the poet says, “death gathers here”. He compares prostitute’s activity of love making with porcupine’s attack as he narrates, “the porcupine wakes up at night and wounds you all over”. The grey colour of porcupine can be interpreted as sign of gloomy and sadness in the life of prostitutes. This painful and deceased body of the prostitutes resembles the body of Kamatipura which is “squatting in the mud” of whoring. Both the bodies are trapped in this social structure which compel them to be in the love making business where deceased “women are paid the price and fucked on the road” to survive “in the desperate material circumstances” (Rao\_) as the speaker says, “As you die at the infinitesimal fraction of a second,

write down the small 's'...'This 's' can be interpreted as daily sexual business which leads the prostitutes towards deathly deceases. Thus, the body of the prostitute emerges in all the three poems is the body without any significance. Their only identity is of the prostitute or whore situated on road or footpath trapped in love making business with their deceased bodies. In one of the poem *Pity* the speaker shows disgust for this life by saying "this life... so beggarly it is nausea to be human" (Dhasal, *Pity*, 98). The only way to escape from this structure is death as in the poem "Dargah" the speaker makes clear that she "went...in heaven" as "she was tired of the harassing ghosts in the street" and "wanted to wash off the darkness in her sari" (Dhasal, *Dargah*, 55). Darkness in her sari is the metaphor for the orphan child who is the speaker of the poem. In this context, Rao provides significant link between prostitute's body and city as she says, "the prostitute appears more generally as a symptom of Dalit urbanity" (Rao\_). Chitre also argue that Dhasal's poetry "invoke the exploitation, degradation and alienation of woman as the central tragedy of human civilization (Chitre 94).

As discussed earlier, all the three poems depict the bodies of prostitute, pimp and beggars. The images such as "wearing the syphilitic sore", "an iron eye and tear in it", "swirling vortex", "shed the skin" portray the picture of a scatter body of porcupine/prostitute. In *Pity* and *Dargah* poem also a fragmented images are captured such as "lords of wealth", "lock up", "day supports them", "born on pavement" and "crumpled rags". These images provide the picture of fragmentary bodies which don't fit into the bourgeois notion of complete body. These bodies which don't even exist as complete bodies, as speaker says they are, "numbed ball of flesh" (Dhasal *Kamatipura* 74). Here it is possible to argue that caste as a theoretical aspect also creates margin where these fragmented bodies exist. The poems fail to represent them as complete as they have "become disembodied". Using disembodiment or non existence as strategy, the poems problematise the notion of Bombay city as complete body as they are the extract or the margin of city living in "shit on street" or in "ugly agony" like *Kamatipura* and *Faulkland road*.

Thus, the paper studied the notion of body in the context of Bombay city in Namdeo Dhasal's selected poems. It mainly discussed the relationship between the bodies of prostitutes, pimps, beggars, children on footpath and slum dwellers and areas such as *Kamatipura* and *Faulkland road*.

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## Dialogue between Tradition and Modernity: A Study of Krupabai Satthianadhan's *Kamala: The Story of a Hindu Life*

Roshni Patel\*

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### Abstract

This paper studies the novel *Kamala: The Story of a Hindu Life* (1894) in the context of Bakhtin's idea of dialogism and tries to understand how the narrator uses the dialogue as a mode to show the inner battle or conflict between tradition and modernity which goes on in Kamala's mind. Colonial India became the site on which the clash between tradition and modernity took place. This clash is reflected in the ambivalent attitudes of the nationalists, the reformers, the writers of that period towards colonial modernity. Stuart Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia argue that 'tradition' and 'modernity' cannot be categorized as static and monolithic categories (09). As various discourses of colonial times reflect this clash and colonial modern literature is one of them. The novel *Kamala, the Story of a Hindu Life* (1894) by Krupabai Satthianadhan reveals the indigenous customs and traditions oppressing women of the colonial India through the depiction of the life of Kamala as a child bride in the Hindu Brahmin orthodox family. The paper shows how through the mode of dialogue, on the one hand, the articulation of desire by Kamala marks the emergence of an individuated self in colonial modern Indian novel, and how on the other hand, it quickly vanishes in the name of shame and tradition. The paper thus, studies how Kamala confronts the clash of two voices of tradition and modernity throughout the novel and finally reaches to the conclusion of establishment of her goodness through the final act of denial of her love and desire for Ramchander. In the beginning, it is the voices of Kamala and Ramchander that are dialogized. Kamala's voice which denies the desire clashes with that of Ramchander which wants the desire to be fulfilled. Thus, the paper shows how the colonial modern novel is not monologic but dialogic in nature.

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'Ask me not that', she said with a shudder. 'It is too much for me to think of... My heart beats in response to yours, but betray me not, thou tempting heart. I am ashamed of myself. Despise me and drive me away from thee.'

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No! it is the power of love,' said Ramchander. Rise, my love, and be mine.' And he came nearer and lifted her up. But a cry rang from her heart and she uttered the word, Ganesh,' and ran to the house as if mad. Her religion, crude as it was, had its victory (Sattthianadhan 155).

This is how Kamala's two voices expressing her desire and its denial are represented in response to the marriage proposal of Ramchander at the end of the novel *Kamala: The Story of a Hindu Life* (1894). Kamala is a Hindu widow. Ramchander is a young physician and Kamala's cousin. This final dialogue between Ramchander and Kamala occurs after two years of the death of Kamala's husband Ganesh. As cousins and childhood friends, Kamala and Ramchander have met many times. In the above passage, Ramchander first declares his unexpressed love to Kamala (154). Then, he proposes to her. In a pleading tone, he tries to convince her to accept his love.

In response to Ramchander's proposal and his arguments to convince her, Kamala firmly expresses her own desire (155). It is the most important moment in Kamala's utterance in terms of how as a modern Indian woman she would articulate her desire. Here, she recognizes and admits her desire for Ramchander as she says: "My heart beats in response to yours". But something stops her desiring this and she says: "I am ashamed of myself". These moments show a clash of two different voices in Kamala's utterances. If this moment of recognition about the desire of the self significantly marks the emergence of the modern individuated self of a woman in the colonial modern period, it also vanishes quickly in the name of shame and 'tradition'.

The novel carries many such instances where Kamala as well as the narrative confronts the clashes between two voices. Thus, this paper attempts to study the novel *Kamala: The Story of a Hindu Life* (1894) in the context of Bakhtin's idea of dialogism and to understand how the narrative uses the dialogue as a mode to show the inner battle or conflict between tradition and modernity which goes on in Kamala's mind. The paper attempts to show how through the mode of dialogue, on the one hand, the articulation of desire by Kamala marks the emergence of an individuated self in colonial modern Indian novel, and how on the other hand, through the same individuated self she denies desire and love in the name of shame and tradition. The present paper thus, attempts to study how Kamala confronts the clash of two voices of tradition and modernity throughout the novel and finally reaches to the conclusion of establishment of her goodness through the final act of denial of her love and desire for Ramchander. Thus, the paper attempts to argue how the colonial modern novel is not monologic but dialogic in nature.



The novel *Kamala: The Story of Hindu Life* (1894) by Krupabai Saththianadhan reveals indigenous customs and traditions oppressing women of that period through depiction of life of Kamala as a child-bride in the Hindu Brahmin orthodox family. Kamala lives with her father Narayan, the *sanyasi*, and “granny” in a hut nearby a temple situated on the hillock. Her father Narayan marries her off at the age of eight with an English educated boy named Ganesh. Before one day of her marriage day, a stranger comes to Narayan. We come to know later in the novel that the stranger is Ramchander, the son of Narayan’s sister and that Kamala was earlier betrothed to Ramchander while they were living together. But because somehow Narayan and Ramchander depart and they do not meet again till the day before Kamala’s marriage.

After marriage, as she is extremely harassed at her in laws’ house, she longs for the atmosphere of freedom which she used to have at her home. Initially, Ganesh takes interest in her and enthusiastically teaches her. But he gets an affair with a mistress called Sai. Kamala and Ganesh settle in the city with their child. But due to the ‘other woman’ in Ganesh’s life, Kamala and Ganesh have lot of disputes. One day, he wrongly accuses Kamala of having an illicit relationship with Ramchander. So she leaves the house and comes to her father in law’s house. Soon after Ganesh dies of cholera and later on, the child also dies. Two years after Ganesh’s death, Ramchander, the young physician towards whom she had earlier developed unconscious attraction proposes her to marry. She rejects the proposal and prefers to spend her life for unselfish works of charity. This is where the novel ends.

Returning to the discussion of the dialogue quoted in the beginning, the conflict between the two ideals is represented thus: She says in a high tone: “ ‘No! what you ask is too much’ ”. She calls herself “a broken vessel”. The metaphor signifies her widowed state. She thinks that she is “fit only to be thrown aside and to be spat on”. The state of being married is the contentment of the woman. This metaphor is used to signify her emptiness after her husband’s death. As she pleads: “O God!” she wants the grace of god in achieving some purer form of individuated self rather than merely surrendering to her passions. She thinks that its achievement is possible through the very denial of her desire of love. And thus, she urges to God to help her to overcome her passions and desire.

Throughout the dialogue between Kamala and Ramchander, the tone changes frequently. It is also important to look at the tone in terms of the way Ramchander urges her. In a firm tone, he utters: “ ‘Come, Kamala make up your mind’ ” (154). In a low tone, he talks about his spiritual life as a *sanyasi*. He urges her to accept him and freedom. He reveals his desire of creating a world living

with her where he will entertain nobody's interference (155). His desire reveals his modern self which prefers the individual's desire over others. He uses all the reasons and weapons for convincing her to accept the marriage proposal.

It is also important to note how the authorial narrative voice interrupts Kamala's utterances. When Ramchander comes near to her to lift her up, she cries out and utters the word "Ganesh". Their dialogue ends with this cry. Then the authorial narrator comments that this cry reflects her agony because of the defeat of her desire over the victory of the voice of "her crude" religion and tradition. Here again, authorial narrative voice is interrupted by the mode of psycho-narration, and her inner thoughts are revealed. She feels relief from the misery which would have resulted from the fulfillment of desire and love and thinks that it is good for her that tradition has won over her desire. It indicates her faith in tradition which makes her preserve her attribute of good womanhood by denying desire and satisfaction. She feels a sense of freedom which she gets by overcoming the influence of the man before her. She realizes the happiness of being loved by someone and this is narrated through the mode of narrated monologue: "Ah! It was happiness to know that someone loved her, loved her for her own sake, despised as she was, and degraded in the sight of the little world in which she lived" (Satthianadhan 155). Here the voice of tradition wins over the voice of modernity.

Thus, two of them depart from each other forever and live their lives in their own ways.

Ramchander spends his whole life in helping the needy and suffering people. Kamala spends her money in the unselfish work of charity and her life in helping the poor and unfortunate. It is also mentioned that she does not get rid of her love but the man and it signifies Kamala asserting victory over her passions. The novel *Kamala* ends here at this significant moment. Kamala is constructed as an emerging individuated self who chooses to live at the stake of the killing of her desire. She also feels: "It is true that the love could never be hers, and yet in a way it was hers forever, and she was satisfied" (154). The notion of her goodness as a woman is achieved through the sacrifice of her desire i.e. denial of love for herself, but translated into service to people. Both these moments can be seen as the instance of the emergence of a strong sense of self and desire, and the simultaneous suppression of them in the name of 'shame' as well as for a higher spiritual goal.

Furthermore, it is possible to note that in the dialogue between Kamala and Ramchander, there is a tone of disagreement. Two individual voices disagree with each other in the colonial modern period. Though both of their

voices reflect the possibility of fulfillment of their desire, Ramchander's voice favours modernity whereas Kamala's voice favours tradition. More importantly, the modern self of Kamala makes her the agent of her own desire and it is through this self, she articulates her favour for the tradition. This apparent contradiction is at the heart of the novel. Moreover, the novel uses dialogues between the characters who debate on various issues of the particular period. The novel provides various points of view of the characters through their speeches and dialogues. It is thus useful to take some insights from Bakhtin's idea of dialogism in the novel. He states:

The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized.... Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel, each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized) (Bakhtin 262).

The novel *Kamala* is written in English language and the writer does not use the speech types like dialects. However, according to Bakhtin, the stylistically individualized speech of characters is but one of the type of compositional unity of the novelistic whole (Bakhtin 262). In the passage discussed in the beginning, it is the voices of Kamala and Ramchander that are dialogized. Kamala's voice which denies the desire clashes with that of Ramchander which wants the desire to be fulfilled. In *Kamala*, speeches of characters are one of the fundamental unity through which many social voices are brought out.

As the novel proceeds the conflict between tradition and modernity becomes more complicated as Kamala struggles a lot in deciphering the good moral code from tradition and from an individuated self. For example, the narrator describes how Kamala has learnt "the great lesson of humanity, love for others and the need of doing one's duty at any cost" from "heroic tales of Seeta, Rama and the Pandavas", from "Sanskrit shlokas", from the story tellers who told her the stories "in the manner of fables with a moral" (Sattianadhan 58) and it is the "the sum and substance" of Kamala's moral code, which gives her "an impetus to be good".

But there was another kind of teaching mingled with it all and that was that whether she was good or bad, whether she enjoyed pleasure or suffered pain, she ought not to grumble but accept it meekly, for it was

her fate. This gave her very little consolation... She wished to be exemplary like Savitri, Seeta, and other noble women; but even they had to submit to fate and did not get their due in this world. So Kamala reasoned while she bore meekly all the taunts and hard words of her sisters-in-law and wondered why she ever felt happy at all... (58-59).

Clearly, the passage shows a clash between two voices. The voice of the tradition tells Kamala to bear all the pains meekly and silently, and it clashes with the voice of the modernity which compels Kamala to question everything. On the one hand, she refers the ancient past to determine her "moral code" which teaches her to be "good" and on the other hand, her modern individuated self disagrees with the idea of all the time surrendering to fate. Her modern individuated self compels her to think about her desire and not surrendering everything to one's fate. Here, there is no actual dialogue but various voices of Kamala are dialogized and they are depicted through the narration of Kamala's consciousness with the use of the mode of psycho- narration. The voice of modernity which gives preference to reason questions her voice of tradition. Thus, the dialogue as a method brings out the complexity of thoughts of the colonial modern individual who continuously struggle between tradition and modernity.

It is also important to look at how the narrative undergoes a conflict in the description of Kamala's desire for Ramchander. After listening the story from his father about her relationship with Ramchander, Kamala now understands why she feels such power of Ramchander over her (126).

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

In the above passage, Kamala's inner desires are revealed through the mode of psycho- narration. The desire of having Ramchander as her husband is so much for Kamala that she "cover(s) her bosom with her hands as if to hide it from herself". Though the novel gives scope to reveal her desire through the mode of psycho- narration, the narrator comments that such a wish is "shocking" in a

Hindu girl. This again reveals the conflict between tradition and modernity which is at the heart of the narrative.

The final dialogue between Kamala and Ramchander which is quoted in the beginning is important as it is the moment of full realization of her desire which immediately results into her denial of the fulfillment of that desire. The dialogue is used as a method to articulate the individual desire by Kamala and Ramchander. It is through the same individuated colonial modern self, they express their desire. However, their desire clashes with each other. Ramchander argues for the fulfillment of the desire whereas Kamala argues for the denial of desire. Priya Joshi argues: "for her gender was not simply a site of change in a transitional period; rather, gender was a crucial actor negotiating between tradition and modernity during a century of reform, and Satthianadhan chooses the novel to depict the complexity and contrariness of the transactions" (203). Throughout the novel, the dialogues between the tradition and modernity go on in Kamala's mind and they do not provide simple and straightforward answers. Rather it is important to see how as a colonial modern individual, Kamala recognizes her desire but at the same time, the same self denies the desire.

In the light of Bakhtin's idea of dialogism, it becomes clearer that the novel *Kamala* has a distanced narrator. It does not show preference for a single voice rather it allows various voices to establish the dialogue. It can be observed that the novel *Kamala* is dialogic in nature. This idea is useful to understand the manner in which the characters in the novel speak. Moreover, Kamala's consciousness narrated through the techniques like, psycho-narration, quoted monologue and narrated monologue provide another way to see this novel as establishing the dialogue. The novelist doesn't give preference to one voice. Just like Kamala the novel itself shows the continuous turmoil of two voices and the novelist attempts to represent the continuous conflict between tradition and modernity going on in the colonial modern people which are unresolved.

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**Gender bias in Mahesh Dattani's *Seven Steps Around the Fire***

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**Abstract**

The bias against third gender is often translated into violence. The main factor behind the violence is that society is not able to come to terms with the fact that hijras do not conform to the accepted gender divisions. Male and female—these are the only sexual categories which have secured society's approval. Individuals, who do not fit into these two classes, have to bear social exclusion, separation and hatred. Politically, lawfully and generally the community of hijras is marginalized and victimized. The unseen authority of social forces does not allow the hijras to carve their own design beyond the patterns recommended and accepted by society. Mahesh Dattani gives the hijras of India a voice to articulate their feelings and predicaments in the English theatre through his play *Seven Steps Around the Fire*. The case of a hijra is focused in the play who secretly marries the son of a minister and has to bear dire consequences. The role of the police, politicians and the society as a whole is questioned.

**Keywords:** Gender Inequality, Bias, Hijras (Eunuchs), Politics and Injustice

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As the note to the play states, *Seven Steps Around the Fire* was first broadcast as *Seven Circles Around the Fire* by BBC Radio on 4 and 9 January 1999. The play shows Dattani a master of language and characterization. As a dramatist he was not afraid to work within a relatively conventional dramatic structure to tell a story that was bold and powerful without even being melodramatic. The stated play beautifully deals with the pathetic plight of the *hijras*, their ways of life, their ardent sense of individual identity in a callous and cruel atmosphere where a minister had the young *hijra* burned to death. Mahesh Dattani, a Sahitya Academy Award winner playwright from India, in his play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* has spotlighted the plight of the *hijras* in the Indian society. Having a recorded history of more than 4,000 years, the *hijra* community is deprived of several rights under the civil law because the Indian law recognizes only two sexes. They are isolated and segregated and

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constitute an 'invisible minority' within the society. They are the neglected gender. They sing at the wedding and at childbirth with other *hijras* and people give them money otherwise they put a curse on them. They are considered as the 'chosen of God' and the curse by them cannot be revoked. The author has ironically portrayed this aspect that would not have otherwise received any attention, for any matter related to the *hijras* is of no significance to anyone. For many Indians – both upper and middle class – *hijras* exist at the periphery of their concern, making themselves visible only on certain occasions. Dattani is probably the first playwright who has written a full length play about them. For the very first time they get a depiction in the theatre as human beings with their uniqueness who long for space in the society. Remarking on the theme of the play, Dr. Beena Agarwal remarks:

Dattani in the process of engineering the current of Indian drama by bringing it closer to the real life experiences tried to articulate the voice of the oppressed sections of the society whose identity is shrouded in the cover of myths and social prejudices. They have been dragged in darkness, doomed to survive in perpetual silence bearing the oppressive burden of hegemony of the elitist class. Dttani within the framework of dramatic structure tries to investigate the identities of those who occupy no space in social order. (Aggarwal, Beena p.34)

As we can refer the term "Subaltern" to the marginalized group this "subaltern" in *Seven Steps around the fire* is forced to maintain silence against oppression and injustice. Since the concept of marginality can be interpreted and used from two points of view: in the sense of not integrated into an excluded from. The former applies to a dualist view of society and refers to the people who are moving from one sector to other and not yet fully incorporated into the latter link the homosexuals. The latter refers to those as marginal who are driven among from, or prevented from participating in the dominant cultural and institution which includes the *hijras* and transsexuals. It is a protest play against the social exclusion of the *hijras*. Such exclusions can be found everywhere in the Indian society like the caste, class, religion or inclination based bias, but the *hijras* suffer this on the basis of their neutral gender. Dattani underlines the fact that other than the social customs and bindings, the *hijras* have a 'self' that longs for dignity and when it is denied the same, it tries to break free of such customs. When they protests, most of the times their voice is suppressed by the established order that prevails in the society. Dattani has added a new dimension to the theatre by taking up such themes in his plays. It is remarked:

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Dattani has done a good job by introducing a new theme to Indian English drama. Conservatives and social activists should not turn a blind eye to reality...We have to accept the reality of life, however, painful that might be. (Das, Bijay Kumar p.17)

The play appears more like a detective fiction as the theme of the main plot consists of the investigation of the murder case. Kamla's 'body was found by some passer-by, after four days. The temple priest complained about the stench. It was thrown into the pond after being burned.' (CP p.17) As the play progresses, the suspicion of murder shifts from Anarkali to Champa to Salim to Salim's wife and then to Mr. Sharma. Dattani very cleverly weaves the net of suspense to keep the audience on the edges of their seats. The play is not only about the murder investigation of a *hijra* but also about their social positioning and the social setup where a *hijra* cannot crave his feelings and emotions beyond the patterns and boundaries recommended by the society. These individuals face threat or violence because of their position in the society. The play depicts the social space of hostility faced by them and the vindictive social responses that they experience. Dattani himself says:

I write for my milieu, for my time and place-middle-class and urban India...My dramatic tension arises from people who aspire to freedom from society...I am not looking for something sensational, which audience have never seen before...some subjects, which are under-explored, deserve their space. It's no use brushing them under carpet. We have to understand the marginalized, including the gays. Each of us has sense of isolation within given contexts. That's what makes us individual. (The Hindu)

Various characters are shown interacting with the *hijras*. They have their pre-established notions of hatred regarding the *hijras* and do not want to change those ideas. It is Uma alone who empathises with them and fights for their justice. Suresh, Uma's husband regards them all as 'degenerated men' who never speak the truth. Munuswami, Salim and Mr. Sharma have similar thoughts too. What makes the tragedy of the *hijras* more intense is that they are used to this hatred expressed towards them and have accepted and compromised with the plight of their lot. Their interaction with the general society and other individuals does not lead to any kind of happiness. Anarkali scratches the face of Kamla with a knife, because she knows that they can only be subject to hatred in the society and if someone loves a *hijra* that can just lead to some tragedy. This is what ultimately happens:

... So many times I warned her. First I thought Salim was taking  
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her for his own pleasure. When she told me about Subbu, madam, I tried to stop her. I fought with her. I scratched her face, hoping she will become ugly and Subbu will forget her. He wanted to marry her... I was there at their wedding... she gave me that picture to show to Champa. I saw the men coming for her. I told her to run... (CP p. 41)

Mahesh Dattani is a great theatre craftsman. He uses different techniques in different plays to make his play forceful and appealing. In this play he uses the voice-over technique to bring the audience round to his ideas. Many doubts and myths regarding *hijras* and the sequence of events that happened are cleared in the voice-over of Uma. Voice-over is similar to the soliloquy. The only difference between soliloquy and voice-over is that in soliloquy, the character comes to the front of the stage and expresses his ideas to the audience and the other characters of the play remain ignorant of the views of that particular character. But in the voice-over, the stage is solely occupied by the character giving the voice-over and there is no other character present on the stage. It is a technique used by the dramatist to change the scene and is like a fill up when the other characters are getting ready for the next action. But it is a very useful fill up where the off stage action is reported or some very important information is to be revealed to the audience which cannot be given in the regular action of the play.

The dialogues and words of the play are pointed, crisp and functional. Some of them are taken directly from the *hijra* vocabulary. Dattani uses very bold language in the play; language that a traditional Indian society does not relish publically. But that is to make the audience have a peep into the humiliation and disgrace that *hijras* face daily. One does not have to read between the lines. Dattani is always praised for his quality of expressing the truth in its naked and bitter form. He knows the theatre requirements and writes accordingly. It is attributed:

Dattani is intrinsically a theatre person, rather than a writer, is evident in the way he is able to structure the stage mechanism effectively and how at times allows the text to speak for them and to look at their own workings and methodology. He employs a language that is often pungent, clear and sharp, pushing the spoken word to its limits and interfering them with pregnant silence and that only someone with an intimate inwardness with theatre can. (Choudhuri, Asha Kuthari p.105)

The play was first conceived as a radio play and after its success; the stage version of this play was made. That is why, it is full of music. The most

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important and typical is the music that accompanies the coarse *hijra* songs accompanied by the typical clapping of the hands. There is no rhythm or pattern in the songs of the *hijras* as they have no formal music training. Dattani has used this music to bring it closer to reality and give it a typical Indian 'hijra-effect'. The play has special sound effects that are well-designed and are required to glue the attention of the audience to the play. Even the minute sounds like the whirring of fan, rustle of paper, hitting of sticks on prison bars, striking a match, throwing of coins, zipping of a bag, starting of car etc. are taken care of to give everything a realistic touch. Moreover, in a radio play, the success lies in manipulating the sounds at the right instance. Dattani is an expert in such techniques and he has portrayed it very successfully in the present play.

Dattani by dedicating the whole play to the *hijra* cause has brought the margin to the centre; the underdogs to the forefront. He has granted them an audience who never thinks or has no concern regarding the *hijras*. He is not only advocating their cause but also underlying the fact that what they need is not pity or sympathy but understanding and concern. The traditional rules and norms are challenged and the hypocritical social setup is exposed. Dattani sensitises the audience with the issue without being didactic and the audience is made to think of the state of affairs of the *hijras*. The play portrays not the tragedy of the *hijras* alone but the tragedy of the whole political, legal and social system of India. It is the society that acts as the villain and Dattani is ruthless in exposing such hypocritical society. It is attributed:

Mahesh Dattani does not seek to cut a path through the difficulties, his characters encounter, instead he leads his audience to see just how caught up we all are in the complications and contradictions of our values and assumptions. And by revealing the complexity, he makes the world a richer place for all of us. (Mortimer, Jeremy p.3)

To conclude, we can say that Mahesh Dattani's play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* raises many questions regarding *hijra* identity, their constitution, connotations, their social acceptability and tolerability. They are the 'invisibles' in the society, the lowest of the low on the steps of social hierarchy. They face a double jeopardy as they are the victims of nature as well as of the society. The bias against them is even worse than the class or caste or religious bias. They are not even recognised as the members of the society. There is an aura of disgust and dislike related to them. Their fears and frustrations are underlined in the play. They are human beings with no voice, no sympathies, no love, no consolations, no justice and probably no hope of acceptability in the society.

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Dattani's plays do not end. They are simply preambles of the advancing complexities that are yet to be faced. Mahesh Dattani's plays demonstrate different attitudes that society has towards anybody who is different or who is at the lower end of the political balance. These subaltern sexualities face threat or violence because of their position in the society that are often ignored in registering their legitimate claim through literature politically and socially disenfranchised groups without a voice to be heard. Dattani is narrating the counter claims of the 'subltern sexualities' in a society that promises more in the name of democracy and liberty. His plays depict the social space of violence faced by 'subaltern sexualities' and theatrical validity gets transferred to legitimate social responses.

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**Quest for Identity in Shawn Wong's *Homebase***

Bhandare Shrikant \*

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**Abstract**

The present paper is an attempt to analysis the diasporic consciousness reflected in Shawn Wong's novel *Homebase*. The term 'diaspora' was first used in the sociological discourses in order to indicate the situation of displacement and estrangement but soon it was applied in the context of literary criticism to group the literary works that deal with such social and cultural situations. The problem of acculturation, assimilation and feeling of estrangement gave birth to the consciousness that make the author nostalgic about his homeland and keen about the cultural differences. The theory of diaspora is well established and comprehensively understood in the recent period so it requires very little introduction in the paper as the prime focus will be on the select author and his representative work.

Key words: Assimilation, estrangement, dislocation, quest for identity, acculturation, displacement, etc.

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Shawn Wong is forth generation Chinese American diasporic author of *Homebase* (1979) and *American Knees* (1996). He is also well known as a pioneer of Asian American Literary Studies and he takes initiative and edits six anthologies of such literature. His understanding of diasporic psyche is outstanding and therefore it is assumed that the analysis of his work will help us to set some parameters to make a critical statement on the Chinese American diaspora writers. In the representative novel the protagonist Rainsford Chan represents the social and cultural scenario of California in 1950s and 1960s. It is a dilemma of an immigrant to choose the home base and to define his cultural and social identity accordingly. The panoramic picture reflected in the novel presents social and psychological problems faced by an immigrant who was born and brought up in foreign land but physically identical with Chinese decent.

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This paper is divided into two parts with short theoretical background of diaspora studies followed by analysis and conclusion. An attempt is made to generalize a critical statement in the context of Chinese American diaspora in general and Shawn Wong's novel in particular. This paper analyses the diasporic writer Shawn Wong's novel *Homebase* and the Chinese immigrants' craving for identity in the foreign estranged land.

Basically, diaspora means a scattered population that has common origin in a small geographic area. The word is related particularly to historical forceful mass dispersion like migration of Jews from the Middle East, the southern Chinese during the coolie slave trade, the African Trans-Atlantic slave trade etc. After industrial revolution, imperialism was spread all over the world. Major European countries like England, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, etc., expanded their boundaries through war and trade and developed their colonies. England, no doubt, was more attentive in this race. It became the biggest empire in the world. British colonies were formed in the eastern as well as western countries. Industrial Revolution in the Europe changed the modes and means of power. Trade with the countries having raw material and labour became unavoidable. To fulfil the need of labour involuntary displacement of people as a labour took place. The rulers picked up the poor, less educated or uneducated people, peasants, and coolies and transported them to western developing countries.

Three percent of the world's population—or 191 million people—lived in a country other than the one in which they were born..... with one third having moved from a developing country to one that is developed, one third moving from one developing nation to another, and another third originating in the developed world. (UN Statistics) (P.41 Encyclopaedia of Diasporas)

The term, diaspora, derives from the Greek verb 'diaspeiro' means, 'I scatter', 'I spread about' and that form, 'dia', 'between, through, across' plus the verb 'speiro', 'I sow', 'I scatter'. In ancient Greece, diaspora means scattering. The word diaspora, after Bible's translation into Greek, was used to refer to the population of Jews exiled from Israel in 587 BCE by the Babylonians and from Judea in 70 CE by the Roman Empire. Major new diasporas have formed from or been larger or more effective by these conflict induced population movements over the last two decades. (P. 36 Diasporas: Concepts, Intersections, Identities)



According to the Oxford English Dictionary online, the first known recorded usage of the word diaspora in the English language was in 1876 referring, "extensive diaspora work of evangelizing among the National Protestant Churches on the continent. The term was more widely used in English by the mid 1950s, with long term 'expatriates' in significant numbers from other particular countries or regions also being referred to as a diaspora".

In all the cases the term diaspora carries sense of displacement. The people separated from their homeland, by any means, and have a hope to return or restore to their country. Diaspora may result in a loss of nostalgia for a single home as people, *re-root* in a series of meaningful displacement. In this sense a single men may have many homes throughout their diaspora, with different reasons for maintaining some form of attachment to each.

William Safran set out six rules to distinguish diasporas. These included that, "the group maintains collective memory of their homeland. They thought that their ancestral homeland as their true home, to which they will eventually return being committed to the restoration or maintenance of that homeland and they relate "personally or vicariously" to the homeland to a point where it shapes their identity". Safran's definitions were influenced by Jewish diaspora while Rogers Brubaker also noted that diaspora has been widening. Majority of books published on diaspora up to 1960 were also about the Jewish diaspora, but the picture changed up to 2002. Only ten percent books were about Jewish case that means other diasporas are covered in the books. These various diasporas are in the world now like Asian diaspora, African diaspora, American diaspora, Indian diaspora, Chinese diaspora, Australian diaspora, European diaspora etc.

Chinese people migrated thousand years ago. But the mass emigration occurred from 1850 to 1949. It happened mainly because of World Wars and starvation in China. There was political corruption also in China. The migrated people were poorly educated peasants and coolies who were literally hard labours. All of them were migrated towards developing countries like America, Australia, South Africa, Southeast Asia, Malaya and other places in need of labour either willingly or forcefully.

The ancestors or forefathers of Shawn Hsu Wong were also migrated to America in mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The author is the forth-generation Chinese in Oakland, California where he was born in 1949. He is a Professor of English and former Director of the University Honours Programme during 2003 to 2006. He

was Head of the Department of English (1997-2002) and Director of the Creative Writing during 1995 to 1997 at the University of Washington where he has been on the faculty since 1984. He is the pioneer of Asian American Studies. He received his Undergraduate Degree in English at the University of California at Berkeley in 1971 and the Master's Degree in Creative Writing at San Francisco State University in 1974. His first novel *Homebase* published by Reed and Cannon in 1979. His second novel *American Knees* published by Simon and Schuster in 1996, which was adapted into an independent feature film entitled *Americanese* (2010), written and directed by Eric Byler and produced by Lisa Onodera. His *Homebase* won *The Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award* and *The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Writers Day Award of Washington*. He is also co-editor of six multicultural literary anthologies, including the famous anthology *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers*. He has been awarded a National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship and a Rockefeller Foundation residency in Italy. He specializes in Creative Writing and Asian American Studies. Since 1972, he has taught at several colleges and universities including Mills College, University of California, San Francisco State University, German University, University of Washington, Rome Centre, Italy. As he mentioned in his preface his first teaching job, Ethnic Studies, Department at Mills College in Oakland, was offered him without having any teaching experience and to teach Asian American Literature.

*Homebase* is Shawn Wong's first novel. This novel narrates the story of the writer's own life and the life of his forefathers as Chinese immigrants in America through the mouth of its protagonist, Rainsford Chan.

Rainsford Chan's great-grandfather was made to move to America as a labour for the building of Central Pacific Rail Road over the Sierra-Nevada Mountains. Chan's great-grandfather did not move to America but he was made to move. He was not allowed to keep his family with himself. He stayed in America and remained there till the end of his life. His son that is Rainsford's grandfather, though he stayed throughout his life in America towards the end, he was sent to his homeland, China. This clearly shows that when the work of the Rail Road building was over and when there was no need of physical labour and menial work felt by the Americans, ruthlessly Chan's grandfather was sent back to his homeland. Chan's father was an engineer in America. The great grandfather was imported to America to perform physical work. In the course of

time his grandson that is Chan's father became an engineer who performed intellectual labour. This shifting from physical to intellectual labour took three generations. As Shawn Wong states in his preface to *Homebase*, this novel is a work of fiction with autobiographical elements (P. XI Preface, *Homebase*) and Rainsford Chang is Shawn Wong's mouthpiece. Whatever Shawn Wong speaks through his protagonist is his agonies that he desires to intimate or share with his readers.

Shawn Wong himself has worked at various prestigious colleges and universities in America and held positions. He is an American now. He speaks American language, goes to American churches, prays the Jesus and follows American culture. He has become a part and parcel of the American civilization. Yes, it is true. It is possible also however in some farthest corner of his mind he feels a little restlessness. This sense of restlessness, at occasions, takes hold of his whole self. He is made to think that even after four generations; the American society has not accepted him as an integral part of America. American language has accepted him. American institutions have accepted him. American constitution has also accepted him as American National. But still he is not complete American. He says through Rainsford Chan,

I have no place in America, after four generations, there is nothing except what America tells me about the pride of being foreign, a visitor from China I have never seen, never been to, never dream about and never care about, or at best, here in my country I am still living at the fringe, a edge of China. (P.66)

Now he has no connections with China. Still he has a room, though very small for China. On the other hand, though American constitution has accepted him as American national, he falls a bit short though from the American point of view. At a spiritual level, he is neither Chinese nor an American. Rainsford Chan narrates his own school experience when he wins award in water-polo, in the prize distribution ceremony his coach introduces him as the first Chinese in the history of the high school to win that award. He was applauded (P. 79) but he was not satisfied to receive the award. He was hurt somewhere in the mind and in the heart by his introduction as 'first Chinese' made by his coach. Even after four generations he was identified as a Chinese only. This apparently shows that America has not accepted him as an American.

In another incident related to his father whose negative answer to the question of the Chinese girl, "Are you not Chinese?" explores his inner sensibility to be an American rather than Chinese. It is not because of negligence of his being Chinese but because of his efforts to project himself as an American. While discussing with an old Chinese man he clearly states that, "I am a part of this land too". (P. 83) "Today, after 125 years of our life here, I do not want just home that time allowed me to have. America must give me legends with spirit." (P. 94) He is firm about his expectations from America. Apart from his original home land which he left behind around 125 years ago, he is doing his best for America, spending his whole life for the country and still has a sense of deep pain in him because he is treated as Chinese due to his physical appearance. He wants to be an American but is not treated as an American. Simultaneously he doesn't want to present himself as Chinese but he has a sense of attachment towards the Chinese as this novel reflects the life of Chinese immigrants and their experiences in American scenario.

Thus Shawn Wong focuses on Chinese immigrants in America, their experiences and their quest for identity in the novel since 1850s. This novel reflects the dreams, visions and bitter reality of Rainsford's forbearers. They struggle for being an American though the Americans are not ready to consider or treat them so. The novel represents overall life of Chinese immigrants through the dreams and experiences and historical aspects of ancestors of the hero. His attempt is to claim America as his homebase. The novel allows the reader to discover and to learn the truth about the Chinese American experience. The novel does not explore American culture, tradition, social aspects and ethos but its whole focus is on Chinese people, who have the sense of displacement, and their experiences living in America. The exposure of only Chinese throughout the novel itself is the proof of author's deep attachment towards the homeland that is China. This novel is a chronological presentation of the life of the Chinese migrated people to America since 1850s and their nostalgia and quest for identity.

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## Transculturality in History: A Scrutiny of Bharti Mukherjee's novel *The Tree Bride*

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### Abstract

The paper intends to make scrutiny of Bharti Mukherjee's novel *The Tree Bride* in relation with the term 'transculturality'. The terms such as 'transculturation' and 'transculturality' refer to cultural encounters, exchange, sharing and assimilations among the communities of different cultural and ethnic orientations. The process of 'transculturation' is a historical one since immigration of communities for various purposes makes co-existence of different communities inevitable. The stay of British colonizers in India results in the same direction. Bharti Mukherjee in her novel reinvents the colonial history of India during nineteenth and twentieth century, therefore, provides the perfect situation for the scrutiny of 'transculturality' in history.

Key Words: 'Transculturality' and 'Transculturation'- historical process of immigration – colonialism – ethnicity – cultural encounters and assimilations – cultural and religious practices.

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'Transculturality' plays an important role in the novels of Bharti Mukherjee. Most of her novels deal with intercultural issues of the contemporary world. The term 'transculturation' was coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in 1940 in his book *Cuban Counterpoints* (1940). He used the term to describe a process of intercultural exchange among the white cubans, Afro-cubans and carebians. The co-existence of various cultures is bound to make cultural impact on each other. These different communities confront against each other and also learn to find resolutions to the conflicts over the period of time. The economic and socio-cultural co-existence of different ethnic communities undergo processes such as deculturation, acculturation and consequent creation of transculturation. Fernando Ortiz describes this process of cultural camouflage through the metaphor of two important crops of Cuba sugarcane and tobacco. These are, of course, symbols for white and black communities of Cuba. Ortiz, here, celebrates the cultural synthesis between different communities and describes consequent creation of new cultural phenomenon as 'transculturation'. This theory of 'transculturation'

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or 'transculturality' serves the point to study such situations where different cultures and communities live together.

Immigration is one of the historical facts that had brought different communities closer to each other. Immigration, initially, was closely associated with the process of colonization. The Great Britain emerged as one of the most powerful colonial powers of the world during eighteenth and nineteenth century. The British colonizers came into close contact with colonized Indians. Bharti Mukherjee revives the same British colonial history of India in her novel *The Tree Bride*. In her other novels, Mukherjee writes about post-independence Indian Diaspora. She writes about the 'root search' of Indian immigrants in America but her novels also talk about 'transculturality' of contemporary time which is driven by Information and communication technology. 'Transculturality' and history go hand in hand in Bharti Mukherjee's *The Tree Bride*. The novel is second book of the trilogy written by the novelist, the previous and the later being *Desirable Daughters* and *'Miss New India'* respectively. Bharti Mukherjee employs history of colonial India in first two books along with the family history of Tara-Lata Chatterjee, the common narrator and the protagonist of the two books. The first book of the trilogy narrates the story of Tara's namesake ancestral aunt Tara-Lata Gangooly who marries a tree and becomes the 'tree bride' after the death of her betrothed husband. This event of a five year old girl marrying a tree becomes the integral part of the family history of Tara Chatterjee, the narrator. She had been named after the same ancestral aunt, the tree-bride Tara-Lata. But the novel *Desirable Daughters* concentrates more on the lives of three daughters Padma, Parvati and Tara. Tara, the youngest daughter owes to write a book on the 'tree bride' and thus the life of the tree bride becomes the central theme and the title of the second book *The Tree Bride*. The novelist blends historical facts with fiction in the backdrop of nineteenth century British India. The time frame provided for the plot covers nineteenth and twentieth century pre and post independence India.

The novel presents the two parallel tracks of the life of the tree bride and lives of British individuals in India. The 'transculturality' can be traced in the lives of British individuals in India and the way they negotiate with Indian society and culture. The first important character of this sort is John Mist. John Mist is the person who dreams to build a well run society in a remote village of Sundarban forest of the Eastern Bengal. The narrator while tracking her family history comes across a book on Mist's life, the *Mistnama* written by Mist's friend Rafeek Hai. John Mist is a British but does not hold any administrative post in India. His arrival in India can be called just a co-incidence. In fact, Mist is an orphan in an orphanage of London. He spends his childhood on the London

streets among the prostitutes. His life in 'Betterment Trust' in London disassociates him from the British catholic religion and culture. John Mist is a sort of decultured human being who travels to India in a ship called 'Malabar Queen' with his friend Tom Crabbe. The ship has been looted by the pirates and the boy John Mist along with remaining crewmen comes to Calcutta. The court sends him to orphanage in Calcutta for three years where he acquires Bengali language and culture. He murders a powerful British official Todd Nungent in order to save Olivia, a lady whom Mist reveres a lot during his voyage to India. Rafeek Hai and David Owen who help him during his trial in the court suggest him to elope to Rafeek Hai's village in Sundarban which falls out of British jurisdiction. John Mist soon makes profit in indigo and jute trade and wants to create a 'perfect society' where there will be everything in perfect order including education, health, justice and most importantly communal harmony. John Mist is a perfect 'transcultural' being since he is deeply rooted with Bengali life and culture. He does not speak a single word of English, wears completely Indian clothes and believes in Hinduism. He treks to the ice cave of Ambarnath as any other devoted Hindu pilgrim. Nobody suspect his religion and nationality. He is treated just as any other Indian wherever he goes. He becomes a sort of link between the Hindus and the Muslims of the village. The villagers love him as their mother and father. They rename their village as Mishtigunj to acknowledge their love to John Mist. The tree bride, Tara Lata Gangooly, daughter of Jai Krishna Gangooly continues the legacy of John Mist after his brutal execution by the British police. The life of John Mist is an epitome of cultural synthesis in nineteenth century colonial India. But, the British policy makers like Macaulay changed their strategy for their administrators in India in the early decades of nineteenth century. They executed their policies to create surrogate British administrators out of Indians for their benefit. Mukherjee discusses this cultural tumult in the novel as she refers to the division among the Indians like 'Brahmo samaj' the more anglicized cult of Bengali Brahmins and the orthodox Bengali Brahmins embracing their rituals and religious practices. The increasing divisions among Indians further widened the distance between the British and the Indians. The arrival of British missionaries in India in nineteenth century had brought more restrictions on social and cultural exchange between the British and the Indians. The missionaries preached the doctrine of 'sexual abstinence' and strict separation of races. John Mist's cultural transformation occurs before all these anti-cultural unification moves by the British authorities. These moves were directed towards maintaining the relation between the British and Indians as the colonizers and the colonized. The British policies were being framed to make India more profitable land for them. These strategies created the administrators like Virgil Tradewell as referred in the novel who carries extreme antagonism about Indians and India. Still, rules and

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strategies can not stop individuals of different ethnic origins to share beliefs, values and practices of each other. The novel, further, depicts two more characters who transcend their religion and culture and become the Indians not by birth but by belief. These sort of people were generally discarded by the majority of British administrative community in India as 'White Hindus'. Nigel Coughlin and David Owen are the two British individuals who are secretly opposed of British injustice and oppression in India. Nigel Coughlin represents his fifth generation in India. He holds the important position as secretary to British Eastern Army General Staff. He secretly meets the tree bride, Tara Lata Gangooly, one of the freedom fighters of East Bengal and handovers important documents of British army so as to help nationalistic leaders like Netaji Bose and Mohandas Gandhi. Mr. Coughlin declares himself to be a Hindu at heart. His intensity to be an Indian clearly reflects in his remark: "If there was a way I could trade this pale skin and these blue eyes and lank yellow hair for anything I see on the streets of India, I should do so in a flash." (*The Tree Bride* 267)

Mr. Coughlin does not leave India even after the British leave it in 1947. He lives happily in India till his death in 1973. His affinity and love for India cannot be measured by his original religion and ethnicity. David Owen is another such character in the novel who disassociates himself from the British community in Calcutta and lives like an ordinary Hindu. He lives with his four wives and thirty children. He helps Indians to contest their cases in the British court. He secretly wishes the British empire to handover the country to the native Indian rulers. He helps John Mist to go out of British jurisdiction. The character of tree bride also crosses the barriers of caste religion and geographic boundaries. Tara-Lata Gangooly, the tree bride confines herself to her house the 'Mist-Mahal' after the unfortunate incident of her marriage with the tree. In fact, her marriage with tree is not less miserable than widowhood. She leads her further life for the liberation of motherland, India. The people of Sundarban revere her as a spiritual guide and a political leader who helps Indian freedom fight in every possible way. She donates the gold of her dowry to the 'dandi' march of Gandhiji. She assists Netaji Bose to raise funds for his Indian National Army. Virgil Tradewell, the district commissioner of police during 1930 to 1947, expresses his amazement over the wide and solid Intelligence network the tree bride operates from her house. It is quite evident that some of the British officers help her with information and input. The senior officer like Nigel Coughlin helps her and provides her sensitive documents about the movements of British army. She keeps herself update with latest information about the development about British Empire even before the same information reaches to British officials in India. She learns Bengali, English and Persian on her own and then literates the servants of her house. The each servant in turn literates five

more people of the village of all castes and religions. The people of Mishtigunj respect the tree bride irrespective of their caste and religion. Her house is always full with native Hindu and Muslim followers. The tree bride names Sameena, her close friend as a legal heir of her property. The British authorities arrest and kill her in the police custody in 1943.

Therefore, it can be claimed that 'transculturality' is a historical process. The 'transculturation' between the colonizer British and the colonized Indians is not always bound to the usual equation of superior and inferior but instead sometimes works other way round in favor of India. Through the portrayal of many individuals who transcend their nationality, ethnicity and culture and accommodate themselves in another culture, the novelist presents the unique example of cultural synthesis of colonial India. The novel '*The Tree Bride*' also marks the continuity in cultural encounter and synthesis as an integral historical process. The phenomenon of 'transculturation' occurs wherever peoples of different nationalities and ethnicities come together for any cause, and celebrate cultural assimilations.

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## Violence in Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* (1989) and *Wife* (1975): A Comparative Study

Ujwala M. Gosavi\*

### Abstract:

Bharati Mukherjee, a versatile immigrant writer in her fiction powerfully and sensitively evokes the cultural tensions and torn identities that her South Asian protagonists suffer. In both North America and India, her characters live amidst the disjunctions of two very separate worlds and world views. Her main theme obviously refers to the phenomenon of migration and the problems like alienation, struggle with identity, racism and various forms of discrimination etc. Her writings largely reflect her personal experience in cross-cultural boundaries. In her novels, she honestly put forth her different phases of life- from alienation in India and then in Canada to assimilation in USA. Hence, this paper throws light on the theme of violence that *Jasmine* and Dimple Dasgupta, the protagonist of the novel *Jasmine* (1989) and *Wife* (1975) experiences. This paper also analyses how Dimple, caught in a gulf between the two contrasting worlds leads to her illusion, depression and finally her tragic decision of killing her husband.

**Key words:** violence, identity, migration, alienation, depression, discrimination.

Of Bengali origin, Bharati Mukherjee (born July 27, 1940) in Kolkata, West Bengal is an Indian-born American writer who is currently a professor in the department of English at the University of California, Berkeley. After Independence she travelled to Europe with her parents and returned to Calcutta in the early 1950s where she attended the Loreto School. In 1959, she received her B.A. from the University of Calcutta and M.A. from the University of Baroda in 1961. She further travelled to the United States to study at the University of Iowa and received her M.F.A. in 1963 and her Ph.D. in 1969 from the department of Comparative Literature. She taught at McGill University, Skidmore College, Queens College, and City University of New York.

Mukherjee with her husband, Clark Blaise co-authored a memoir *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977) and non-fiction *The Sorrow and the Terror: The Haunting Legacy of the Air India Tragedy* (1987). She published her first two novels while living in Canada: *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971) and *Wife* (1975). She wrote other novels like *Jasmine* (1989), *The Holder of the World* (1993), *Leave It to Me* (1997), *Desirable Daughters* (2002), *The Tree Bride* (2004) and *Miss New India* (2011). Her Short story collections include: *Darkness* (1985), *The*

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*Middleman and Other Stories* (1988) for which she got National Book Critics Circle Award. Her non-fiction works include *Political Culture and Leadership in India* (1991) and *Regionalism in Indian Perspective* (1992).

The protagonist Jasmine of Bharati Mukherjee's novel *Jasmine* (1989) also known as Jyoti, Jase or Jane, passes through one situation and country to another and so is her inner self reborn several times towards a higher level, until she finally seems to have found a place to rest. Throughout the novel, Jasmine experiences numerous situations that bring violence with them. She is not always the subject of these situations, but they are always connected with her. It is not only physical violence experienced, but also mental violence that influences Jasmynes further way of life and forces her to be reborn as a different person. The rough pictures that Mukherjee draws of violent moments reflect the psychological pain that comes with the changes of culture and life that Jasmine experiences.

The story begins with Jasmine as a young Punjabi girl born as Jyoti in Hasnapur in a traditional Indian society. Jasmine's father dies when she is a teenager. He gets killed by a bull after stepping out of a bus. Her mother shaves her head afterwards as a sign that she has given up her own life. Having experienced this sort of mental violence, see the father dead and the mother resigned, Jasmine stays strong and takes over the role of the mother in the house. The child is gone and she is reborn as a young woman. Hence, she takes over a new role in her life and leaves the old behind. Young Jasmine is restricted by patriarchal gender customs. The protagonist, Jyoti in this phase of her life, is introduced to readers as follows:

Lifetimes ago, under a banyan tree in the village of Hasnapur, an astrologer cupped his ears – his satellite dish to the stars – and foretold my widowhood and exile (*Jasmine*: 3).

Given the traditional Hindu belief in the realization of such astrological forecasts, Jyoti is confirmed an unwanted as well as undesirable girl, with a prediction of eventual widowhood and exile. Indian male dominated astrology seems to be a superstition which controls female behavior. Male supremacy, as represented by the astrologer, thus defines Jyoti from the very beginning of her life.

In Jasmine's initial move, from Hasnapur to Jullundhar after her marriage to Prakash, she is subject to male dominance, and this continues to be the case throughout the novel. Prakash an educated man with a liberal mind, "trash some traditions" (*Jasmine*: 76). After their marriage, he moves into a two-room apartment across the street from his technical college, refusing to live with his uncle and aunt. While Prakash's uncle criticizes his deeds as a violation of tradition, Prakash, "a modern and city man" (*Jasmine*: 76) considers their



complaints as part of the Indian feudal ideology that should be abolished. Simply abiding by Prakash's will, Jasmine, as his wife, also breaks the traditional code for a daughter-in-law by not moving in with her in-laws. This event connotes Prakash's own rebellion towards traditional narrow-mindedness.

Jasmine has a traditional Indian woman's psyche and acts like a conventional subservient wife with no sign of agency. She feels uncomfortable when she learns that her friend in Hasnapur has already had a child, while she has had none. These behaviours suggest the fact that Jasmine does not entirely share her husband's liberal attitudes and opposition toward conservative Indian feudalism and patriarchal dominance which shows her traditional female psyche. Jasmine's past comes back to her mind and she soon confronts a drastic turn in her life when her husband is killed through a bomb attack in a shop shortly before his departure to America. She has been just seventeen at that moment. The bomb, the work of some radicals, was supposed to hit her and other women in that shop for being "whores", meaning "too modern". That cruel act of violence changes something in Jasmine. First of all, she goes back to her mother's home and they live isolated as two widows for a while. But Jasmine wants to do more with her life. She gets her brothers' help to get documents for a journey to America. She takes her husband's clothes with her and intends to burn herself with them at the university he wanted to study at. "Jasmine", given that name by her husband when she still was named Jyoti, already has changed into the more modern woman her name represents. She already has turned from Jyoti, the girl from Hasnapur, to Jasmine, the woman who immigrates to America. It is significant that Jasmine initially undertakes her journey to America as a mission to commit ritual suicide in the name of keeping to Hindu traditions, rather than as an act of self-emancipation.

Jasmine's intention to go America was to fulfill her husband's mission but when she landed drastic change took place in her life. When she arrives in America, a rapist, "Half-Face", brings her into a motel the first night and rapes her, an incident that disrupts her original course. He treats her like cattle, like something he owns. Thus, instead of committing suicide, taking on the guise of 'Kali', the Hindu goddess of creation and destruction, Jasmine cuts Half-Face's throat and he bleeds to death. Jasmine's killing of Half-Face and burning of her wedding clothes symbolically separate her from the Indian patriarchal system and activates her quest for an actual American identity. She finds the strength to continue living instead of committing "sati" over the burned clothing of her husband. So Jasmine leaves the old Jasmine behind and now begins the life of an illegal immigrant and murderess. It is like she peels one of her skins off and appears as a new person, trying to overcome her past and start again. After several steps and places to stay at, Jasmine gets a job as a caregiver in the Wylie

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household in New York. The child's father, Taylor, is a man who embodies what it is like to be an American for her. Again, Jasmine is reborn, with a new name, for Taylor calls her Jase instead of Jasmine. Her new life breaks in two when Jasmine thinks to recognize the man who has killed her husband. Jase feels that her journey is not yet ended, because she still cannot come to rest and so she decides to move to Iowa where she becomes Jane to Bud Ripplemeyer who is bewitched by her oriental beauty. The change in names proposes a psychic violence in her as she symbolically murders her previous identity again and again to reconstruct a new one. The process of her deleting previous identities does suggest psychological violence, resistance and transformation in the novel.

A person's life and the choices they make are ultimately shaped by their continuously changing circumstances. In *Jasmine* (1989), Mukherjee introduces us to the various changes that her novel's main protagonist – Jasmine – goes through, as she journeys from the world of rural Indian Punjab to that of America's Mid-West. The author shows how each such transformation is accompanied by its own share of pain and violence.

Mukherjee's second novel, *Wife*, (1975) is about immigration, gender, ethnicity, and power. The protagonist Dimple Dasgupta, like Mukherjee, experiences identity crisis through the cultural forces that powerfully shape her self-perception and deny her access to control of her own life. Mukherjee locates *Wife* (1975) in two very different geographic settings: the dusty suburbs of Calcutta and the metropolis of New York City. Brought up in an upper middle class conservative environment, she leads a protected life throughout and as expected from a girl of Hindu traditional family is shy, docile and submissive. For Dimple, the agency for 'freedom' is after marriage as imbibed in her psyche. So she starts awaiting marriage with all her fantasies fed by magazines and films. She fantasizes about marriage, not to an engineer, but to a neurosurgeon. She imagines it will bring her freedom, love, and a more desirable life. Dimple worries that she is not fair or bosomy enough for marriage. From the start Dimple seeks to manipulate her identity through whatever means in order to become more desirable. She is presented as unformed and malleable; she simply adapts and adjusts according to others. Mukherjee presents a feminist perspective, creating an image of the oppressed woman who struggles with her identity but does not know it. Dimple is subject to the desires and whims of others and has been socialized to be unaware of her own desire for an independent identity. She believes she wants to be a wife, but her longing is confused with her desire for freedom. She is also unaware that such a role will not grant her those desires.

Dimple gets married to Amit Kumar Basu, a guy of her father's choice. The first of Dimple's series of disappointments comes in learning that Basu is a short Prince Charming rather than a tall one. Her marriage does not turn out her hope and dream. First her mother-in-law takes away her name, preferring instead Nandini. Then the newlyweds move into Dimple's mother-in-law, where they live a far-less-than-glamorous life. Though her in-laws didn't accept her wholeheartedly, Dimple tries to live up to the expectations of them. But the negligence of her in-laws makes Dimple feel isolated in her own house. She understands the difference between the premarital dreams and the marital realities. The passion and fulfillment that Dimple thought eludes her once she is married, as Amit her husband fails Dimple on all grounds mental, emotional and physical. She was just learning to compromise with fate but the news of their going to U.S brings a ray of hope to her sullen life. Amit wants her to interact with people but is apprehensive about her becoming too American. She is doomed to her world of fantasies hiding her yearnings from her husband. Lack of communication between the two stifles and chokes Dimple's voice and disintegrates her sensibility. She has nightmares of violence, of suicide and of death. Unable to find love in her arranged marriage, she feels attracted towards the American Milt Glaser 'the exotic other', who makes her feel good but she does not have the grit to find a foothold for herself because her strings are in her husband's hands who lets them loose according to his own ego. Her cultural values are eroded in Milt's company. Naturally the husband becomes an adversary when he is not as per her fantasies.

In America, Dimple and Amit have to stay with a Bengali couple, Jyoti and Meena Sen till Amit gets a job. But Dimple faces the unresolved dilemma between her desires to be a traditional Indian wife like Meena Sen who is perpetually satisfied with her position and her identity as a wife and mother and the lure of western feminism like Ina Mullick who is determined to live freely, Dimple sees in herself neither. Staying home, she is isolated and grows more and more depressed. She is detached and begins to confuse her reality with television. She reacts to others passively, never actively engaging in socializing or housework. She sleeps nearly all day, cooks when necessary, and increasingly watches television and reads magazines while her husband repeatedly inquires what she does all day. Married life promotes the status of women to motherhood- a stage which brings greater excitement to the Indian women. But for Dimple, the prospect of becoming a mother enrages her. Before they left Calcutta for America, Dimple had found herself pregnant. Unable to face motherhood, she jumped rope until she aborted her fetus. Her excessive exposure to soap operas and violence on television warps her values and distorts her sense of reality. She frequently plunges into moods of depression,

fantasizing about different ways of committing suicide or inflicting pain on her husband. Life with Amit, both in India and America, is naturally a big disappointment for her. Her dreams and hopes are shattered. In her moments of feverish introspection she thinks that life has been cruel to her:

Life should have treated her better, should have added and subtracted in different proportions so that she was not left with a chimera. Amit was no more than that. He did not feed her reveries; he was unreal. She was furious, desperate; she felt sick (*Wife*: 156).

Driven by guilt, passion, and revenge, and at the same time disillusioned, disoriented and unable to grapple with the conflict she turns into a psychopath, she finally liberates herself by stabbing at the mole on his husband's face, thus setting her free from him. Her reality was so confused that she is not fully aware of her own actions. She is symbolically freed from the power Amit and their marriage had over her through this violent act. This act of self-empowerment makes her feel strangely American, like some character in a television show.

Therefore, in case of Dimple Dasgupta, it is constant fight within the bonded and enchained Dimple who wants freedom and love. On the other hand, Jyoti being the seventh daughter who was literally strangled to death by her grandmother is a survivor and fighter from the beginning. Amit is caring but takes Dimple for granted the day they get married. On the other hand, Prakash sees Jyoti as an individual and wants her to grow and blossom. Jasmine has no complex regarding her looks whereas Dimple is always conscious of her physical attributes. Unlike Dimple, Jyoti was fortunate to get the 'other' (her brothers and husband) who support her and nurture her spirits instead of suppressing them. But soon her life leaves her shattered and heartbroken at the age of seventeen with the death of her husband. Dimple wanted to be loved by others. Without making effort herself, she always expected freedom and happiness from others. On the other hand, Jasmine is aware of her capabilities and tries to overcome the obstacles as she is more self-efficient than Dimple. Hence, Bharati Mukherjee in her writings reflects that the basic idea is self-empowerment, which is essential for any human being and the blending can produce characters like Jasmine and the imbalance in personality leads to someone like Dimple.

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**POEMS**

**The Rose**

Dr. N.G. Wale\*

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Thou Lovely rose!  
Give ear unto my praise.  
    Though near am I to thee,  
Dare I not to touch thee;  
    Lest thou fadest.  
I like to enjoy the beauty,  
    For the time is fleeting,  
Garden is thy beautiful paradise,  
    To see thee, my heart likes to rise.  
I pray to Almighty to give me sight.  
    To love thee and see thee always bright.  
Oh! thou lovely rose!  
    Thou lovely rose!

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## **The Earth**

Dr. N.G. Wale\*

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We, all human beings live on the earth,  
On this earth, we experience the sorrow and the mirth.  
Dost thou know the variegated Nature,  
Where dwell countless creatures, engrossed in worldly rapture?  
Nature is Earth's part and parcel.  
Her mysteries are unfolded by great scholar.  
As many minds, many bodies,  
This earth has got prolific names.  
To rich, the earth is full of treasure and pleasure,  
But poor think it a hell and jail.  
Shakespeare says it is a stage,  
To perform our part according to the age.  
Wordsworth says it is a fairy place,  
Fit home for the Cuckoo to pace.  
Some feel, it is the loveliest garden,  
Lovers consider it a paradise golden.  
All these names are components to the whole.  
All these go to make the earth, sole.

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