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A Special Issue on Comparative literatures in English



Editors

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~ ~ EDITORIAL ~ ~

I feel happy to present you the special issue of *Critical Space* on comparative literatures in English with kaleidoscopic variety of issues and critical queries. The topics discussed in this issue are quite interesting and has a pedagogical worth. The comparative perspective used by the article writers brings new perspectives in discussion and reveal many interesting facts that otherwise may remain unexplored.

Sangita T. Ghodake in her article 'Gordimer's *My Son's Story* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: A Shift from Eurocentrism to Humanism' discusses the issue of racial discrimination with the reference to two well-known literary artifacts. The conclusion of the article interestingly notes the shift of literature from 'Eurocentrism' to 'Humanism'. Sharmin Afroz Shantu analyses 'The Yellow Wallpaper' and 'To Room Nineteen' in order to investigate the myth of the 'happy homemaker'. The texts selected for the paper represent two different spaces with two different ideologies, but both reflect women's struggle with the space and for the space in common. Priyanka Jindal makes an attempt to focus changing interpretations and definitions of aesthetic for the female dalit author and the female black author with special reference to the works of Bama and Audre Lorde. A comparative study of the works written by dalit and black literary personalities adds interestingly new dimensions to the existing body of knowledge. Dr. Tripti Karekatti in her article 'The Idea of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and Modern Indian Writers: A Study of Raja Rao, Chaman Nahal and Datta Bhagat' analyses the select Indian texts to show how the authors from different castes approach the idea and rework it in their works. Dr. A. K. Chaturvedi analyses the literary works of Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga and compares their preoccupation with the marginalized sections of society. The paper compares how these authors depict the subjugation of marginalized communities. Swati Chandra undertakes a Feminist Study of Modern Tamil Poetry by Women and celebrates the bold

defiance of these 'sovereign queens of words', namely Malathi Maithri, Salma, Kutti Revathi and Sukirtharini. Dr. Pramod A. Ganganmale in his article 'Comparative Analysis of *Baromas* and *The Grapes of Wrath*' points out the issues pertaining to farmers, their problems, their protest, their cultural conflicts and their social, educational, and political existence. Dr Shweta Gupta, after analysing many facts related to the modern society, in her article 'Emerging Bilingualism and Biculturalism in India', reveals that the modern communication technology and rapidly developing international trading is promoting the bilingualism and biculturalism in India. Dr. Sunita Agarwal's paper analyzes Karnad's play *The Fire and the Rain* reveals that how it contextualizes the myth to discuss contemporary issues and the relevance of it to bring out the heterogeneity and diversity of meaning in the text. The poems by Dr. N. G. Wale 'Winners and Losers' and 'Life' reflect the philosophy of life. Babasaheb B. Patil's interview with Thomas Keneally will help us to materialize his literary vision in order to understand his novels.

It is hoped that you will find this issue worth reading and worth referring. The topics also generate new avenues in the area of literary research and also make available the discussion on the less discussed topics.

Dr. H. B. Patil

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Gordimer's *My Son's Story* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: A Shift from Eurocentrism to Humanism

Sangita T. Ghodake*

Abstract:

Eurocentrism is one of the popular terms of the post-colonial studies in which economical, social, political, cultural and psychological aspects of the relationships of the colonizer and the colonized, the centre and margin and the dominant and dominated are to be studied. The selected writers for the close study of Eurocenterism against humanism are Shakespeare and Nadine Gordimer who have always supported humanist concern through their characters. Both of them have got critical acclaim due to their efforts to raise voice for issues related to human suppression. The study tries to prove that Europe is no longer the centre of attraction but the territories like Asia and Africa are also making their mark. Greeks, French, British and Romans are replaced by the third world men of the millennium like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela etc.

The Europeans started exploiting foreign territories since 16th century. Initially they entered in the colonies in the name of trade and business but later on became the rulers of the land. Eurocentrism is one of the popular terms of the post-colonial studies in which economical, social, political, cultural and psychological aspects of the relationships of the colonizer and the colonized, the centre and margin and the dominant and dominated are to be studied. Titus Pop has mentioned it as 'the practice, conscious or otherwise, of placing emphasis on European concerns, culture and values at the expense of those of other cultures.' Eurocentric point of view has claimed that the West is the messenger of God and they have all the rights to rule the other than Europe. Edward Said has portrayed it as the conflict between the Orient i.e. the west and the other i.e. the east. Gayatri Spivak, Franz Fanon, Ashish Nandi and many other critics and scholars of post-

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colonial studies have thrown light on the issues of the superior west and the inferior east. All of them raised their voices to claim that a human being must be treated as a human being and not a beast like creature. The selected writers for the close study of Eurocenterism against humanism are Shakespeare and Nadine Gordimer who have always supported humanist concern through their characters. Both of them have got critical acclaim due to their efforts to raise voice for issues related to human suppression. The study tries to prove that Europe is no longer the centre of attraction but the territories like Asia and Africa are also making their mark. Greeks, French, British and Romans are replaced by the third world men of the millennium like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela etc. The moral of the story is to 'Live and let live' that can be the only guiding principle for the entire humanity in 21st century. Titus Pop in his article *From Eurocentrism to Hibridity or From Singularity to Plurality* says,

Assumptions of European superiority arose during the period of European imperialism, which started slowly in the 16th century, accelerated in the 17th and 18th centuries and reached its zenith in the 19th century. ... Reality has been distorted to the benefit of the colonizing powers ever since imperialism existed. The native has been painted in a negative way by the settlers from the very outset of the colonial process.

William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611) is considered to be the best document of colonial oppression and exploitation through the relationship of the master Prospero and the slave Caliban. Nadine Gordimer's *My Son's Story* (1980) represents colonial subjugation by the implementation of unjust policy of Apartheid at the hands of the white rulers. Caliban, the black slave of Caribbean origin was depicted as rebellion due to his exploitation at the hands of his master Prospero in *The Tempest* and Sonny, the coloured protagonist of Nadine Gordimer from South Africa was also threatened in every possible way by the white government but he re-emerged like Phoenix from the ashes. Oppression has

always been led to revolt and finally proceeded to ultimate freedom. Though both the characters represent different ages as Caliban represents Elizabethan age and Sonny represents postmodern but they reveal Eurocentric monopoly and try to stand firm against every type of discrimination. The journey from Caliban to that of Sonny of postmodern era proves gradual change and shifts in the treatment of the dominant and the dominated. Their resistance led the entire world to treat one another in humanitarian way. Moreover it gives birth to several questions like though the colonies have got political independence but what about postmodern economic imperialism of the west and former colonizer's struggle for fighting against all sorts of disparities? The paper is a humble attempt to compare and contrast the Eurocentric notions of entrapment right from an ancient to the modern era and colonized's cry for equal humanitarian treatment. It will also try to explore postmodern economic imperialism of the west and struggle for survival of the east in the time of recession in 21st century.

The Tempest is written in the early part of 17th century and is supposed to be one of the finest tragic-comedies of William Shakespeare and a post-colonial text for modern critics whereas *My Son's Story* by Nadine Gordimer is a novel of the last decades of 20th century. Both the genres are completely distinct still they do have many commonalities regarding post-colonial issues. Shakespeare did not intend *The Tempest* to be a post-colonial text whereas being a citizen of a British colony Gordimer has clearly intended it. She has closely observed and experienced exploitation and subjugation of colonial rule in South Africa and has actively worked against injustices in humanitarian grounds. The first striking similarity between both the authors is that of their white race and both of them have shown their concern against human subjugation and exploitation. Their characters of marginalized race try to raise their voices against the white regime and try to rebel. Though there are many more common and uncommon characteristics in both the selected texts I would like to concentrate on the master-slave relationship

between Prospero and Caliban in *The Tempest* and Sonny and his battle against British regime in *My Son's Story*. Both the protagonists from the margin stand for marginalized and inferior cultures that lead them to inferiority complex. They acquire the language of their master and feel proud initially for the mercy of the master but later on realize cunningness of the masters and thus try to attempt unsuccessful revolt. Though the works belong to different genres and different centuries they have dealt with common age-old conflicts and issues of 'centre-margin', 'superior-inferior' and 'power-peace' with the only solution of 'forget and forgive'. The Eurocentric approach of superiority of the West and the cry for equality of the East is very nicely come out with the message of 'humanitarianism' as the ultimate solution through these texts.

Let us deal with the story of *The Tempest* in brief. The story starts with the flash back. Prospero, the central character, tells the story to his daughter Miranda about their stay on an unknown Island. Both of them see one ship gets caught in the storm. Miranda is anxious about the travellers on the ship. Prospero promises her that he would save the lives of the people on the ship and then starts telling story of their past life in Milan. Prospero is the duke of Milan with a beautiful daughter and is madly in love with his 'magic' studies. His brother Antonio wants to claim the throne of Milan and he removes Prospero and abandons them in a ship. Gonzalo, a courtier of Napoli, supplies food, clothes and other necessary stuff to Prospero so that he and his two year-old daughter could survive for the period of time. They land on the unknown island and decide to make it their permanent home.

Antonio, after fifteen years, is passing through the island after attending a marriage. Prospero decides that he would relieve a spirit called Ariel, a super human, from his cruel master Sycorax, the queen of the island who is no more. He compels him to work as per his orders with the help of his magic. He promises Ariel that if he helped him in achieving his goal he would release him forever from

his master. Ariel is visible only to his master Prospero and invisible to all. The island is owned by Sycorax and after her death her son Caliban, a monster like creature is supposed to be the only living object on the Island. Caliban is asked to serve Prospero and his daughter Miranda. Prospero tries to teach his language to him and to tame him but in vain. He remains savage and barbaric throughout the play. He attempts to rape Miranda. Prospero punishes him for his hideous act. Meanwhile Prospero asks Ariel to create storm and to disperse all the members on the ship. Ariel creates storm and disperses them from each other.

Ariel then compels Ferdinand, son of Gonzalo to follow him and lead him to Prospero. Ferdinand falls in love with Miranda and Miranda too experiences love at first sight. Prospero is expecting the same but he imprisons him just to test his abilities as his future son-in-law. Antonio and Sebastian, remaining scattered royal personalities on the other side of the island decide to rebel against their king Alonso and Gonzalo but Ariel uses his magic power and awakens both the then kings of Milan. The king sees swords in their hands and asked them about their intention. They speak lie that it is just to safeguard him. He easily believes in them and asks them to find out whereabouts of his son Antonio. The third sub plot of the play is woven around the island's native Caliban and the king's courtiers Trinculo and Stephano who accidentally happen to meet each other. Trinculo and Stephano tactfully find out Caliban's rivalry with Prospero. They entrap him by giving him some wine and promise him that they would relieve him from his master Prospero if he helped them to rule the island and to support Stephano as a new king. Caliban agrees because he thought that those are the spirits of his master who has sent them to torture him. Ariel informs Prospero about Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban's plan. He helps him in destroying their plans and punishes them. In the last act all the cheaters Antonio, Gonzalo, Alonso and others were placed before Prospero. He decides to forgive them and to free the obedient spirit Ariel. He hands over the island to Caliban but being an uneducated slave he misunderstands

Sabastian as his master. Finally Prospero becomes the Duke of Milan and returns to Italy and Ferdinand and Mirinda weds happily. Ariel is freed from his services and is permanently relieved. Prospero buries his magic art and throw his books of magic in the sea and lives happily as the duke of Milan. The play ends with the note of poetic justice that virtue is rewarded and evil is punished.

Let me deal with the plot of *My son's Story*. Sonny comes from a family of workers and is the first in the family to take up the pen and book. After completing his years of schooling he becomes a school teacher. Sonny and Aila marry after a former engagement. There is passion, affection, sensitivity and domestic adjustment in their married life. They decide to have two children and a girl is followed by a boy. The girl is welcomed as Baby and the boy is Will, named after William Shakespeare. Sonny, the teacher organizes parent-teacher meetings and engages himself in community upliftment activities. The school teacher has a yearning to improve himself and to read Kafka and Shakespeare. In the Reef town people respect Sonny the teacher, who teaches Will to change fuses and replace the cord. His mother prepares traditional foods on Saturdays Sonny reads to his children, teaches them to play chess. The school teacher once corrects the mistakes on the placards and then he becomes a mediator, a defender of the protestors. His photograph gets into the police record and he follows the trials. He becomes a regular speaker at the meetings. That is how he is drawn into the movement. The principal of his school visits their house to inform that the department wants the teacher to be dismissed.

Sonny loses his job as a school-teacher when Will is eleven years old. Sonny wants his son to become a writer. Sonny's profession has become the meetings, the speeches, the campaigns, the delegations and the movement. The committee for which he takes the train to the city every morning and returns every evening finds a job at a warehouse of clothing for him. In order to show

that they do not accept segregation they move to the neighbourhood of Afrikaners in Johannesburg. His involvement in the movement makes him face a trial in the prison. The Human Rights Activist Hannah Plowman, a blonde visits the ex-prisoner host's house. Both of them are drawn into the vortex of passion. Will, the boy of fifteen, is to take exams and is waiting to get into five o'clock performance at the cinema hall when he finds his father Sonny coming out of the earlier performance with blonde woman Hannah Plowman. Will runs home and shut himself in his room shocked, confused, bewildered, broken and shattered psychologically. It is his decision to hide this disclosure from Aila and Baby. Will cannot come out of the psychological turmoil and has school boy's wet dream. Sonny and Will believe that Aila does not know about the affair. Both of them continue to pretend but Baby's reaction is to cut her wrists. Then Will comes to know that his mother Aila knew his father's affair. Sonny and Hannah continue their affair coming to intimate terms through 'happy for battle' note. They attend together the cleansing of the graves of the nine youngsters and are required to escape from the police firing. Baby joins the activists with her husband beyond the border. Aila goes to Lusaka for her delivery. Aila becomes a comrade in helping her daughter, she is charged of hiding ammunition and weapons in the house. Aila before the trial is sent abroad. In Aila's absence Sonny and Will have been very close and Will manages the household responsibilities efficiently. Hannah has taken another assignment and has moved out. Will is working. Sonny is still in the movement. Aila and Baby are busy in their activities abroad. Sonny visits Baby and returns to find his house bombed. Will and Sonny watch the destruction and Sonny says "we can't be burned out. We're that bird ...called the phoenix, rising from the ashes". That is the story of the father as told by a son. That is the story of a son who grows to maturity in spite of the psychological upheaval caused

by the involvement in the movement of the members of his family-his father, his mother and sister.

If we compare 17th century black creature, monster like man Caliban to Sonny, educated coloured teacher by profession and freedom fighter of South Africa we come across certain similarities. Caliban is Black Afro-Caribbean native of the Island and Sonny is a coloured of marginal native race. Both are treated by their masters as uncultured, uncivilized savage barbarians who are good for nothing. Both of them received language from their colonial masters. They learnt to rebel against the masters by using his own language as a weapon. Another striking similarity is that both of them came in contact with the white lady but with different results. Caliban tried to rape Miranda and got punished on the other hand Sonny won the heart of Hannah due to his oratory and had an extra marital affair with her. Miranda started to hate Caliban on the other hand Hannah loved Sonny unconditionally. This change in perception might have come after the struggle of three centuries.

Due to formal education the colonized came in contact with the history of mankind and then realized their imprisonment on their own land and thus tried to fight for their rights. Prospero, the white colonial master and the British regime in South Africa are portrayed as intruders and exploiters. Both the colonizers left the colony but not for the sake of the colonized but to end their tough time in the colonies and to live with the comfort of their mother land. As Caliban was from 17th century he did not realize his role against the cruel power of the colonizer. He was not portrayed as a complete human being by Shakespeare. Sonny is a protagonist of 20th century when most of the colonies have regained their independence by banishing colonial rule. Sonny learnt it from the history through formal school education and he tried to revolt against the colonial rule. In spite of many calamities in professional and personal life he re-emerged from the ashes.

Let us look at the point of view of the white women in the selected texts. Miranda was all alone on the island with her father. Her opinions were completely influenced by her father. She started hating Caliban because her father did so. She did not get attracted to the only young male because she was under the impression that he was her slave. On the other hand Hannah was an educated social worker who was working for the betterment of the blacks in South Africa. She immediately came under the spell of Sonny's masculinity and his knowledge. She willingly decided to be his mistress. Thus earlier master-slave relationship between Caliban and Miranda was transformed into 'live in relationship' between Sonny and Hannah. Still it is yet not very close to Gordimer's vision of "Rainbow colour family" in the former colonies.

Prospero is a complete portrayal of the cunning colonizer who captured the island and became the owner of the land and enslaved the only heir of the land Caliban. He tortured and threatened him in every possible way in order to get the heavy work done. He taught him Christian doctrines and tried to give him lessons of language but Caliban did not develop any interest in it. He wanted to rescue himself from the clutches of his master and joined Prospero's enemy. He wanted to replace his master and to become the authority. Unfortunately the plan did not succeed but he got his land back and thus lived happily forever. Ariel, another slave spirit of Prospero represents obedient marginalized colonized from the colonies. He wanted to get free from his role to obey his master. He was freed in the end but not because of his obedience but due his master's sublimity. Sonny's postmodern era was an era of democratic rule. He along with his fellow sufferers decided to rebel and played a significant role in the freedom movement. He was supported by his race and his family. His master made him jobless and homeless but he got support of his beloved and family. Both of them got their land back but after too much of sacrifice.

To conclude it is a fact universally accepted that 'old orders change yielding place to the new'. Humanism includes emergence of a new man that will be made possible by making, the forces of love, truth and compassion triumphant in governing human life all over the world. Christ's message of love will enable man to know another man and every man as the child of God. Budha's path of enlightenment through compassion towards the brothers and sisters irrespective of the differences of caste, creed, race, religion, colour, community and nationality will foster the Brotherhood of man. The guiding principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity are to mould the thoughts and to motivate the actions of the entire humanity. Truth, justice and non-violence shall exert influence over the forms of expressions and the modes of movement of all the aspects of human life. Thus following humanitarian approach from each one of us is an ideal expectation and almost like 'mission impossible' but this is the only philosophy that can lead us to forget our differences and cope up with each other.

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Struggling with space: Exposing the myth of the “happy homemakers” through a comparative analysis of ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’ and ‘To Room Nineteen’

Sharmin Afroz Shantu*

Abstract:

Throughout narrative history the politics of spatial territory has registered the power balance in individual bodies and the most prominent and extended war of space may be considered as the one that exists between man and woman. The research analyzes the cultural association between space and gender that intends to domesticate women and dissect the beliefs that nourish the ideology. The paper scrutinizes two short stories of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper” and Doris Lessing’s “To Room Nineteen”. The texts represent two ideological time period yet they are selected as a couple for their uncanny similar depiction of women’s struggle with space (metaphorical, physical, psychological, emotional, etc.). The analysis will show that the cultural association of woman with domestic sphere remained static even with the lapse of nearly seventy years in between. The two protagonists, despite being the emblem of cultural “true womanhood” (perfect mother, wife etc.) wills for self-identity, a form that exists beyond the relational capacity, a definition that truly is their own. The critical investigation of the primary texts would reveal the cultural manipulation that limits the gendered boundaries and overstepping of which ends in results that are regrettable. While some critics signify the break-through at the ending of the primary texts as an image of empowerment, the paper imagines that authors’ transgressive patterns might be re-installing the very patriarchal beliefs that the authors were trying to break.

Space and Gender

Space has always been a deceptive concept with which the gendered bodies have played tug-of-war. The binary position of the two identities in a patriarchal structure of society has attributed qualities to themselves on the foundation of

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which the power relation of the sexed identities are recognized. The patriarchal ideology that visualizes certain criterion of masculinity and femininity has created binaries such as active/passive, strong/weak, dominant/suppressive, etc. which throws the female in the latter position. It was and still is at instances of real lives, considered to be feminine for a girl to feign faintness, suppress opinion, and stifle their ideas and intelligence. The ideological stance of the "Cult of True Womanhood, legitimized their victimization. These were the means that men used to ensure the passivity and docility of women [...]" (Welter 373-377). With the formulation of 'weak' women, it then *became* the 'job' of the men to deal with the harsh world outside while the women were trapped in the domestic sphere, dependent on the men as the breadwinner, living with no voice of their own with the identity of a homemaker.

The limitation of women's mobility, in terms both of identity and space, has been in some cultural contexts a crucial means of subordination. Moreover the two things - the limitation on mobility in space, the attempted consignment/confinement to particular places on the one hand, and the limitation on identity on the other - have been crucially related. (Massey 179)

By controlling the spatial mobility of and 'attempting to confine women to the domestic sphere', the society driven by the power of the phallus, limits and restricts the identity formation of women. The 'self' of a woman is scarcely independent and she is mostly recognized as somebody's daughter, sister, fiancé, wife or mother through the entire period of her lifetime as she moves on from her father's space to her husband's.

The spatial separation of the home and workplace is also based on the ulterior motive of enclosing women in a space where she is economically dependent and the survival of her existence relies on the decision of her male counterpart. In most cultures, "'capitalism' and 'patriarchy' were articulated

together, accommodated themselves to each other, in different ways" so as to sustain the power balance of the society (Massey 191)-a design of thought which can be aligned with Foucault's Power/Knowledge concept. The idea of 'anatomy is destiny'¹ was used as a cultural device to assign spaces and label women's roles and assign specific activities for them in society.

It was very difficult for women to escape from those spatial confines to the degree that they had to pay a penalty of isolation and relative exclusion because of the way spaces had been planned for them. At the heart of the domestic world, according to societal parameters, there was the duty to bear and raise children. Home constituted an area of privacy and tranquillity; it was concerned with moral undertakings while the outside world was related to economic activities. (Gugliara 97)

The self-dependency of women "was a threat in (at least) two ways: that it might subvert the willingness of women to perform their domestic roles and that it gave them entry into another, public, world – 'a life not defined by family and husband'" (Massey 180).

The 'domestic' women, the 'angels of the house' and the '*ghorer lokkh*'-s² are the apparently content women brainwashed by the ideological system that creates meaning in their located existence. They fall in the trap which Žižek calls 'intersubjectivity' where the behavioural pattern of the home-makers template on the expectation of the men-controlled society. When Virginia Woolf wrote about these women, she articulates that their success in the outside sphere is not because of the lack of talent but from social disadvantages such as "their exclusion from educational institutions; their financial dependence; their lack of personal space; the demands of constant childbearing" (*Twentieth century women writers* 12). "Some said it was the old problem -education: more and more women had education which naturally made them unhappy in their role as housewives"

(Freidan 18). Betty Friedan illustrates a study done in Bernard College among the women graduates which deduces the idea that-

a significant minority of earlier graduates blamed their education for making them want "rights," later classes blamed their education for giving them career dreams, but recent graduates blamed the college for making them feel it was not enough simply to be a housewife and mother; they did not want to feel guilty if they did not read books or take part in community activities. But if education is not the cause of the problem, the fact that education somehow festers in these women may be a clue. (Freidan 24)

Education being a vital component for better jobs and opportunities within the workspace and women being cut off of this sector from the core via the design of 'un-femininity', they gain no weapon to revolt back in case of physiological or psychological oppression and is amounted to adapt to the subjugated environment. Evidence of repulsion from the education culture is entrenched within the minds of the 'happy' women through hegemonic mediums of stories, novels, advert etc. D. H. Lawrence portrays characters like Miriam in *Sons and Lovers*(1913), who, from a surface point of view might be the representative of the educated women in the society, but a critical analysis would show her pining for the attention of Paul Morel all throughout the text and Paul fleeing away at the sight of Clara Davis, the social outcast. The catch in such scenario emphasizes the idea that education in a woman somehow reduces her 'femininity' and renders her unworthy of marriage or affection. The idea is elaborated with such extension in popular media that the story-line where the cheerleader leading a happy life and the nerdy-girl side-tracked by the jock or in fact another nerdy-boy and living a vacant life is almost a daily recurrence in ethereal or print media even today. The social pressure to 'settle down' and conform to creating a familial space is so monumental that women everywhere would betray their own identity to get there.

The desperate "problem[s] [of the desperate house-wives were] dismissed by telling [her that] she doesn't realize how lucky she is- her own boss, no time clock, no junior executive gunning for her job" (Friedan 19). The home-makers apparently create their workplace in their own territory. They are the functioning worker that individually occupies the department of husband-care, child-bearing and rearing, the in-laws maintenance, the home-making, the nourishment of all, the physical and psychological stabilizer, etc. They can safely provide their own image for the proverb- "Jack of all trades, master of none." Yet these are the women that create no union, no representation to speak for their rights, no wages for their deeds and delusionally happy to be living in the identity created for them. Betty Friedan calls the emptiness of these occupational 'housewives' who at a point of their lives questions this Beckettian existential limbo that they are stuck in, as 'the problem that has no name'.

The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night-she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question-"Is this all?" (Friedan 10)

The Sisyphean livelihood that women are caught in, ruled by the absurd ideological acceptances, breaks down at points in life from where there is seldom any chance of return or any kind of do-over. The context discussed here relates towards the ideology of Woolf, De Beauvoir and Friedan which gives the limelight on individual identity and economic independence. The realities of determining ideologies

should not scare women to the entrapment of marriage as a form of easy solution, or more importantly lose themselves under the pile of mundane housework.

Ideology of the "Ideals"

Over and over women heard in voices of tradition and of Freudian sophistication that they could desire no greater destiny than to glory in their own femininity. Experts told them how to catch a man and keep him, how to breast feed children and handle their toilet training, how to cope with sibling rivalry and adolescent rebellion; how to buy a dishwasher, bake bread, cook gourmet snails, and build a swimming pool with their own hands; how to dress, look, and act more feminine and make marriage more exciting; how to keep their husbands from dying young and their sons from growing into delinquents. (Friedan 11)

Judith Butler's concept of 'performativity' might be used to analyse the behaviour pattern and unquestionable submission of billions of 'home-makers' world-wide. She blames the representation discourses throughout the ages which narrates the common ideology and cycles it towards the next generation without fail. "This image--created by the women's magazines, by advertisements, television, movies, novels, columns and books by experts on marriage and the family, child psychology, sexual adjustment and by the popularisers of sociology and psychoanalysis-shapes women's lives today and mirrors their dreams" (Friedan 29). Butler discusses the assumption that if one is a woman that is surely not one is. The homemakers fall in the troupe of subjugation under masculinist phallogocentric society that she criticizes. The content of women must not only be defined on the basis of her motherhood. Singing along the same lines as Simone de Beauvoir, who articulates the idea that "One is not born a woman but rather becomes one", the female entity must be conscious of what femininity should and should not define. If a man can venture in different places in search for his identity,

then why should a woman be content with the established pathway of patriarchal identity formation and get stuck with ritualized roles. Why in fact must she be conformed in the private sphere and away from the public domain which has the capability to recognize and acknowledge her talents and provide her with the economic backup around which the whole world revolves. Each individual woman must be conscious of the determinant pathways that conform gender roles and spaces. It is high time when the mis-en-scene of a scenario should include a reverse structure where a man has the ability to bring a cup of tea and a woman sits with her laptop and works. The narrative in both hard structures and ethereal medium must be analysed and criticized for their 'tactical' characterizations. The home-makers occupy a significant portion in the advertisements of the commodity market. They became the target audience of the consumerist products which assigns their familial happiness on the possession of those products.

"The Yellow Wallpaper" = "To Room Nineteen"

... the sexual contract no longer aims to make the aggressive female desirable or to reward female desire, but rather to provide women with security in exchange for their submission to a traditional role. ... Their power over the male sometimes resembles the demonic force--manifest in the madwoman---that would define these women as anti-heroines and undesirable wives. (Armstrong 53)

The same can be defined for the unnamed narrator of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper' and Susan of Dorris Lessing's 'To Room Nineteen'. The two stories belong to two different historical period yet they share an uncanny similarity that obliterates the notion of such a vast passage of time between their narrations. Gilman's story was published around 1892 at the time of the first wave feminism where women were finally congregating together for a voice of their own and received legal status as rightful voters. Lessing's story was published in 1963 at the brink of the second wave which witnessed the ignition of Betty Friedan's *The*

Feminine Mystique. It was a time in the midst of these two at 1929 when Virginia Woolf imagined *A Room of One's Own*, a place to fathom and gather the self-worth and identity of one's own. These writers dreamt of the 'madwomen' who are willing to break out of their secured cocoon and relish for an individual identity that is independent from the oppressive ideologies.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar read Gilman's story in *The Madwoman in the Attic* as an inspiration and of empowerment by analysing the motif of escape. The unnamed narrator in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' is seen as the emblem of the entire "female writer(s) battling for self-creation in patriarchal culture" (Parry 7) and the wallpaper became a symbol of the confining male-dominated society. The act of tearing away the yellow wallpaper becomes a metaphor of subverting the oppression over women's creativity and independent ideology. In case of Lessing's 'To Room Nineteen', Susan is involved in what she terms as a marriage based on "intelligence". Then the question that arises is that why does this "voluntary bondage" become unbearable for her. Susan is the image of today's modern women who works outside and is economically free.

Both, before they married, had had pleasant flats, but they felt it unwise to base a marriage on either flat, because it might seem like a submission of personality on the part of the one whose flat it was not. They moved into a new flat in South Kensington on the clear understanding that when their marriage had settled down ...they would buy a house and start a family.

If personal space values that much, then what actually drove her to take the decision of giving up her job once she got pregnant and define the act as "choosing right". Even the contemporary ideology puts up an expiration date on the job validity of women and makes it seem like a natural deduction to shift one's entire being to child-bearing and rearing.

The idea of 'silence' pervades the concept of femininity. The trait is recognizable in both the characters that are being analysed. Prior to the psychoanalytical discoveries of Freud, Lacan etc., 'hysteria' was considered as a women's disease against which Dr. Weir Mitchell suggested the "rest cure" to the narrator of 'The Yellow Wallpaper'. The prescription was used as a tactical device against the house-wives who used to feign illness to attract the attention of their seldom present husbands. By physically and psychologically isolating the complainer in a manner where she is allowed absolutely no interaction and no creative attention anywhere, the strategy used by them backfired. It also became another weapon which the patriarchal entities can domesticate women. The paradox of the idea can be exemplified from the story itself, where John, the husband tells everyone that there is actually nothing wrong with the wife ("You see he does not believe I am sick!") and yet "hardly lets [her] stir without special direction." 'Silence' is also observed in the Susan-Matthew's intelligent marriage when the fact of Matthew's extramarital affair is revealed. It seemed like the practical thing to do to move on since the act is understandable through their "intelligent" analysis. The gap in logic lies in the fact that even though the husband has the freedom to go to parties and indulges in meaningless sexual affair with others, "[i]t was in the nature of things that the adventures and delights could no longer be hers, because of the four children and the big house that needed so much attention." The happiness of the home-makers often hides their potential 'replacibility' out of their loving relationship. 'The Yellow Wallpaper' shows the sister-in-law of the unnamed narrator, Jane, taking over the domestic responsibilities, while the reference of two-separate beds in the bedroom and the husband often staying off in the city might refer to the fact of sexual fulfilment received elsewhere. 'To Room Nineteen' shows direct reference of replacibility through the introduction of Sophie Traub, the au pair girl and the affairs of Matthew- Myra Jenkins and Phil Hunt.

The two stories revolve around the idea of 'interruption'. The home-makers divulge themselves into profuse house-work that takes up all of their time. They are an "expert in a dozen careers, simultaneously. 'You might write: business manager, cook, nurse, chauffeur, dressmaker, interior decorator, accountant, caterer, teacher, private secretary-or just put down philanthropist . . . All your life you have been giving away your energies, your skills, your talents, your services, for love'" (Friedan 36). Yet, the worth of the home-makers in real life amounts up to no real recognition. She IS a doctor, but she cannot perform surgeries. She IS a cook, but essentially not a chef. By assigning her humdrum work in detail allows for the scope of constant interruption. Interruptions are majorly prominent in her creative outbreak in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' or just the daily interruptions from the children, or the house-help Mrs. Parkes in case of Susan.

The concept of 'imprisonment' can be found as a major motif in both of the short stories. While the protagonist narrator of 'The Yellow Wallpaper' combats direct physical confinement, Susan on the other hand goes through a psychological warfare of social subjugation. Both the characters were under direct control of their nearest phallic representation of the society. At one point of the maddening mumbling of the nameless narrator, she mentions that it would have been possible of her to explore her potentials only if she had had a little less resistance and more stimuli.

I sometimes fancy that my condition if I had less opposition and more society and stimulus--but John says the very worst thing I can do is to think about my condition, and I confess it always makes me feel bad.

Her simplest requests were fondly side-tracked and continuously ignored all throughout the storyline so as to illustrate her overall importance and function in the social unit. She is rendered 'unreasonable' when she wanted her own space in the form of a bedroom while the husband had the liberty to have his own. John's

infantalisation of his wife's character equates her with the ignored and possibly a new-born child (some theorists believe that the narrator was suffering from post-partum depression that happens to the new mothers). She is neither worthy of being considered as an adult woman, nor as a human being worth of opinions. On the other hand, 'control' is imposed on Susan when her acquisition of a separate space only for herself changes its definition of being her 'own space' to being a lesson for the children to respect the whimsy and the wishes of the elders.

What it amounted to was that Mother's Room, and her need for privacy, had become a valuable lesson in respect for other people's rights. Quite soon Susan was going up to the room only because it was a lesson it was a pity to drop. Then she took sewing up there, and the children and Mrs. Parkes came in and out: it had become another family room.

The locked rooms in both the stories emphasize paradoxically similar and opposing ideas. The narrator is literally imprisoned in her 'princess tower' and the narration tactfully gives an essence of a mad-house or a prison cell through the description of the room with the mention of the "great immovable bed [which] is nailed down", "the heavy bedstead, and then the barred windows". The point to focus here is that the problem with the room started with the wallpaper and the personification of the inanimate yellow paper started after the lamp-shaded refusal to renovate the house to make it fit for living. The woman is segregated in a space that is isolated from any kind of activity which incidentally equates as being a psychological torture chamber for the wife. The husband becomes the avatar of a jailor who sets down the rules and the sister-in-law in the form of a guard that oversees her moment to moment activities. She is geographically secluded and barred to meet any of her friends or perform any kind of 'work'. The only way out of her mad house is accepting the identity imposed on her and breaking out of the locked door where her freedom lies. On the other hand, Susan is seen to be

constantly seeking the very isolation the wife in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' wants to get out of. Her life is so cluttered with the needs of the others that she seeks to find a space to breathe her own. She waited thorough a major part of her life to get her identity back- as if her life has assumed a pause button from being 'twenty-eight, unmarried; and then again somewhere about fifty'.

They were now both fortyish. The older children, boy and girl, were ten and eight, at school. The twins, six, were still at home. Susan did not have nurses or girls to help her: childhood is short; and she did not regret the hard work. Often enough she was bored, since small children can be boring; she was often very tired; but she regretted nothing. In another decade, she would turn herself back into being a woman with a life of her own. Soon the twins would go to school, and they would be away from home from nine until four. These hours, so Susan saw it, would be the preparation for her own slow emancipation away from the role of hub-of-the-family into woman-with-her-own-life. She was already planning for the hours of freedom when all the children would be "off her hands."

The point to highlight is the fact that by the time they were indeed "off her hands" there is a vacuum created in her own space where her identity was long obliterated to give space to the others. If we are in fact dealing in a scenario comparable to the third wave problems of feministic theory, then this might not seem much, but this invasion of space and thus obliteration of self-identification has been ignored long enough and our attention to such a space is indeed long overdue.

Faustus:

O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour and omnipotence,
Is promised to the studious artisan!

All things that move between the quite poles
Shall be at my command. Emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces
But his dominion that exceeds in this
Stretches as far as doth the mind of man.
A sound magician is a demi-god. (Marlowe 7)

The realization of the “problem that has no name” by the two female protagonist might be equated with their responding to the Faustusian calling of the devil. The power that Faustus articulates in the quoted stanza is articulated as the supremacy that belongs not to the kings and the emperors but of the mind that has the potential to rule over the world. Christopher Marlowe mentions the power to be promised to ‘the studious artisan’ lime-lighting simultaneously the merit of an educated background and the application of that education in the creation of things that are worthwhile and which can equate the man to magician and demi-gods. The deal with the devil in case of the house-wives could be their act of flowing against the tide-breaking the norms, the fear of rejection by being ‘unfeminine’ and arch for artisan-ship in their lives. Faustus submitted himself to Mephistopheles with a contract for a short life, yet, the life he achieved in return constitutes of deeds and experiences that are unfathomable for others. The unnamed protagonist of Gilman’s story articulates, “Personally, I disagree with their [husband, brother, doctor] ideas. Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good.” On the other hand, Susan believes that “their life seemed to be like a snake biting its tail.” The realization of an acute emptiness causes them to see apparitions around them. The narrator in ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’ sees her reflection in the form of a woman trapped behind the binding of the wallpaper of the room who also has the ability to travel outside if she wants. Susan saw a “gingery, energetic man, and he wore a reddish hairy jacket” whom she perceived as the “devil”. Before this point Susan could have been

considered as the modern woman capable of jumping back into the game but from the moment of the appearance of the apparition the two stories becomes a reflection of each other and we are left to listen to the voice of mad-women or possibly the potential freedom-fighters. The emptiness that Gilman's narrator and Lessing's Susan experiences is something that their respective husbands cannot understand. Which is why John infantilizes his wife, ignoring her cries of help and Matthew 'expects' Susan to be having an affair rather than facing the truth that she might be craning for something more.

Is it worth the sacrifice?

Žižek analyses Milton's *Paradise Lost* in *The Seven Veils of Fantasy* to elaborate on the idea of 'After the Fall'. He articulates "...Adam does not, strictly speaking, decide; he finds that he has decided. Adam discovers his choice rather than makes it." "Contrary to the common –sense notion of fantasizing as an indulgence in the hallucinatory realization of desires, prohibited by the Law, the phantasmic narrative does not stage the suspension-transgression of the Law but the very act of its installation..." (54). On the basis of Žižek's ideology, one might question the nature of empowerment that the authors are trying to portray. The protagonist is supposedly tearing out of the patriarchal oppression in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' and in case of Susan, even though she realizes her need for achieving something more is shown to be suicidal in the end. In such scenarios, the authors might be fantasizing about women emancipation and empowerment but their narrative might not actually portray the transgression. The madness and the suicide re-install the patriarchal ideology of women not being of the stable mind to compete in their race.

Conclusion

Reflection of the long gone Susan and Gilman's narrator can still be found abundantly today in the faces of women who thrive on their father's or husband's

achievements while they make the bed. The time has finally come when the pull of the tug-of-war has transgressed from the physical arena towards the battle of the minds. The politics of space has opened up the hegemonic game of the social norms. What we do with the deduction of this enlightenment is yet to fathom. The portion of the modern women in today's date does aim for integrated space but seldom is it sculpted into a structured career crossing the path containing the gaping holes of family, children, husband, society and 'you-first-syndrome'.

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Discussing the literary aesthetic in dalit and black literature specifically in context of Bama and Audre Lorde

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Abstract

The focus in this work would be upon the aesthetics of black and dalit literature in context of Audre Lorde (Black-Lesbian) and Bama (Tamil-Dalit-Christian-Female). The objective here is to engage with this very idea of aesthetic and query the changing interpretations and definitions of aesthetic for the female dalit author and the female black author. The dismantling of the stereotypical concepts of beauty and aesthetic sensibilities was an uphill task subsequently achieved by the literatures from below/ literature of the marginalized. The western concept and 'popular' Indian concept of aesthetic valorised and associated it with a level of polished/cultured writing which was hostile to the literatures written by blacks and dalits, belittling their literature and culture as unrefined and aesthetically unpleasant. Lorde and Bama seek to break away from these structural ideologies built around the work of a dalit and black author and overturn these dogmas by showing how their work is a beautiful amalgamation of a unique set of tropes and literary practices.

Stanford encyclopaedia of philosophy defines Aesthetic as 'relating to beauty or good taste'. When applied to the dalit consciousness and black consciousness, aesthetic takes a different meaning. Dalit author's mind muses upon the idea what is beauty?, for he or she is always associated with a life of squalor and absconded by the upper caste people. Beauty for them would be having a wholesome meal or getting to live a life with basic necessity. Beauty would be to be free. Taste was also an experience, ironically interpreted by them, for they had been abstained from a certain kind of lifestyle and to taste certain food items which were considered as holy (sacred). 'Joothan', was something they are supposed to consume. The purpose of their life was defined as, that they were born to suffer and not to be live a life of comfort or pleasure in any form. Hence

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aesthetic was something which they are supposed to completely disassociate with. The objective here is to present the issue of how the dalit aesthetics separate itself from the ongoing tradition and explicate its subsequent reception and discuss Bama in same light. When we look at black aesthetics, the concept of beauty acquires a different meaning. The conventional idea of beauty has been associated with the colour "white"; this idea had also been instilled in the mind of the colonized black. They were considered as deplorable and despicable beings, associated with the 'dark as the sinister'. To construct a discourse from this starting point and deconstruct the idea of beauty in the western discourse had been the purpose of the black literary movement. The black aesthetic reconstructed the idea of beauty, the idea of a cultured and civilized individual. They reconstructed the pattern of language and words and created a space for themselves in a global discourse. The beat movement, the jazz music was something which was a part of cultural heritage of the black aesthetic movement where they valorised the use of rhythms, sounds, colours they were accustomed to. What would be elaborated upon here is that how black female aesthetic and the black lesbian aesthetics infuse itself into the complex web of discourses which push these voices out.

Many a times when reading a work, one tends to forget the way it has been constructed; the other important aspect is that the authors who belong to the marginalized background are expected to fail in their endeavours to a certain extent. These women make it very clear in the body of their work as well as their theory about writing that they follow a peculiar kind of pattern, unique in itself to their writing and their own writing styles.

Authors of both these traditions pick up the practices of their particular culture and instil their works with the same. They work with the oral literature of their time, the myths, folklore tradition, the stories told by their mothers and grandmother which act as a catalyst in forming their initial memories and later

their respective works. At several junctures in narrating their stories they refer back to the tales and legends of their community. For Lorde, her aesthetic is infused with the idea of a home away from home. She narrates the stories about Carriacou, where her mother was born and associated with the scent of lime.

Language

One of the crucial aspects regarding the writings of the dalit and black authors is that the language they use is entirely not their own but of the oppressor in certain senses but considering a post colonialist view regarding language like that of Homi Bhabha, Rushdie, Desani, one can apply the perspective that the language that they use is "chutnified"¹. The blending of the words in a certain way which encloses the emotional quotient and original dialect of the authors leads to a work which sustains a distinctive literary aesthetic and sensibility. Their language is vibrant, emotive, euphoric and rhythmic. This kind of interplay with words and these attributes are valorised when we apply a post-structuralist view to a work. Looking at them in this light opens up several avenues in the field of literature and broadens the way we review literary works. Dale Spender's *Man Made Language* (1980) is an accessible fusion of the concerns of language and gender. It worked with the concerns of the significance of language in feminist discourse and how language can be formulated, deconstructed and reformulated for the purpose of the feminist writings. What transpired was the fact that languages are infused with the structures which are already gender biased. The grammatical structure and vocabulary are infused with gender specific roles. English is one such language which is permeated with extreme biases. So the feminist concerns with 'how to name and define?' were complicated when viewed within these parameters. She talks about how in various cultures the linguistic silencing of women is practiced

¹Salman Rushdie's use of the expression "chutnification" epitomizes his style in the novel *Midnight's Children*. "Chutney," an Indian side and tangy dish, is used in adding flavor to the main course of any meal. "Chutney" itself is a noun form and is understood as such in English. By affixing "-fication", Rushdie changes this Indian word into English. "chutnification" means "transformation".

and they are not allowed to speak in the public arena. Deborah Cameron in her essay "Feminist Linguistic Theories" quotes; "If the 'power to name and define' requires linguistic resources, it also requires the means and opportunity to use them. One of the ways in which women have been kept in a subordinate place is through a denial of our right to be equal linguistic actors." (154). The complicated issue is that the marginalized groups of women are operating and living in an environment where almost everything is hostile towards them not just because of their gender but also because of their race, sexual affiliation and caste. It becomes the task of contemporary authors, then, to gain equality and prominence in that particular arena as well. The focus here would be on is this very fact that authors such as Lorde and Bama amongst others have been trying to accomplish this very task. They recognize how the conventional and dominant discourses have been working throughout centuries and they have to work through all of these presumptions (undercutting these notions) to create a space for themselves and strongly echo the voice of the marginalized. They want to showcase that the aesthetic of the marginalized is a complex network of various tropes which infuses their narratives with a whole spectrum of colours and sounds and rhythms. They reclaim their position, as, so to say to be equal 'linguistic performers'. Breaking away from the logo-centric discourse hasn't been an easy task for the feminist groups and it had been a long hard battle they had to fight. The struggle is an ongoing process for there are different kind of oppressions and battles which need to be fought with the changing times. For these women the battle was much more complex as they came with different set of values and discourses. They had a rich cultural history of oral literature behind them which was shunned and eschewed on the basis that they lack a proper structure. This lack of acceptance prompted these women to develop and appropriate the dominant aesthetics which could be absorbed and amalgamated in the aesthetics of their own cultural heritage. This hybrid aesthetics is something which is a representation of their hybrid identity as

well. For Bama it is an enactment of her identity as a Christian-Dalit-Woman and for Lorde it is a celebration of the erotic energy. She speaks against the masculine aesthetics and the masculine word not just in her autobiography but also in other works and speeches she gave during her lifetime. Lorde says; "the master's tool operated in the location between the personal and the political in that they recurred in language..."²While Lorde applies the aesthetic of body and erotic, Bama works with the local dialect and includes the purest form of cultural aesthetics and symbolism in her work. Both these authors have different and yet certain similarities in their theory about aesthetics and the art of writing. A Postmodern aesthetic can be applied to the voices and works of these authors. The postmodernist thinkers such as Jean Baudrillard and Ihab Hassan delineate it(postmodern aesthetic) in terms that the reality is overpowered by art in every way and there is hyperinflation of reality, Hassan talks of postmodernism as an 'unmaking' of the western mind and discourse where it cover aspects such as demystification, deconstructing, revalorizing, differences. This phenomenon was also something which occurred in realm of literary practices and in terms of the form that narratives structures take. There was distrust in the theory of grand narratives and grand structures and importance was given to the difference in the structures of narrations. Both Lorde and Bama break away from these conceptions of grand narratives and develop an aesthetic theory and structure of their own. While on one hand Lorde proclaimed her difficulty with writing prose, she wrote *Zami* as a fusion of prose and poetry, for poetry according to her was the sacred form of writing but to disclose the narratives of the women of her community she needed to find a balance between two genres. And Bama realized that she needed to put the story of her life and her community and her ideas about Christianity into words, for that autobiography seemed an appropriate vehicle. She asserts in her

²Lestor.C. Olson in discussing Lorde in her essay "The Personal, the Political, and Others: Audre Lorde Denouncing "The Second Sex Conference" quotes Lorde's perspective about language and the discourse of language being a patriarchal tool, 263.

work as well that she remained well connected to her roots and the very same earthy quality which she wanted to portray is felt through her words.

Reception

What also needs to be inquired is that the authors from these marginalized backgrounds rarely get to feel the accolades for the work they do. The critical faculties equally practice the exclusionary act of discounting them from developing any kind of critical theory or to participate in the same along with the western dominant voices. The dalit and black author needs to interrogate these practices and develop a theoretical outlook which would be receptive to the voices from their community.

The aesthetic sensibility which these authors attach to their work is that they indeed have a social purpose. The literary is always interacting with the social and there cannot be a separation. This constant interaction is an empowering factor in the interpretation of the work, for complete detachment defeats the very purpose of the work. This facet of marginalized literatures have been deliberated upon and reviewed and even though their literary aesthetic have been discredited constantly because of the same reason, in contemporary times they come out of the shadow of the stereotypical ideas regarding their works and embrace the jostling of the two equally important traits of a literary work. One of the important purposes of their work and agenda is to make one-self 'visible' and the different personalities of their languages make them visible and stand out. The typical connotation accorded to an individual who is 'different' is negative and pejorative. Same happens with the changes they bring to the language, the creolized or the local dialects which these authors add to the English or the fact that they write in their local language leads to a redundant opinion of them and their work. Lorde talks about Carriacou "which was not listed in the index of the Goode's School Atlas nor in the Junior American World Gazette nor appeared on any map" (14) that the author could find. The invisibility of even the space they once inhabited made

Lorde think about the kind of literary practices which had been going on. She comprehends this and then takes upon the mammoth task of creating that space through her work, making it visible, making the culture of her community visible through all the mythical, legendary tropes her culture inhabited and had been either wiped off or completely garbed by the western canons. The same happens with Bama who sees that her village is like a speck which remains hidden or cornered in the shadow of the larger structures and she intends to create a web of narrative to represent that space in words.

Dalit Aesthetics

In the discussion of dalit literature in aesthetical terms a lot of speculative theories and analogies have been made. The formal aspects of dalit literature are discussed in *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies and Considerations* (1996) by Sharan Kumar Limbale. The author mentions the ongoing debates in this realm. The literature written by dalits was being reviewed with different sensibilities. While on one hand there was a criticism and restrictive view which stated that it had to be measured with the same literary standards as generally literature is viewed with, on the other hand many contested that the aesthetic of pleasure and beauty cannot be applied to the literature of the dalits and it would be highly inappropriate to do so. The pleasure principle which is usually considered integral to literature and even in the Indian aesthetic theory i.e. the rasa theory, leaves out the aesthetic of revolt, anguish, and cry which form an essential part of the aesthetics of dalit literature. Limbale elucidates upon this pleasure principle present in literary works, stating that with the change in times and situations the aesthetic theory has to be revised and reformulated. Dalit Literature being a post-independence literature was fairly new in its content, form and purpose and the same aesthetic theory should not be applied to them. Limbale talks about how the language of dalit literature is different since the very reality they represent is unique and distinct. He says "it is the uncouth-impolite language

of Dalits. It is the spoken language of Dalits.” (33). A Similar path was dauntlessly and unabashedly trailed by Bama, as she decided to write in the native dalit Tamil language. The complexity of the aesthetics of language which dalit authors could not relate to was because they failed to find the dialects and vocabulary of their language in the literature written before. So the question for them was how one embraces something which had no space and no tolerance for their experiences with language and life. Hence the critical canons of dalit literature encouraged the dalit authors to infuse and indulge with the myths and metaphors of their own community, rejecting the ones which the Hindu discourse provided them with. Now other things amongst these claims were that dalit literature was considered to be propagandist and univocal. The fact was that the experiences of dalits were near about similar for they all were marred by the act of untouchability and were secluded by similar kind of experiences. Also to consider is the issue that whenever there is a construction of any kind of aesthetics, the aesthetic of women’s writing is still left out. This trend of the invisibility of the feminine language and voice is something which needs to be considered while studying even the discourse of the marginalized. The story of the dalit community primarily became the story of the dalit male against the story of the upper class. Women had to work harder to find a space in the dalit aesthetics which made them much more marginalized in every way. The lack of equality as discussed before in terms of education lead to reduced participation on women’s part in the field of writing as well. The only histories about dalit feminism were the oral histories in the Ambedkar movement, which since not documented were forgotten and absent in the archives of both dalit and feminist movements. The oral literature was a rich literature which needed to be recuperated and women were the best interpreters and story tellers when it came to narrating them. The retrieval of the history of dalit feminist struggle was the task in hand. So as and when the field of education opened up for them, they could best depict the history of their struggle through

their own aesthetic sensibilities. These narratives have established themselves as a distinct genre. The difficult for these authors is that their aesthetic sensibilities find scarcer audiences to begin with, for the lack of connection on part of mainstream audiences. Moreover they reveal the face of evil residing in the house of much of the audiences they are catering to. The kind of content they put forth is something which slowly sensitizes the people and perhaps brings a change in the longer run. Dalit women do not shy away from representing the kind of biases they have suffered and neither do they lacerate it with a beautified language. The concept of aesthetic detachment has also been talked about in *Poisoned Bread* (2009), edited by Arjun Dangle. It talks about how this detachment is perhaps only possible in a free environment which is unavailable to the dalit authors. The dalit author is brought up in the environment which makes him socially conscious and instills that purpose into his sensibilities. To detach the two, is almost impossible.

While Bama has written her autobiography in her native language, it has been translated into English by Lakshmi Holmstrom. The translation serves a double edge here. While some believe that it leads to a loss of natural colour of the content, there is also a proliferation of translations in this post- modern era where translations make it possible for the voice of the vernacular to reach a cosmopolitan audience and gives it a global appeal and wider range of audience. Bama makes it clear in her work that she defies the conventional modes of writing and finds her own language and her own words to best emulate her story. Bama rejects the hegemonic discourse and version of Tamil which was used in Tamil Nadu by people of upper caste and instead uses a colloquial version of Dalit Tamil. The very act of deciding to choose a language becomes the very first pivotal aspect which gives us an insight into what the author wants to represent and retell. The politics of identity is infused in the act of choosing the language on the part of the author. Another important aspect is that she contributes prolifically in dalit literature by adding a whole range of dalit words expanding the vocabulary. What

is important that the author who is also the narrator uses the same vocabulary as the characters and this vocabulary is non-standardized dialect of the local dalit women. Her use of the conversational and confessional mode of narration in her narration also makes them peculiarly different because the aesthetics of the local community of her hometown was different than the urbane so the choice of narration gives it that curiously unique characteristic.

The problem faced by the dalit authors and autobiographers that they land themselves in a tumultuous situation where they do not want to disconnect with the rural audience and upbringing and yet cater to the urban audiences which are more likely to read their work.

Bama is the first Tamil Dalit Woman autobiographer and also the first one to be translated in English from her region. Being the precursor of this genre from the region of Tamil Nadu, she is like a torch bearer of her community which could connect with her narrative at multiple levels. She had to keep in mind what to describe and how to describe. While at various turns in the narration she made it a point to express her opinion candidly about various aspects of the life of a Christian Dalit Woman, the genre of autobiography gives her the liberty to express freely and yet maintain the structure of 'fictionality' around it. Using this particular form allows her to be brave and bold with her truths and open up the world to the literary capabilities of not just herself but also people from her community. Throughout the narrative, the voice of the narrator cuts through the narrative, inferring past events in the light of the present political consciousness of the author. Encompassed in the aesthetic of knowing and struggle, the author has to imbue the elements of her identity construction. The genre of autobiography is beneficial for these authors because through this not only they can lay claims to the truth they were eager to represent but also it becomes the space which no one else can claim for themselves or they are no more the untouchables in this space. The autobiographical work is their own space, their own construct representing

their own aesthetic sensibilities. They feel a sense of freedom to inhabit this world in their own way. One can talk about the subaltern theory in Indian context here, where Ranjit Guha (a key figure in the Subaltern Studies Group) gives a new significant perspective to the word connecting it to class, caste, age, gender and office. Considering this aspect, the dalit woman is a subaltern and Bama experiences this kind of subalternity as well. While people like Spivak have asserted that the subaltern cannot speak for she does not possess a discourse of her own and there is an inherent problem of articulation on her part, but one can also review it in the light of statement that the subaltern deduces power through the dominant discourse not just by appropriating it but also depicting powerfully that the logo-centric discourse is not something which is fixed and which is available only in the hand of the dominant³. The subaltern (woman) can perforate it with her own aesthetic sensibilities. Bama exactly practices this principle and for the woman reader her words are easily accessible, her sensibilities are very well understood. The same is the case with Lorde who rejects the masculine word and fight against it. She believes that the power of the dominant can be snatched away and can be used for the purpose of the marginalized. The concept of power, hence, becomes a more fluid entity. The subaltern then has an aesthetic of her own which interacts with the world at a different level.

While the earlier form of dalit literature was written much in the form of verse and poetic expression, the mode of narrations shifted to the confessional autobiographical modes for it encapsulated the emotive expressions and the wide-ranging content by authors very well. They (dalit authors) extended the horizon of what is literary and what aesthetic sensibilities an author should have. Vandana Rajoriya writes in her essay "Dalit Literature: A New Distinct Genre", that dalit authors "resort to sanskritized vocabulary as a political strategy: to appropriate

³Gayatri .C. Spivak in her seminal work "Can the Subaltern Speak" (1988); has argued that the subaltern does not have the appropriate voice, or discourse to voice her opinion and hence she cannot speak. Ranajit Guha is another prominent figure in the Subaltern Studies.

linguistic hegemony of dominant castes and expose their hypocrisy in denying the right to learning to Dalits" (286).

The title of Bama's autobiography also indicates how words have different interpretation in different languages and context. For Karukku is a Tamil word, meaning palmyra leaves, which with their serrated edges on both sides, are like double edged swords. But she brings notice to various other connotations of the word. Karukku containing the work Karu also signifies embryo or seed referring to freshness and newness. She also draws attention to the Hebrew meaning of the word where it stands for "for the word of god is living and active, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."⁴ This play upon the title is quite interesting when one talks about the literary aesthetics of the work. It tells us how the work is a product of a cultivated insight and rich in literary patterns and undercuts all the notions of inferiority connected with the dalit authors and especially dalit women authors. One needs to commend that a dalit woman was the first one to publish an autobiography in Tamil language and that it became an award winning work and defied all odds. To gain education and applying it to use, to finding work as a teacher and passing on the knowledge which is rare and heartfelt is something which the author takes pride in.

Lorde and African Aesthetics

The title of Lorde's autobiographical work much like that of Bama has a hoard of connotations attached to it. For *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982) stands for the tradition of West-Indian women who share a deep bond with each other. Lorde stated that she wrote this so that it can create a space for the black lesbian feminist critics in society. It is a kind of revelation of their lives. This word 'Zami'

⁴Introduction of the text *Karukku* (1992) by Bama, (Pg vii)

interestingly when considered in Hindi means 'bhumi/zameen/land/space'. Both Bama and Lorde have been writing to acquire and inhabit rather create that space.

As discussed above, criticism played an important role in the reception of the works of these authors. The problematic was that there was an urgent need to develop a black feminist approach for the popularity of the works depended upon the word of the critic. Theorist and critics like Barbara Smith, Alice Walker, bell hooks discuss these issues in their works that this precise group of critical analysis was absent or denied a presence. Smith discusses this particular aspect in her essay *Toward a Black Feminist Criticism* (1982) where she questions the canons. She says "the role that criticism plays in making a body of literature recognizable and real hardly needs to be explained here. The necessity for no hostile and perceptive analysis of works written by persons outside the "mainstream" of white/male cultural rule has been proven by the black cultural resurgence of the 1960's and 1970's and by even more recent growth of feminist literary scholarship"(8). The need is for a (black) feminist approach which would encompass the issues of sex as well as race at the same instance. Smith further states "Until a Black feminist criticism exists we will not even know what these writers mean" (9).

Smith further critiques theoretician and critics like Elaine Showalter who very conveniently forget to mention a single third world woman author or a Black woman author in her best of works. The categories of feminism and blackness for the white canon are mutually exclusive and they are short sighted in seeing that they intersect with each other just as the category of black and civilized individual were considered to be mutually exclusive. This kind of colonization of mind had overshadowed their minds totally. There is a further criticism of the black male critics who undermine the value of the black female aesthetic sensibilities and the kind of literary sensibilities a black woman author possess. Smith picks up this issue when she says that the black male author could not relate or comprehend

"women's experience in sexual as well as racial terms" (11). The sexist ideology overtakes the judgment of many a critics.

The concept of literary history as believed by many is a documentation of selections. Deborah E. McDowell harps on the issue of selective reception and acceptance of literary works of black women in her essay "New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism". She talks about the fact that how women usually fall prey to the act of arbitrary selection and omissions McDowell criticizes critics like Patricia Meyer Spacks who refuse to allocate a space in her work to the third world women quoting that they lack the experiences of the same, to which critics like Alice Walker reply that "Spacks never lived the nineteenth-century Yorkshire, so why theorize about the Brontes?" (25)

Lesbian aesthetics forms a crucial aspect in the literature of black women's literature for they provide them another dimension altogether. The lesbian word not only open avenues in terms of social issues such as work against the homophobic society but it also asserts how literature can have innumerable threads to its fabric which can be encompassed by a whole different arena of colours. The black lesbian woman creates a space for herself in the critical imagination of all the other kinds of readers and writers. Hence this expansion on the thematic ground is accompanied by expansion on the structural grounds of a work. The lesbian author infuses a whole range of vocabulary, sounds, narrative mode to the structures which already exist, inventing new forms, celebrating the hybridity of the new forms. There is a sense of valorisation of this mode of narrations giving it a post-structuralist bent and also a sense of expansion and acceptance of new horizons. As Smith writes that the black lesbian had to invent her own word and her own perspective for so little had been written regarding the black lesbian ethos. One of the facts to be considered regarding Smith is that she argues for a body of political theory to apply upon the works of black women's works. For her it becomes important as it would give a justifiable marker to

analyse their works. This theory would be something which would believe that there is a recognizable black women tradition and it would overturn the presumptions regarding the same.

Robert J. Patterson discusses how Valerie Smith in her work *Not Just Race, Not Just Gender: Black Feminist Readings* (1998) foregrounds black feminist criticism as something which can be deployed to analyse not only literature, but also other forms of cultural media, including film, art and music. It acts as methodology which would map the intersection of constructions such as race, gender, class and sexuality as well.⁵

Another thing which happened was that the space which they were accorded in literary realm was that of minor writers or the marginalized and they were subsumed without much recognition in literary works. This clever interpellation⁶ was done so as to buy their silence otherwise or control their tongues and participation in a greater amount. For Audre Lorde the erotic becomes a method to channel her powers in writing. She enumerates upon this facet of her literary capabilities throughout her novel as well her essays. At one point in her essay "The Erotic as Power, Black feminist Cultural Criticism" Lorde exclaims that "There is, for me, no difference between writing a good poem and moving into sunlight against the body of a woman I love" (289). The literary aesthetic is infused with the spirit of the erotic which she explores and celebrates not just in her work but throughout her life.

⁵ See *Cambridge companion to African American women's literature* (2009). Robert j. Patterson in his essay "African American Feminist theories and literary criticism" discusses Valerie Smith.

⁶Interpellation, a term coined by French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, describes the process by which ideology addresses the individual. Louis Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)".*Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971).

Lorde's work can be seen as an exploration of and extension of the concept of 'écriture féminine'⁷. Her writing is inspired by the tales told by her mother about the Caribbean women. The idea of writing from your body and using mother's milk/ink as your ink applies to the writing of Lorde especially in her autobiographical work *Zami*. To quote an instance here, she says "once home was a far off, a place I had never been to but knew well out of my mother's mouth. She breathed exuded hummed the fruit smell of Noel's Hill morning fresh and noon hot, and I spun visions sapodilla and mango as a net over my Harlem tenement cot in the snoring darkness rank with nightmare sweat"(13). The lines not only talk about the idea of home and experiencing home as a place back in time but also exudes the sensory experiences which the author seem to experience through her mother's tales and narratives. They clearly give an insight into the text as a vision which has a different purpose and aesthetic structure. It is built upon these artistic poles which gives it a distinct structure. One notices how as a child she writes her name in a slanting manner rather than a straight line or as her teacher told her to. This enrages her teacher who rebukes her for not following the command. Also how she spells her name as 'Audre' rather than 'Audrey'. Her work is marked by the lamppost of her identity as an author in terms of naming her chapters. "How I Become a Poet"(31) is a chapter in her autobiography in which she elucidates upon the difficulties she faced in terms of physical ailments as well as a black who had to work hard to gain education and how despite of all that poetry came natural to her. Another point in the novel she talks about the time she moved to New York where we can see how poetic her language appears and how rhythmic her words are, she says; "The birds suddenly cut lose all around me in the unbelievable sweet warm air. I had never heard anything so beautiful and unexpected before. I felt shaken by the waves of song. For the first time in my life, I had an insight into what poetry

⁷. Hélène Cixous first coined the term *écriture féminine* in her essay, "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1975), where she connotes "Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies" because their sexual pleasure has been repressed and denied expression".

could be. I could use words to recreate that feeling, rather than to create a dream, which was what so much of my writing had been before.”(160). The inculcation of lesbian aesthetics in the fabric of black women’s literature as the only way of analysing the literature is also seen by critics like McDowell as somewhat reductive for they overlook the other complexities involved in the process of writing be it the folklore, the mythical aspects, the metaphors or symbolic references of any sort.

The genre which both Bama and Lorde write in, also become a tool in hands of the author to further their agendas. While on one hand it becomes a structure which best portrays the stories which people from the marginalized class want to present in front of the world, it also becomes a literary device/structure which can be modified according to the needs of the author. For dalit and black authors in general it was important to present an alternative view of reality as discussed before and for these authors the rules of literary world were also laid before them. What becomes crucial is that the form of autobiography let these writers question truth claims, question rigid structural constructions in language structures as well. Both Lorde and Bama use this to their advantage. The literariness of their work is as much valuable as the content part.

Autobiography

Karukku belongs to the genre of autobiographical writings. Looking at the genre of autobiography in a post-modernist light gives the author the liberty to absorb or forego a horde of identities (making his/her ‘self’) and map the culture the author is a part of. The other important thing which it achieves is that it gives the interpreter the freedom and opportunity to discover multiple communities, examine identities and embrace the existence of dissimilarity.

Joanne M. Braxton talks about the autobiographical tradition and African American women in her essay “Autobiography and African American Women’s literature” where she traces the tradition back to slave narratives of women like

Harriet Jacobs. She talks about how the tradition is shaped by different and 'unique inheritance' as well as different kind of challenges. Lorde takes upon these challenges and embraces her unique inheritance. Lorde calls her work as a 'bio-mytho-graphy'. All these elements form a crucial aspect of the literariness of her work. Here the play on the word myth is also quite important in discussing the textual elements or deconstructing the text. Myth as talked about formed is a very inherent trope of Lorde's culture. She was transported into another land and culture because of colonization and slave trade. This act of migration leads to a childhood full of tales from West Indian heritage. This aspect of her identity influenced her writing very much. She narrates throughout the text a lot of stories her mother use to tell her and a lot about the West-Indian women, referring to her own self as one of them.

Both these women bring their own aesthetic sensibilities to their respective works and overturn the meanings associated with the word aesthetic and also the predominant signifiers associated with the literary nature of a work. They break away from the hegemonic discourses and contribute to a new form of literary tradition redefining the boundaries of the old one.

The aesthetic (as discussed above) which they elucidate is personal and it is entwined in the political. It is driven by the philosophical ideologies they endorse. Both of them believed in using a free-flowing narrative structure. Both use the tradition of myth and folklore in their work by referring back to the tradition of their community. They valorise and depict the significance of their tradition which had been denigrated in the past by the dominant discourse. This constant use of the aesthetic theory of their past add an element of difference to their work. They do not blindly follow the literary traditions of the past, nor show the scepticism to adapting new forms, or to modify the old ones. Also they use language in their own peculiar way. And add the dialectic structure and unique vocabulary of their own community i.e. Bama did not take recourse to the dominant version of Tamil

followed or spoken in Tamil Nadu, nor does Lorde follow the structural pattern of the official English. Both evolve from these narrow structures and portray a brave front to usual and the dominant.

Their aesthetic is an aesthetic of beauty which resides in the heart, beauty which comes from a place of actual purity; their aesthetic is the aesthetic of anger, resistance, rebellion and reworking. They use their own ink, the mother's milk to write their narratives. They rework the genre of autobiography by adding myth, orality, and fable like structure to it. They both play with the title of their work which symbolically explicates a meaningful explanation of their work. Both of them celebrate the difference and pluralism encompassed in their identity and craft out works which allocate multiple interpretations to the understanding of the structures, narratives, aesthetic and language.

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The Idea of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and Modern Indian Writers: A Study of Raja Rao, Chaman Nahal and Datta Bhagat

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Abstract:

The concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is present in ancient Indian literature in varying forms. The concept is found in Sangam (300-100 BCE) literature – “Yaadhum Oore, Yaavarum Kelir” which means, 'every country is my own and all the people are my kinsmen.' Many will recognise that this is comparable to Marshall McLuhan's idea of global village.

The present paper is interested in finding how this concept has influenced modern Indian writers. It is a modest attempt to explore and compare how different writers- from different castes approach the idea and rework it in their works. For this, three works are chosen – Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), Chaman Nahal's *Into another Dawn* (1977) and Datta Bhagat's Marathi drama *Routes and Escape Routes* (1986) for comparison.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam etymologically is a combination of “*vasudhā*” (the earth), “*ēva*” (indeed is) and “*kutumbakam*” (family) and means – ‘the whole world is one single family’. Different people have different viewpoints, however, the idea of ‘vasudhaiva kutumbakam’ urges one to respect differences and think of all living things – humans and even animals, birds, plants – as a part of one big family. Tiwari (2008) points out in his blog that *Mahōpaniṣad* (VI.70-736.72) mentions ‘Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam’ as a part of the qualities of an individual who is a ‘brahmayogi’:

ayam bandhurayam neti gaṇanaa laghuchetasaam |
udaaracharitaanaam tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam ||

(Discrimination saying “this one is a relative; this other one is a stranger” is for the mean-minded. For those who're known as magnanimous, the entire world constitutes but a family).

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This verse is also used in *Panchatantra* (3rd century BCE) in V.3.37 and in V. 1.3.71 of *Hitopadesha* (12th century CE).

The concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is present in ancient Indian literature in varying forms. The concept is found in Sangam (300-100 BCE) literature – “Yaadhum Oore, Yaavarum Kelir” which means, ‘every country is my own and all the people are my kinsmen.’ Many will recognise that this is comparable to Marshall McLuhan’s idea of global village.

The present paper is interested in finding how this concept has influenced modern Indian writers. It is a modest attempt to explore and compare how different writers- from different castes approach the idea and rework it in their works. For this, three works are chosen – Raja Rao’s *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), Chaman Nahal’s *Into another Dawn* (1977) and Datta Bhagat’s Marathi drama *Routes and Escape Routes* (1986) for comparison.

The novel *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960) is deeply rooted in Indian metaphysics and draws heavily on Advait Vedant of Sankara, Nagarjuna’s theory of emptiness of the soul, the Buddhist and Hindu Tantric thought and Gandhism. At various levels, the materialistic and worldly inheritance of the West and the spiritual and orthodox inheritance of India are contrasted using characters, metaphors, images and locations. The attitude of the West and India towards love, sex, marriage, position of women in society, as well as to life and death are constantly juxtaposed. Ramaswamy, the protagonist, is placed between these two contrasting planes. We see that he has a very sympathetic and open minded attitude towards all the Western characters. He is not just sympathetic but he also ‘understands’ their perspective. So, he achieves a kind of a ‘double vision’. To link the two planes, Ramaswamy constantly constructs different bridges. His marriage with Madeleine is also one of these bridges. Other bridges are his attempts to ‘graft’ India on the West – he imagines that the huge flat stone in his garden is

Shiva's bull, a stone found in river Seine is an oval '*lingum*', Rhone is like Ganges and Paris is "a sort of Benares turned outward".

However, the strongest bridge is of course that of 'advait' philosophy, for it doesn't just link, but resolves the contradictions and evaporates the differences.

"There is no East and there is no West. All is one, rounded like a globe, within your own self."

Realising that ultimately there are no differences is in a sense continuation of the idea of '*vasudhaiv kutumbakam*' even if it is also a step further. The difference in perspective is not merely 'understood' but the difference is itself shown as an illusion. The end of Rama's quest at the feet of his Guru is in keeping with the brahminic spiritual tradition of India.

Ramaswamy becomes Rao's mouth piece when he says that India is the Guru of the world. The same notion is expressed by Swami Vivekananda at a public meeting on January 15, 1897 at Colombo on his return from Chicago:

If there is any land on earth that can lay claim to be the blessed '*Punya Bhumi*', to which souls on earth should come to account for Karma, the land to which every soul wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest degree of gentleness, generosity, purity, peace, introspection and spirituality, it is India. (1)

The metaphor of home is applied to India in two senses. The first is – India as the physical land, the physical home. The other sense is hinted at when Rao notes that India is not a country like France or the England; "India is an idea, a metaphysics...My India I carried everywhere I went". Saying this has become possible for Rao because of the double advantage of being deeply rooted in Indian tradition and also being a voluntary exile from India. So India becomes not just the physical 'home' but also an entity capable of revealing the right path to self-knowledge which will ultimately help one achieve the qualities of a '*brahmayogi*'.

Chaman Nahal's novel *Into another Dawn* also deals with the relation between the East and the West. The protagonist Ravi, however, is rather projected as a human being, not a White or a Black person. He says:

Now I'm not particularly dark. On occasion I have been mistaken for a Greek, or an Italian, or a Spaniard...No, I'm not as dark. But, it would be apparent to anyone that I am not white. (11)

When in America, he leads a cosmopolitan life through his contact with the Whites, the Blacks, the Jews. He is too much troubled when he sees men fighting against other men. He cares not only for other human beings but even for inanimate things. Take for instance his treatment of his car. When he sells it, it is not to a new owner who will take care of it just as himself, on the contrary, he sells it to a junk dealer on the promise that he will not sell it to someone but melt it down and put it into a new shape. The car is treated as if it is a human being now grown old but who can move from one life into another after death.

Unlike many other novels of the time, the West in this novel emerges in a better light – a land where people are open towards each other, mix together and may form a community of humans irrespective of race, class, colour, gender, nationality and other differences. Irene's love for him transcends the constraints imposed by boundaries of race, nationality and class. The novel deals with the essential oneness of the East and the West at emotional and spiritual level. The West, we see, has played an important role in shaping the protagonist's personality. In a way, the West has taught him the teaching of India itself: the world is a family.

Datta Bhagat's third play *Routes and Escape Routes* (*Wata Palwata*, first performed in Marathi in 1986) is considered a milestone in Marathi theatre as well as in Dalit theatre. India for Raja Rao is a metaphysical entity. Marathi Dalit dramatist Datta Bhagat, stands in sharp contrast with Raja Rao. Datta Bhagat talks about the differences between the elitist Hindu Brahmins and the adopted

Buddhist faith of the Dalits. The play is about the problem of distribution of government-built houses to flood victims. However, this event takes ultimately a violent turn when fights erupt between the upper and the lower castes. It gives us three different responses (through portrayal of three generations) to the needs of the Dalits and to the caste violence: Kaka (a long-term participant in the Ambedkar movement); Dalit Professor Satish and his progressive Brahmin wife Hema and the young student activist Arjun.

Kaka represents the elder generation of devoted followers of Ambedkar many of whom were uneducated. Satish is his nephew. He is a professor. He represents the post-Ambedkar generation of educated Dalits who have, to a great extent, got integrated with the mainstream population. Arjun is a student leader and is of radical views and represents the current phase of the Dalit movement. Arjun considers the identity issue of the Dalit community of greater importance than the wider issue of social change. To stop the upper-caste people from illegally occupying the houses for flood victims, he resorts to unethical practices which finally will affect the foundation of the Dalit movement itself.

Datta Bhagat questions the very foundation of the Indian tradition which boasts of the ideals of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' through his portrayal of the fight between the dalit and the non-dalit homeless people for the *houses* constructed by the government. Through his balanced treatment of caste prejudices and conflicts, Bhagat confronts head on the traditions and boundaries that Raja Rao and Chaman Nahal have used as a stable site.

This comparison shows that the selected writers have very distinct takes on the idea of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam'. Raja Rao and Chaman Nahal are untroubled by the inner contradictions, conflicts and fissures in Indian society, culture, traditions and beliefs. They take Indian tradition as an established, unchanging, and monolithic stable site against which West can be portrayed. However, for Bhagat, the fissures and inequalities with Indian society are far more

important than its spiritual traditions. He doesn't only question the monolithic upper caste metaphysical tradition appropriated and valourised by Raja Rao and Chaman Nahal but also questions the various factions within the Dalit movement as well as the tradition Dalit movement is in the process of establishing.

On comparing the three authors, it is evident that Rao and Nahal use the idea of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' the way it is used in the *Mahopanishad* - to describe an individual who has given up all attachments and attained the highest level of spiritual progress. However, in the *Panchatantra*, the verse is said by a fool who later gets killed due to his naivety. In the *Hitopadesha* it is said by the jackal and shows how it is used for selfish motives and also how the gullible fall for it. Bhagat by using the physical and metaphoric 'houses' for which the poor and homeless upper caste and lower caste Indian fight with each other, like the *Panchatantra* and *Hitopadesh*, is critical of accepting the idea categorically. Bhagat's approach goes much closer to Kautilya when he says (in the first book of *Arthashastra*, as qtd. in Tiwari, 2008), 'apranito hi matsyanyaayam udbhaavyanti baliyaan, ablam hi grasate dandadhar abhaave': that (far from being a family) human society in its very basic nature is like a group of fishes in water, where mightier ones devour the weak, unless a chastising rod is exercised.

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Comparative Perspectives in the Fiction of Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga

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Abstract:

Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga having won the Man-Booker Prize in 1996, 2006 and 2008 respectively, shot into fame as prominent contemporary Indian English novelists. Their popularity as novelists solely rest on their Booker Prize winning novels viz. *The God of Small Things*, *The Inheritance of Loss* and *The White Tiger*. Their preoccupation with the marginalized sections of society and their deep concern for the uplift of these sections constitute one of the important factors that led to their winning of the coveted prize. Kottayam in *The God of Small Things*, Kalimpong in *The Inheritance of Loss* and Dhanbad in *The White Tiger* form the basis of the thought provoking saga of the peripheral existence. Velutha in *The God of Small Things*, Biju in *The Inheritance of Loss* and Balram Halwai in *The White Tiger* represent the margins of the contemporary globalized society. Their pity provoking roles, deeply influenced by the local rhythms of modern life, reflect the harsh realities confronting their counterparts across the globe. The plight of Arundhati Roy's and Kiran Desai's major female characters, Ammu and Sai, reflects the true face of the modern society which adopts double standards for the marginalized. Unlike Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai, Adiga has shown little concern for the plight of women remains throughout preoccupied with the problems and challenges confronting the male protagonist belonging to the marginalized section of society. This paper aims at a comparative study of the marginalized as depicted in the fiction of the Booker Prize winners of Indian origin Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga.

Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai, besides being strong feminists, have effectively championed the cause of Dalits through the portrayal of the plight of male characters belonging to the Dalit community. Both novelists have shown the Dalit characters as dependent upon the upper class people for survival and betterment of life. Velutha, the protagonist of *The God of Small Things*, is dependent on the Ayemenam House for his livelihood. Being a carpenter in the pickle factory

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of Mammachi, his sustenance is at the mercy of his female boss who pays him less than other workers because he is a Paravan. Despite being “a skilful carpenter and indispensable at the factory by virtue of his way with machines,”(Khan,161) his contribution to the growth of the factory remains unrecognized and unrewarded. He possesses the competence of a magician who “could make intricate toys—tiny wind mills, rattles, minute jewel boxes out of dried palm reeds; he could carve perfect boats out of tapioca stems and figurines on cashew nuts.”(Roy 74) Due to his birth and upbringing in a low caste family, he is allowed into the Ayemenam House only to repair or install something. Mammachi thinks, “he ought to be grateful that he is allowed on the factory premises and permitted to touch things that the touchable touch.”(Roy 60)

Despite being fully aware of the fact that Velutha is a skilled person, Mammachi treats him inhumanly as she treats other Paravans. Impressed by his consummate expertise in carpentry and mechanical work she often says that if he had not been a Paravan, he might have become an engineer. Having known about Velutha’s illicit relationship with Ammu, Mammachi not only humiliates him publically and expels him from service but also files an FIR on the false ground that he is responsible for the drowning of her granddaughter.

Although he is a committed worker and card holder of the ruling Communist Party, the communist leader K.N.M. Pillai refuses to provide him protection against police action. He bluntly tells Velutha, “But comrade, you should know that Party was not constituted to support workers’ indiscipline in their private life.”(Roy 287)

Accused of the serious crime, Velutha being rudderless is arrested by the policemen. Driven by the feelings of “contempt born of inchoate, unacknowledged fear—civilization’s fear of nature, men’s fear of women, power’s fear of powerlessness,”(Roy, 308) the policemen subject him to multiple physical injuries and leave him smashed and broken. As the novelist puts it:

His skull was fractured in three places. His nose and both his cheekbones were smashed, leaving his face pulpy, undefined. The blow to his mouth had split open his upper lip and broken six teeth, three of which were embedded in his lower lip, hideously inverting his beautiful smile. Four of his ribs were splintered, one had pierced his left lung, which was what made him bleed from his mouth. The blood on his breath bright red. Fresh. Frothy. His lower intestine was ruptured and haemorrhaged, the blood collected in his abdominal cavity. His spine was damaged in two places, the concussion had paralysed his right arm and resulted in a loss of control over his bladder and rectum. Both his knee caps were shattered.(Roy 310)

Like Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai in her second novel portrays the plight of a Dalit boy named Biju. Having been born and brought up in the family of a penniless person who earns his livelihood through working as a cook, Biju is illiterate and as such unfit for service in restaurants of America where he goes to fulfil his dream of serving the American boss. While Velutha is tortured by his female boss of Indian origin, Biju is tormented by his male boss of American origin. Although he has inherited servant like traits from his father, he miserably fails to please his American boss. As he is not a green card holder, he is treated by his boss as an illegal immigrant. While working in his employer Harish Harry's kitchen, Biju one day falls on the floor and his leg is seriously injured. On asking his employer to arrange for his treatment, he gets this reply:

I take you in. I hire you with no papers, treat you like my own son and now this is how you repay me, living here rent free. In India would they pay you? What right do you have? Is it my fault you don't even clean the floor. You should have to pay me for not cleaning. Living like a pig. Am I telling you to live like a pig?(Desai 188)

Biju's repeated requests for issuing him green card fall on the deaf ears of his employer. Having enjoyed the privilege of being an employer of long standing, Harish Harry angrily cites many reasons for not sponsoring the green card and in order to make his servant realize the weakness of his roots, arrogantly says:

If you are not happy, then right now go and find someone to sponsor you. Know how easily I can replace you? Know how lucky you are!!! You think there are not thousands of people in this city looking for a job. I can replace you like this, I will snap my fingers and in one second hundreds of people will appear. Get out of my face.(Desai 188)

The American employer's cruelty reaches its climax when he asks injured Biju to cut vegetables while lying down and utters, "If you are not better, go home. Doctors are very cheap and good in India."(Desai 189)

Like Velutha and Biju, the protagonist of Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*, represents the margins of society. The son of a poor rickshaw puller who died of tuberculosis, Balram is taken out of school at the age of sixteen for the reason that his father is unable to pay the school fee and meet his domestic expenses. Along with his elder brother, he is forced to work in a tea shop at Luxmangarh, a small village in Gaya district of Bihar. His dream of becoming a man with a big belly leads him to Dhanbad where he learns driving and serves the coal merchant of Dhanbad as a driver of Maruti Suzuki. Although his basic job is to drive Maruti Suzuki, he is forced to perform domestic chores. Besides driving the car, he has to "sweep the floor of the courtyard and make tea, clean cobwebs with a long broom and chase a cow out of the compound."(Adiga 70) He has also to play cricket with any brat in the household who wants to play and "heat water on the stove, carry it into courtyard and then lift the old man's feet up one after the other and immerse them in the hot water and then massage them both gently."(Adiga 78) In spite of serving his master ungrudgingly, Balram is not meted out human treatment. Treating

servants as inferior to dogs is the norm in the houses of the urban rich people. Balram's life in the service of the coal merchant is not an exception to this norm. As he himself puts it, "the rich expect their dogs to be pampered, and walked, and petted, and even washed. And guess who had to do the washing? I got down on my knees and began scrubbing the dogs and then lathering them, washing them down and taking blow dryer and drying their skin." (Adiga 78)

Balram's loyalty towards his master and sincerity in his duty as a driver leads the coal merchant to take him to Delhi to fulfil his business objectives. His life in Delhi adds to his plight. During the night he has to grapple with cockroaches and mosquitoes and during the day he faces harmful air and sound pollution. To him Delhi appears far worse than Dhanbad in respect of living conditions. Unable to cope with the morbid conditions of life in Delhi, he holds his father responsible for his plight and says, "Why had he raised me to live like an animal? Why do all the poor live amid such filth, such ugliness." (Adiga 151)

Having a spirit of protest like Velutha and Biju, Balram does not hold himself responsible for his difficulties. Instead, he puts the entire blame for his plight on his family and the traditions upheld by his parents. As the seeds of servitude were sown in him during his childhood, he cannot help being a submissive servant ready to suffer for the fault of his master. To the Chinese Prime Minister, he unhesitatingly confesses, "Once a servant, always a servant; the instinct is always there, inside you, somewhere near the base of your spine. If you ever come to my office, Mr. Premier, I would probably try to press your feet at once." (Adiga 299) Commenting upon his inborn instinct, he further tells Mr. Jiabao:

I had rushed to press Mr. Ashok's feet the moment I saw them even though he had not asked me to! Why did I feel that I had to go close to his feet touch them and press them and make them feel good—why? Because the desire to be a servant had been bred into me; hammered into my skill, nail after nail, and poured into my blood,

the way sewage and industrial poison are poured into mother Ganga." (Adiga 193)

Balram, like Biju, faces discrimination and humiliation in restaurants and hotels of Delhi. Despite his curiosity, the luxuries of the grand hotels of Delhi remain a mystery to him. Along with his employer, he visits a number of hotels but is never allowed to step past the front gate. What pinches him most is the guards' hatred for the driver standing at the gate. Stung by the guards' behaviour, he regretfully says, "That's the driver's fate. Every other servant thinks he can boss over us." (Adiga 200)

Velutha's father Vellya Paapen belongs to the class of the marginalized people who are bereft of the spirit of protest and resistance. He is loyal to the Ayemenem House despite the fact that its' owner Pappachi does not let him touch the things that touchable touch. As he represents the old generation, he has seen times when "Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Brahmans or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan's footprint. In Mammachi's time, Paravans, like other untouchables, were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke, to deliver their polluted breath away from those whom they addressed." (Roy 74)

Velutha's relationship with Ammu hurts him beyond tolerance with the result that he hurries to the Ayemenem House and himself reveals to Ammu's mother the news about "a man and woman, standing together in the moonlight. Skin to skin." (Roy 255)

Having heard the unlistenable news, Ammu's mother "stepped forward and pushed Vellya Paapen with all her strength. He stumbled backwards, down the kitchen steps and lay sprawled in the wet mud. While lying "in the slush, wet,

weeping, groveling," (Roy 256) he offers to kill his son, "to tear him limb from limb." (Roy 256) His condition, instead of melting Mammachi to pity, provokes her to shout, "Drunken dog! Drunken Paravan liar!" (Roy 256)

In *The Inheritance of Loss* Kiran Desai has presented a specimen of Vellya Paapen in the persona of Biju's father, the cook whose name has not been disclosed anywhere in the entire novel. Like Vellya Paapen, the cook is a loyal and faithful servant who serves the retired Judge Jemubhai Patel with full sincerity and commitment. Despite his punctuality and promptness, the retired judge treats him inhumanly because he is "a powerless man, barely learning to read and write, had worked like a donkey all his life, hoped only to avoid trouble, lived only to see his son." (Desai 11) The judge, an epitome of arrogance and cruelty, is insensitive and inconsiderate to the cook's plight. In spite of his promptness in the delivery of service, he is paid a considerably low amount of money as monthly salary which is insufficient to support his small family. In lieu of low wages, he performs all types of domestic chores including washing and ironing of clothes, preparing and serving of tea and food, polishing of shoes and cleaning of utensils, taking care of the pet and so on and so forth. Despite accomplishing all these menial jobs with full dedication, he is humiliated, abused and sometimes even beaten by the judge. Disappearance of the pet adds to his trouble. Holding him responsible for the loss of his pet, the judge warns him of dire consequences on non-retrieval of the pet. Failure in tracing the pet despite all possible efforts leads the cook to mental turmoil driven by which he one day drinks heavily and appears before the judge with the result that the judge is provoked to go to the extent of beating the cook with slippers "with all the force of his sagging, puckering flesh." (Desai 321)

The cook ungrudgingly bears the judge's cruelty only because of his low status in society. He represents millions of Dalits who suffer limitlessly due to their helplessness. The privileged give precedence to their dogs over the marginalized. To the judge the retrieval of his pet is more important than the life of the cook. This

deplorable situation is laughed at in the Thapa Canteen by a Nepali who says, "In a place where they died of T.B., hepatitis, leprosy, plain cold fever and so no jobs, no work, nothing to eat—this commotion over a dog!" (Desai 314)

As is evident from the above discussion, the root cause of the plight of the marginalized is their dependence on the privileged for sustenance and betterment of life. The marginalized people belonging to the old generation are even today submissive, loyal and faithful to their heartless masters. Vellya Paapen and the cook do not gather courage to protest the cruelties of the privileged. They lower their heads whenever they come face to face with their masters and ungrudgingly abide by whatever mandate is given to them. The marginalized youths, on the other hand, have nurtured a spirit of protest and resistance against exploitation inflicted upon them by the privileged. The way Velutha, Biju and Balram Halwai deal with their bosses is reflective of a growing awareness among the modern dalit youths towards their rights and roles in the globalized world where the boundaries between castes, creeds, classes and communities are gradually crumbling.

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No More a Guarded Tongue: A Feminist Study of Modern Tamil Poetry by Women

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Abstract

The so called guardians of the Tamil society kept on yelling, abusing, threatening and they kept on writing their stories, penning their experiences in their own language, which were more than a mere 'midnight tale'. The paper celebrates the bold defiance of these 'sovereign queens of words', namely Malathi Maithri, Salma, Kutti Revathi and Sukirtharini who chose to abstain from the 'good' Tamil women image and observe *accham*, *madam* and *naanam* (fearfulness, propriety and modesty) and went on writing a non-mainstream poetry, of rebellion, of breaking out, of 'weaving with their bodies a blanket' against the cold attitude of the world outside.

The paper tries to elucidate the subjectivity of the poems of these 'bad girls', their treatment of domestic and private space, the lack of space and the desire for it, the teeming dreams and the choking effect, and the narrative woven with the fabric of their experiences, the awareness of their bodies and their sexuality, all spoken out bluntly. They tried to create a new language, not only their words, but even their bodies and their silence spoke out.

For long the pen had been a phallic symbol, at times synonymous with penis, leaving traces that cannot be erased and thought of as being an invincible weapon. It created identity, it struck them off. Literary history has often marginalized the contribution of that section which nurtured the pen, which made the pen mighty i.e. women. Considered to be the dominion of men, when women started writing, the men folk simply could not take it. They could not accept that those whom they kept confined around the hearth for centuries, should become their rivals in the outer public space. All that they say, is history. And the world has witnessed doses of feminism, women venturing out to that space which was alien to them before. But nothing much has changed back home here in India. People

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still cannot take when women of their families turn to writing, that too subversive writing. Poetry, which was considered to be the highest form of literature, how come women do it! After a time, the privileged women could make it but for others from the margins, especially in the traditional Tamil scenario, the society still sneers at them. And this is not a long time back. We are talking of a recent scenario just a decade back. The paper hails the bold defiance of four Tamil women poets, Malathi Maithri, Salma, Kutti Revathi and Sukirtharini who refused to freeze the ink of their pen though the climate outside was of freezing criticism.

Can the subaltern speak? Yes they can, and when they do, neither the language, nor the ideology subscribes to that of the dominating agency, but a subversive one. Doubly marginalized, first, as a woman and secondly a Dalit woman, Sukirtharani, daughter of a labourer, wrote her poetry in an atmosphere of disapproval, with little support from her family when her writings turned a feminist colour. Strongly aware of gender and caste distinction, she considered it her duty to redeem the body of women from male ownership, to 'speak up bluntly'. Similarly Salma's self-educated pen burst out breaking the yoke of orthodox Muslim patriarchy, and the confines of a stifling loveless marriage. And she was rewarded with abusive, at times violent family life. She considered writing to be her right and linked to her existence to voice the secluded, dissatisfied married life, the shared experience of women. Kutti Revathi too was born in abject poverty. Trained in *Siddha* medicine she believed in its doctrine of our body being ourselves, thus her poems are more erotic and use a more subversive language to depict the body. Malathi Maithri, born in a fishing community, in order to pursue her writing and an independent lifestyle, had to leave her home at the age of eighteen. Her writings try to create a new language and end in a *pey mozhi*- demon language.

Give me my body, give me my space

I need to sit with legs stretched out
I must sleep with my own body

- Malathi Maithri, 'Proscribed Blood-1' (Lines 31-32)*

More often than not in her entire life, a woman, especially in India, is never able to utter these words out, even if she wants to. In the patriarchal set up of conjugality, she is made to believe that her body is owned by her husband, it is a property of his. She has no right nor is it commendable, if she wants to treat and do with her body as she wishes. A woman is always expected to be ready with her body to accept her husband. That she can pine for her own privacy, that she may love her body, even without an affirmation from a man, is not even acknowledged. There is a certain code of conduct framed within which a female body should navigate, crossing of which is termed transgression and condemned. But these dauntless ladies pioneered a breaking out of such codifications through their poetry. Their outburst cannot be taken to be only engulfing the Tamil society but the entire stifling set up of patriarchy.

In the poem 'Cast Away Blood', Malathi Maithri talks about that need to be vocal about one's privacy. She makes Minakshi speak to Shiva in the *Ardhnareshwar* form, that she would like to be left alone for some time, with her own body, though Shiva insists that he cannot be complete without her and he needs her. It is the time of her period and she uses Shiva's snake to wipe the trickling stream down her thighs. And she washes her underskirt with "the moon in the tank reddening/slowly, slowly"(lines 30-31). Such bold images and narration of the bloody periods about which women shy away to talk even in daily life, let alone to write about it as one of the many experiences was not a commonplace thing in literature. But Malathi has made the phenomenon seem sensual and while convention uses goddesses to affirm traditional feminine virtues of subservience and endurance, she has made her utter the words of individuality.

This is what these 'empress of words' set out to do, to subvert the convention in a bid to reclaim the female body, without the stamp of a male ownership.

"During penance, they swell, as if straining
To break free; and in the fierce tug of lust,
They soar, recalling the ecstasy of music" (Lines 15-17)*

- Kutti Revathi, 'Breasts '

When Kutti Revathi came up with her poetry collection titled *Mulaigal* (Breasts, 2002), there was a furore among the literary as well as non-literary Tamil conservationist. A woman talking about her body was obscene though it was proper for men to describe the beauty of a female body, something that is being done in Indian literature since the age of Kalidas . The opposition by the society was so vehement that these poets were sent abusive letters both from the academic and non-academic arena. A certain film-song writer even went to the extent of suggesting that such women should be lined up on the road and burnt alive.

A woman for whom her body is her being, her gateway to a plethora of experiences, her window to the world, is it then not natural for a woman to talk about it? Revathi tries to bring home this idea that a female body is not merely a passive entity but a living world. In the poem 'Breasts' she presents them as being inhabited by a variety of feelings.

From the press of an embrace
they distill love; from the shock
of childbirth
milk, flowing from blood.(Lines 20-23)

They are not an unfeeling object but a receptor of myriads of sensations that responds according to the treatment meted out to it and a companion of all the 'changing seasons'.

Our society has always endeavored to confine the female body within the space of the four walls, her identity being defined by her being an object of desire, by her virtue of being someone's daughter or wife or mother. This non acknowledgement of individuality, these poets protest against. Women, though are called the homemakers and the Lakshmi of the house, there is no space in her house that is her own, where she can be herself, where she can sit with her legs stretched out, without the fear of being watched and judged, and the space outside the house is alien to her.

"There is no room prepared,
Ready to welcome me at any time..
...I erect myself a palace" (Lines 9-10, 13)

- Malathi Maithri, 'My Home'

And this palace, this space which women build for themselves is often in imagination and poetry too is one such space where the aspirations get a foothold, and poetry is also a vehement voice against the denials in real life. Salma too speaks about this lack of space. Being born in a Muslim community she has faced this denial of space, of individuality, of identity to a greater degree. In the poem 'An evening, another evening' she goes on to say how isolated and left out a woman is in her home, still solitude is nowhere to be found.

In reception rooms
full of animation
There is no one at all
whose acquaintance I can claim.
The solitude of the bathroom

Awaken a fear
of despising the naked.
...in this garden enclosed within the four walls
There is no shade for me to sit
The open spaces
of the roof terrace
secure no privacy.
There is no chair anywhere
On which I can sit
and swing my legs.(31-37,41-49)

And thus each day in a woman's life is just another evening and this is the story of most of the women in a traditional household.

Malathi Maithri in her poem 'Large as the world' has very deftly defied the confinement of the female body as the poet persona's body parts fly out to wander in different spaces and in Time's expanse, though efforts are made to track them down.

and voices of different lands,
They graze all over my body,
Shuffling and rearranging my identity
... My vagina as a butterfly,
Flitting about among the hills (19-21,25-26)*

Thus Malathi brings home the idea that the identity of a woman even if it is her body that shapes it, is not a fixed one as certified by the society, but can be volatile and the woman has the control over it, to reconstitute it as she wants. Thus these poets do not hesitate when they say, as in Malathi's poem

"We weave with our bodies
A blanket against the cold"('Empress of words' 48-49)

Against the cold attitude of the world they weave a poetry of an indirect revolt, writing their narrative imprinted on their bodies.

The greenery of desires in an arid landscape

“you are the hastening of time

I am the blossoming season”(Lines 18-19)

- Kutti Revathi, ‘Rain river’

Desires never die. They never age, it is the body that ages. When men pen their feelings on paper it seems natural to the world, after all it is men who can desire. They share their dreams, describe their chase, the accomplishment and the object of their desire- the women, to be specific the female body and it all seems natural to the world. Is she not to feel but only to be felt? How women desire is left to the imagination of men! A woman in our society is taught to mortify her desires, not to speak about it. Even the very thought of having such thoughts calls forth within them a self-censorship, so deep is the acceptance of the moral prescriptions. But these women dared to bare their hearts, share their dreams and encourage or even teach other women to dream and desire. The intensity of desires can be fathomed through the concrete images used.

when dreams teem

It is now , at this midnight hour

the tiger...

...takes its place at my head

and stares and stares.(Lines 38-40, 42-44)

- Salma, ‘A midnight tale’

In her poems Salma narrates the tale of every woman for whom the marital bed has become a liability, a contract where every night the ordeal of a routine worn out sex begins with the question “ so what is it, today? ”(‘The contract’ line 9) as if the responsibility for making the love acts eventful solely lies with the woman.

And still in full knowledge of what little authority she has over her husband and what her status is, confined to being his child's mother, the poem 'The contract' ends with the line- 'my vagina opens' which manifests how helpless a woman is , trapped in an indifferent web of expectations with no thought given to her own aspirations. The poem 'A midnight tale' brings forth the angst of a woman whose body has thickened after many childbirths and so her husband is dissatisfied who still looks for her erstwhile beauty. The partiality of nature towards men is lamented.

Before this too,
Your children, perhaps, were born
in many places, to many others;
you may be proud
you bear no traces of their birth.(20-24)

"Nature has been / more perfidious to me/ than even you"(30-32) comes the accusation. The body is not a paper to be cut and pasted and it is his luck that he bears no traces of his fatherhood. But the statement also comes that "from you began/ the first stage of my downfall"(33-34). And though the body may have withered, the dreams have not. They still teem at midnight and stare like a tiger eager to bounce.

To talk about the pinings of the heart, to be struck by the arrows of desire and to express them in lofty lines, all seem so natural to men that a woman doing the same is considered vulgar. But women are not immune to love, they too can dream , and can give expression to their ecstasy.

like a laden cloud about to unburden
Itself of rain

At this unbearable joy,
Red stars have begun to spring in my body (19-22)*

- Kutti Revathi, 'The Grey Bird'

To talk about these pulsations, the formation of ripples of joy in the body, a woman is as free as a man, desires are nobody's slaves or dominion. One can restrict exposure to the body, not to the imagination. Poetry becomes a platform for the staging of the desires as though the body can be restricted, the thought cannot be.

We make love inside the waters
As fallen jasmine cover us
And our bodies' sap flows away, foaming. (Lines 12-14)

- Sukirtharini, 'A time for birdsong'

Often these poets have likened the female body to a landscape and thus amalgamating nature and sexuality they bring around the idea of the evergreen nature of desires that keeps renewing.

"Nature becomes my body lying still
My body is a land that is alive" (23-24)

- Kutti Revathi, 'I have invited this summer for you'

And this alive land does not only pine for fertility, it also has expectations from the fruits it bears, a desire to be acknowledged for the labour and toil it goes through. A gloom creeps in when that desire is thwarted, then, even the memory of that unfulfilled dream pricks. In the poem 'His world beyond me' Salma describes how the same child who could not bear a moment's absence from her side, when grows

up starts seeking his own world, beyond the mother who nourished him, while the mother still dotes on him.

Today,
When the gloom that has found
Shelter in my room
Asked me to be let in again,
I was sending away
A dream that came to me
When I had first conceived (26-32)

Motherhood though gives a wonderful experience, a mother does not always get her due either from the child or his father, though it takes a toll on her health, her beauty. And then instead of a companion she starts desiring for solitude as in the poem 'A closure' Salma talks about the need to build a fort where no one can disturb her. She looks for the 'solitude of a painted house'. In the poem 'Image' she depicts the plight of every woman through the image of the carcass of a dead cockroach.

Leaving behind the carcass to show me
The novel sight of myself
With wings that can no longer rise in flight
And stick legs — no longer of use(6-9)

And then the "heart seeks the solitude of a painted house".

A new language, my language.

Someday, the language wrought
By this loneliness of mine
Might be shaped into verse (Lines 26-28)
- Salma, 'A Deserted Place'

The language that the poetry of these poets speak is that of silent rebellion in the quest for freedom from all sorts of fetters, that bind women in the name of tradition, virtue, propriety etc, spreading through letters, yet it was unwelcome to some ears. As Malathi sarcastically points in her poem "Demon language"-

demon language
is poetry
...demon language
is liberty(Lines 5-6, 12-13)

So when women write poetry and talk about liberty, women are demons. Thus it is the demonic language they speak. Whatever it may be, this language is not going to be silenced. The journey from silence to expression, from subjugation to eruption, from confinement to liberation cannot be undertaken without it as the patriarchal language is inadequate to represent this new colour. Sukhirtharini is vehement in her declaration in the poem "Nature's fountainhead".

Say you bury me alive,
I will become a green grass-land
...you may set me on fire;
I will become a flaming bird
...You may dissolve me into wind
...I will emerge, like blown breath
...The more u confine me, the more I will spill over
Nature's fountainhead(1-2, 4-5,11,14, 25-26)

This new language is constituted of new metaphors, a new tone, a new bold range of imagery and a fierce spirit which shall pave way for a new pride. Gone are the days of a language owned by patriarchy and the conventional metaphors, they no more suit the spirit of these women. They cannot reveal the long fettered body, they cannot reach the unexplored regimes of a women's thoughts. For example,

earlier often the metaphor of the knife was used for the male organ, the penis, owing to its power to cut open, to penetrate. Revathi, in a poem 'Dawn' speaks of a woman who made "Of the body's aridity, a beautiful knife-/ And went to prison"(17-18).

The words like blood, masculine images like that of a tiger etc, now can be seen in this new creation of a woman language, which is an unending process. They boldly announce that they speak up bluntly, in an infant language, sticky with blood.

The late night dreams I memorized-
will not be taken for complaints
Its meaning will be as wide as the skies
...The keys of that unique language
Will put an end to sorrow
Make way for a special pride (10-13, 16-18).

- Sukirthrani, 'Infant language'

This nascent- 'infant language' is required to be able to do justice to the voice of many women who are not poets, who are not privileged to speak in public, whose voices are not heard even within the four walls and "a heavy silence/ fills the space"(2-3). As Salma says in 'The rust of silence', "easier indeed/ to trust to silence/ than to trust in words/ though silence itself has rusted"(5-8). When words lose credibility silence becomes a language. And if silence too rusts, what then? To empower the words again, a new language is a pre- requisite. A language that rejects

the mistakes of history
the slashes that outline the body
the destruction of the imagination
the wrongs that have entered our veins (15-18)

-Kutti Revathi, 'Face to face'

This shall be a subversive language, to demolish all conventional constraints, to evoke new frameworks.

The language of God becomes the night

The language of Satan becomes the day

Changing from one to the other

In our dictionary (13-16)

- Malathi Maithri, 'Language Change'

"Poetry . . . demands an endless enquiry into the self, and endless cycles of the self's destruction and renewal"- Revathi. This enterprise is not easy. To speak out your victimhood is not a cakewalk, to be the throat for other's thoughts, too comes at a price. Some critics point out that what these women poets have done is not a breakthrough in Tamil poetry, simply the fact that they are women and largely from the marginalized section, have secured them the limelight that they shower in today. My answer would be- what miracle do we expect? Considering the fact that none of these poets come from a privileged family, the pain and effort they had to undertake, and the stark criticism they bore the brunt of and yet continued to write in spite of all the trials and tribulations life offered them, if not on a social level, it is indeed a personal breakthrough. And why not on a social level? The end of the twentieth century saw the blossoming of these women poets almost at the same time, marking an epoch of subversive women writing. They lit up a fire not only to light their own paths but to awaken multitude of sleeping sparks within the bosom of many a women, to make them dream again.

To light up the path I lost

To re-thread a shattered dream from my youth

To imagine an entirely new dream(11-14)

- Salma, 'Green Angel'

These poets have set out to rectify, subvert and re-imagine things hitherto shown only from a male perspective. They are there to show the other side, the counter picture from their imagination. The delicate and fragile frame of women have been many a times glorified, made fun of, shown sympathy with, in literature written by male while in real life they have been conquered, commoditized and assaulted at besides being coveted for. In 'Incessant war', Malathi has shown how the same man who being physically stronger assaults women forgetting how delicate they are, can also feel pain, merely on unintentionally being poured hot water over his bruises, and be wary of those very delicate hands that once could not resist his blows.

Your eyes filled with tears
as you took hold of my hands
which could not fend off
the blows that you once rained on me (19-22)
-Malathi Maithri, 'Incessant War'

The fruits of knowledge the society try to keep from a woman. The allegory, how eating of the forbidden fruit by Eve led to mankind's fall from grace is often cited to justify denial of knowledge and agency to women. As Foucault said, knowledge is power, denying knowledge was the means to keep women away from power, to keep them from questioning, to keep them seated on the throne of ignorance in the dark, and then using the excuse of their ignorance to rule over them. But the light of knowledge has reached them, they no more be kept as a guarded tongue, and a meek second fiddler. In the poem 'She who ate the apple' Malathi writes

"slowly I open eyes of hunger
...I pluck it and bite deep,
continuing my journey.
After this

I will never return again
to my own dark lands.”(Lines 2, 8-12)
-Malathi Maithri, ‘She who ate the apple’

Thus they are never again to return to dark lands of ignorance and subjugation, even if it implies falling from grace. They will create their own heaven on their own earth with their own language in their poetry, in their life.

“we will read our poems
full of dreams and desires”(45-46)
-Malathi Maithri, ‘Empress of words’

‘Proscribed Blood’ and ‘Cast Away Blood’ are the two translations of the same poem.

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Comparative Analysis of *Baromas* and *The Grapes of Wrath*

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Abstract:

This research paper intends to compare two novels written in two different periods, in two different settings, and in two different societies but having same background, characters, their ways of living life and the ways of reacting. The paper discusses the farmers, their problems, their protest, their cultural conflicts and social, educational, and political existence. American and Indian literatures have many aspects to compare including workers, farmers, peasants, and gender aspects. Sadanand Deshmukh presents the agrarian society in his novels and short stories with a view to change the present exploitative conditions of farmers and peasants. He has clear intention behind his writing to correct the concepts of farming and presents the multicultural existence of Marathi society in his novels. John Steinbeck deals with the same agrarian and rural aspects of American life in the period of 1950 having vivid object of presenting the impulse to live the life in worse conditions and win over the problems. He presents the gist of life through the conflict of his characters against man and nature made conditions. He presents common people in his stories with a universal spirit to live the life in any condition. The paper deals with these aspects of farmers' life and their will to live the life and their vivid inspiration to win over the conditions. Both the writers have the same approach to look at the life. The heroes of both the novels join the movements of farmers at the end of respective novels and this presents the one message "to struggle and to win".

Comparative Literature comprises of the comparative study of more than one literary works belong to different culture, society, and atmosphere. It profoundly aims to compare two cultures or ways of life with each other to study the differences and similarities of them. Many writers and critics have commented on different aspects of this discipline. In India, it has roots in the concept of Rabindranath Tagore in which he talks about the *Viswa Sahitya* (World Literature). Tagore has comparative aspects in his mind in relation to Goethe's Weltliteratur

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as explored by a few critics like Rizio Yohannan Raj. In 1954, Jadavpur University ventured to establish a Comparative Literature department as a first centre in India to study comparative literature as a discipline.

Every nation has different cultural, educational, political, social, economical structure. These are the basic things where comparative literature works. S. S. Praver says that the comparative literature is, "The writings of a country or period, or of the world in general" (Praver S. S. 1). Praver considers Goethe's view as:

he meant by 'welt - literatur' awareness of national traditions other than your own openness to works written in other countries and other language traffic and exchange between the various literatures which would parallel and supplement commercial traffic and exchanges. (Das 4)

Any factor of one place or literature can be compared with another. It has the main object to find out greatness or weakness of one literature with another. Any literary work may have some features related with culture, tradition, politics, education etc. Comparative literature, while comparing two literary works, stresses upon these things and finds out the particular things in a particular literary work. S. S. Praver defines comparative literature:

An examination of literary texts (Including works of literary theory and criticism) in more than one language; through an investigation of contrast, analogy, provenance or influence of a study of literary relations and communications between two or more groups that speak different languages. (8)

Praver further adds:

Comparative literature does not in itself commit one to any

other principle than that comparison is a most useful technique for analysing works of art, and that instead of confining comparisons to writings in the same language, one may usefully choose points of comparison in other languages [...] to see one poem, or one picture, or one building is to have little feeling for its qualities. To see another example of the same thing which being another work of art, is of course not the same but only 'comparable is to take the first step towards recognizing what in each case good, original, difficult, intended. (12)

Amiya Dev, Professor of Comparative literature in JadHAVpur University, Kolkata defines

a study of literature that involves more than one literature. The exact nature of this involvement depends on the literatures we are involved with. They might ask for a purely historical or a purely aesthetic involvement or an involvement part historical and part aesthetic. (Das 11)

In comparative literature a scholar can promote the study of intercultural relations that cross national, regional, education, cultural boundaries. Even it can study one kind of art in comparison with other arts, sciences, philosophy and cultural artifacts of all kinds.

Sadanand Deshmukh has written a few novels, short stories, and novellas including the farmers and their problems. Farmers and their life is the central presentation in his works and he creates a comprehensive picture of farmers' life including economical, social, cultural, and political aspects.

As a writer he has achieved his identity as a writer of common people in Maharashtra and in India. He has written two novels, both are popular and have

achieved state and national level awards. His first novel is *Tahan* (1998) it means 'quest' which is about the downtrodden people in Maharashtra. It is the story of young man whose quest is to become a successful man. He runs family by earning money. The influence of urban culture on the rural is the theme of this novel. It depicts the 21st century picture of an average person. This novel has been transmitted on Aakshwani Jalgaon in serials.

His second novel is *Baromas* (2002) it means 'twelve months'. It is about the farming in Marathwada, the problems of farmers and their resistance. It is the real picture of farmers' suicide. He presents this problem with real atmosphere and reasons. Unemployment, superstitions, corruption, castes, religious problems are some notable themes in his novels.

Sadanand Deshmukh is known for his agrarian stories. Lachand, Uthwan, Mahalut, Ragada are his some popular short story books. The Setting, language and characters etc. come from rural Maharashtra in his writing.

He has achieved 'Sahitya Akadami Award' for his well-known novel 'Baromas'. He also got 'Maharashtra State Government's Award' for his collection of short stories 'Mahaloot'.

He gives more importance to content by stressing that form is not important one, it may be changed but content remains forever. He justifies his thoughts by giving importance to content in a particular writing. He says:

(I don't feel any need of such experiments to cheat readers with technical miracles of writing without content. I think that experiments should be full of reality, readable and skilful. [Keshav Deshmukh 21])

John Ernst Steinbeck, (1902-1968), is a great American writer and the winner of the Nobel Prize in 1962. He depicted American Society with a vision

which included common people, farmers and workers. He is probably best remembered for his strong sociological novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. It is considered as one of the great American novels in 20th century.

He is known in Europe for his social writing. His writing is full of social problems and the lives of common people. He wrote novels, short stories and articles in newspapers. His literature is rich with realistic, naturalistic, romantic, allegorical and symbolic aspects. Social consciousness and social reality is main stream of his writing.

As a writer he wrote 25 books, including 16 novels, 6 non-fiction books and several collections of short stories. His first novel is *Cup of Gold* (1929). It depicts psychological romance. He travelled to New York and collected impressions. Then he decided to return to California to begin as a writer of serious fiction. *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932), collection of 12 short stories is full of vividly details of rural life in California valley. In 1933 Steinbeck brought out two works: *The Red Pony* is a short, four chapter story, which recollects memories from his childhood.

Steinbeck was writing articles for the San Francisco Chronicle on the migratory farm labourers. It provided material for his next great novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) which won the Pulitzer Prize of 1940. The struggle of a family, forced to turn over their land to the banks and their migration across the vast plains to the promised land of California. The book was made into a film by John Ford in 1940.

Steinbeck is known for his writing about society with social consciousness, Social reality and Social setting. His commitment is with the common people and common society of America. He presented an average person in his novel as social figure with dignity. He made the stories of average person as the source for his writing. He always made an average person a hero in his novel with new picture and new social setting with that hero. Harry Slochower writes: "a new hero is

arising together with the rise of a new order, a personality who combines leadership with democratic representation of those he leads the communal personality." (Lisca, Peter 4)

Hero's journey from an individual man to a social personality where he sees whole society in his personality and reacts as a part of wholeness is the central message in his novels.

Baromas and *The Grapes of Wrath* are the novels which are produced or written in two different cultures, sources, setting and periods. *The Grapes of Wrath* is published in America in 1939 and *Baromas* is published in Maharashtra in 2002. There is a gap of 60 years between the publications of these novels.

Baromas is the story about farmers and their problems in India or especially in Maharashtra. It portrays how the Indian farmers are caught in problems because of social, political, educational and other structure and setting of Indian society. Now a day, in India the suicide of farmers has been the mostly discussed and criticized subject. This novel paints most of the horrifying situations from the lives of Indian farmers which lead them to suicide.

The Grapes of Wrath depicts the picture of 1930s American farming and working class. It paints how the Great Depression and other social problems destroyed the lives of common people specially the lives of farmers and working class people. And it presents how people protest against the problems and face them.

These novels throw light on the social problems like caste, religious, race discrimination, superstitions, gender discrimination etc. which create more problems for people. The most notable and discussed aspect is the resistance of people to their problems.

My intention behind the comparison of these novels is to find out social,

economical, political, educational problems of two countries. Problems of farmers and working class people are same in the world and they have not borders like nations. They don't have food, clothes, education and health. They have the same problems. The difference is only of their social background. The intention behind comparison is also to find out the relationship between the social setting and the problems of the working class people. Every society or nation has its own structure or features of social background in which a literary work is produced. It defines the development and its theme in literary work.

The next important intention behind comparison is to find out how people resist to or protest against their problems.

To compare people, their problems, their social, educational, political, traditional, cultural, religious, background; the reasons for their problems and their resistance; and to find out the similarities and the differences and the writers' intention is the chief object of this comparative work.

Baromas is the novel about farmers' problems and their protest. It is a story of Eknath and his family in Marathwada, in Maharashtra. How the problems shatter the family is the main theme in this novel. The hero Eknath and his family try to overcome their problems.

The Grapes of Wrath is also the novel about farmers' and their protest. It is the story of Tom and his family in America. How the problems of America destroy the life of common people in America is the main theme of this novel. This is the picture of America in the period of The Great Depression, presenting worse effects of American dream.

Both the novels have their own social, political, cultural setting. This setting or background shapes the themes of both novels. The rural India, especially Maharashtra and the farmers' suicide in Marathwada, and rural setting is the structure of *Baromas*. *The Grapes of Wrath* is the picture of America and how the

common people were compelled to leave their lands and homes in the third decade of 20th century.

Ekknath is the protagonist in *Baromas*. He is educated and modern. He has completed his education with good marks. He, his brother and their friends all are educated but unemployed. They have qualities but don't have money to offer donation or bribe. It is the picture of Indian unemployment which is depicted in the novel as a main problem of coming generations in India. It creates dissatisfaction in youth's mind. It carries them away to other unlawful and illegal activities in society. Madhu and his friends established the Golden Gang. The main aim of this gang is to earn money to solve their daily problems. Everyone in the gang wants to give donation for service. This is the reality of modern Maharashtra. They are not happy with the present condition. They want to revolt against the situation. So they give their reactions through the robbery.

(We understand the horrible life of the educated unemployed people from the ever changing activities of the members of the golden gang. [Hemant Khadke, 6])

Unemployment creates new problems in society. The whole educated and uneducated are diverted to some other asocial and illegal ways to earn money or to earn their livelihood. The new consumerism ideology has affected their minds. They want all things in their houses. They long for a good job, a beautiful wife, a bungalow and a car. This need for money and lust for luxurious life creates greed for money. Anyhow they want money, if possible legally and if not illegally.

The Grapes of Wrath is also full of unemployment. People move from one place to another for work. Tom and his family want work. The family is ready to do hard work. But there is no work. Not only Joad family but also the whole Oklahoma region of the country is migrating from one place to another. They want to survive and work is a must for survival. The American Dream advised people to do any

work without any shame. It advised to earn money anyhow. Al wants to settle somewhere, Rosasharn wants her husband to work and settle. Desire for luxurious life is here also in *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The people are ready to do any work at any place for any wages. The Great Depression grabbed their work and compelled them to leave their places and houses. Big landlords exploit working class people and educationists exploit educating pupils.

Baromas presents the new picture of Maharashtra. How people are unemployed after signing GATT treaty. To save the corporate sector government is destroying the farming sector. In *Baromas* another factor of education has been focused; that is, how the present education is useless. The educated young boys in Sanjole don't have any service or job. Today's education creates the useless manpower for nation.

Then, in America the people didn't get education, even a permanent place to live. Both the novels show how the government policies destroy the common man in both the countries. How the government is supporting a class and not the mass. This class in America is defined by the colour and in India by Caste because in both the novels there are some people, some houses and some towns where people have everything to run their families. They have money, power and land to make their lives prosperous.

This unemployment creates divisions in society. These divisions are based on the region, caste, religion, race etc. They are full of wrath against another class in society. These divisions help the powerful sectors of society. Because of their divisions poor became unorganized and capitalist and upper class or caste people take the benefit of it. They keep them unorganized and take all the benefits for themselves.

Unemployment creates divisions on the basis of region. Rural people hate

urban people and the urban people hate the poor people from different places. Baromas is full of such incidents. Eknath and his friend in his village want job but don't have money to give donation. At that time his two friends in city earn big amount with good service and work. He hates them. He even hates the people of Alka's house. Her sister, her father and mother are the urban characters presenting the urban culture, education and social background. They also don't positively think about Eknath and his family. Even his wife, though she had lived with him in the village, hates the rural life. She always wants to shift to city with her husband. This is because the rural, agrarian life is full of problems. There is not anything to live a better and happy life. Everywhere there is tyranny, poverty, unemployment and the people who don't have any future. She advised Eknath to move to city by selling land. But he refused. And she refused to live with him in village and went to her father's home. Thus the rural and the urban crisis have been shown by Sadanand Deshmukh. Her sister hates rural people for the lack of urban manners. There is a conflict between the urban culture and the rural culture.

The Grapes of Wrath is a novel full of migrating people. The main reason behind their migration is unemployment. They migrate to other parts when they don't get the right work but what they get is the hatred of people. People of California hate them for coming to California. They think of them as the Okies. The Okies are the people who have nothing of their own and always get things from others. Here are also divisions among the people according to their interests in the people. The peasants and workers also hate these migrants because they thought them as their competitors. If the Okies settle at these places they will do their work and the natives will go jobless and workless. This particular reason creates hatred in their minds for these people. They don't want these people here in their work. They want them to move away. Farmers, Association of farmers, owners and peasants all don't want these people with them.

First, the Okies were compelled by banks to leave their places. They migrate to California for work and better life. There they are compelled by local people not to settle. They don't get permanent place to live and permanent work to do. They don't have land to buy and work to do. They are the okies. A man explains what okies are for local people.

Well, Okie use' to mean you was from Oklahoma. Now it means you're a dirty son -of-a-bitch. Okie means you're scum. Doesn't mean nothing itself, it's the way they say it. But I can't tell you nothing (Steinbeck 188)

They are treated by local people as their enemy. There is not unity in country. They get separated from these migrant people. There are divisions in a nation. These divisions increased in third decade in America. The Great Depression created these classes of people. It created haves and have nots.

They were hungry, and they were fierce. And they had hoped to find a home, and they found only hatred. Okies- the owners hated them because the owners knew they were soft and the Okies strong, that they were fed and the Okies hungry: and perhaps the owners had heard from their grandfathers how easy it is to steal land from a soft man if you are fierce and hungry and armed. The owners hated them. And in the towns the storekeepers hated them because they had no money to spend. There is no shorter path to a storekeeper's contempt, and all his admirations are exactly opposite. The town men, little bankers, hated okies because there was nothing to gain from them. They had nothing. And the laboring people hated okies because a hungry man must work, and if he must work, if he has to work, the wage payer automatically gives him less for

his work; and then no one can't get more.(Steinbeck 214)

Modern industrialization in America reshaped American economy. American Dream increases the feeling of development in every person's mind. This feeling pushes them to a new condition of life. They work to succeed. To become a successful person is the essence of American dream. It disturbed the value behind the work. American dream created hunger for money. The great depression created problems in works and wages. It increased competition. And people pushed themselves in this new socio economic structure, which crushed them to nonexistence.

Corruption, superstitions, dowry system and addicts are some other problems in Baromas. These are social problems which create new challenges before society. Corruption in India is a very crucial subject. Sadanand Deshmukh has thrown light on this subject very clearly. Wherever a farmer goes to get something he has to face corruption. Without giving bribe any one can't complete his work. Balimama gives bribe to get his papers of farms and to pass on his crop loans case. Government and bureaucracy are full of corrupted people. Deshmukh throws lights on institutional corruption also. An education institution wants donation without receipt before giving the job of a teacher. It is very clear that corruption is destructing the social infrastructure of society. Any institution or government office is not ready to give anything without money. Dilip Pawar, Madhu and Eknath are the victims of corruption.

In *The Grapes of Wrath* they also have to give some money to get good work. To give money to get shelter in camp is also an activity of corruption. Migrant people get handbills of works. They follow the handbills in hope that they will get work. But when they reach at the place they find that there are thousands of people to work the same work. This activity of owners is a corrupt activity. First they advertise that they will give good wages but when the workers come they

refuse to give the promised amount of wages. This is also corruption to cheat the workers. The owners really exploit the workers.

In *Baromas* superstition is another subject which shapes the novel. Indian society is the follower of different religious rituals to fulfil their wishes. Rituals are compulsory in India. Sometimes people themselves do different rituals. Sometimes they are advised to do. These rituals sometime become superstitions. They do these rituals without having the scientific temperament. This is also responsible for farmers' miserable conditions. They complete the rituals without having budget to do them. They fulfil them because they are afraid of bad forces. They don't spend their earning to meet their basic needs. Lack of self-confidence perhaps leads them to such superstitions practices.

Eknath's father always refers to almanac (panchang) before performing any work in farms. He goes to Tarubhadaji to see the stars and their positions. Whether a star may affect his life or not is his main interest. His mother performs different rituals at home. They lose some money every year on this activity though they don't have budget. This also is one of the reasons for their poor situations. Farmers take loans to complete such religious rituals and they can't return them.

In *The Grapes of Wrath* some characters also have drug addict behaviour which destroys them. This is a universal problem. Uncle Joad always wants to drink alcohol even the family doesn't have money for food. He always drinks wine without thinking about the family's needs. He becomes a problem for the family when he drinks.

Jim Casy is a religious figure in *The Grapes of Wrath*. People come to him to offer prayers. All the characters request him to offer prayers for them. He believes that prayer will not save them from destruction. Ritual is a work which people want to perform at any cost.

Tarubhadaji and Banuba are the two Sadhus in the novel. Eknath's father

goes to Tarubhadaji and Madhu and his Golden gang follow the orders of Banuba to get secret wealth. Madhu even knows that they will not get anything by following it, but he couldn't stop himself and his friends

Baromas has a different cult of movement of farmers. Tejrao Khapke and other activists always try to give justice to the farming. They propagate knowledge to farmers about modern farming. The aim of their movement is to enable farmers to start new modern farming. Tejrao Khapake advocates globalization for getting good prices. But it is not the real condition. Globalization is not for giving farmers good price it is to start company farming. At the end of the novel after losing everything Eknath decides to participate in the movement. He became a full time worker of farmers' movement. He was imprisoned for giving illegal speech. This is the last effort of Eknath to give justice to the farmers' situation. His father commits suicide, brother decides to loot cars on the road but he decides to participate in the movement. This decision makes him a different character. Tom also decides to work in the workers' movement. He and Jim Casy were accused as the workers in the strike. He found that without conflict they will not get anything. There was not any decrease in their salary because Casy and others were on strike. As long as the strike went on and as long as Casy lived, the owners did not dare to reduce the wages. But once Casy was shot dead in firing the owners dared and reduced the wages of workers. He found that in the struggle against the situation, unity is the only answer against these problems. His sister Rosasharn becomes a great example of humanity at the end of novel. It is also like participation in a movement of humanism. She offers her milk to a hungry man who had not eaten anything for six days. This is the symbol of humanism. Every human being can save other's life by helping each other is the central message of this novel.

These two novels have some similarities and differences. There are many similar incidents, characters, circumstances and structure in both the novels. And there are differences of cultures, education, background and resistance of

characters in both the novels.

Difference of culture is a main point in both the novels. The culture of Baromas is different from that of *The Grapes of Wrath*. Tom's family and Eknath's family have different cultural background in their development. Baromas has the Maharashtrian culture and *The Grapes of Wrath* has the American culture that's why the development of these two families is different. We may not accept the help like Rosasharn here in India.

Steinbeck has used Okie language and its dialect and not standard language of that area likewise Sadanand Deshmukh has used variety of Marathi language that is specially used in Marathwada region. The use of dialect adds a special colour into the conversation. The dialogue in these novels seems natural and not artificial. Being realistic there is no scope for artificiality and romantic elements in these novels.

These are the great social satires. The writers are laughing at weaknesses of people, their governments and their policies. A few good policies adopted by some governments may not necessarily make the whole mankind happy and healthy in the true sense of the word because there are some gaps in implementation.

Both these novels are the realistic novels. All the characters and actions in these novels are the representatives of real life situations. The credit goes to these writers for creating the realistic picture. They are truly the realists.

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Emerging Bilingualism & Biculturalism in India

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Abstract:

With the development of telecommunication system such as mobiles, internet, transportation facilities and interaction through mass migrations among the people of different races, nationalities and ethnicities, the importance of understanding language and culture of other countries has increased drastically. India is known worldwide for her rich and supreme cultural heritage. The language, religion, food and the arts are just some of the various aspects of Indian culture. Bilingualism is the ability to use two languages effectively. In India, Hindi is a major language spoken by nearly 40 percent of Indians and English is the second language of the Union besides Hindi. At present, English language enjoys a global status. Language globalization brings with it culture globalization resulting in biculturalism. This state of biculturalism may be noticed to a varying degree in India where along with Indian Culture, existence of Western Culture can be felt everywhere which is brought into the country mainly by English language. Hence, there is fear in the minds of people that learning foreign language and culture may affect Indian languages and culture adversely but the fact is that learning a second language and culture helps everyone in building self-esteem, creativity, problem-solving skills etc. In India, as Hindi or other languages are spoken as mother tongue, the foreign language or culture, even if it is dominant, cannot make these languages inferior under any circumstances. At present, it is the need of the hour to strengthen the foundation of values and attitude in the lives of our younger generation so that they can judge the positive and the negative aspects of any foreign language or culture and accept whatever may lead them ahead to progress in their life.

Key Words: Bilingualism, Biculturalism, Globalisation, Communication.

Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.--**Rita Mae Brown**

Introduction

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During the last few decades, the technological, political, and sociological changes have made the world a smaller place to inhabit and have transformed the world into a global village. India is known worldwide for her rich and supreme cultural heritage. The language, religion, food and arts are just some of the various aspects of Indian culture. The 1961 Census had listed 1,652 mother tongues in India but around 325 languages are used for in-group communication in various parts of India. Hindi is a major language spoken by nearly 40 percent of Indians. English is recorded as the native language of 226,449 Indians in the 2001 census. English is the second language of the Union besides Hindi.

Presently, with the development of telecommunication system such as mobiles, internet, transportation facilities and interaction through mass migrations among the people of different races, nationalities, and ethnicities, the importance of understanding language and culture of other countries has increased drastically. Nowadays, it is indeed difficult for the people of different cultures to live together with inadequate understanding about each other. Intense knowledge of the subject, innovative thinking, strong language skills and cosmopolitan attitude are essential to get success in the 21st century. From the economic point of view, the 21st century is characterised by globalisation of economies and high job mobility. Millions of non-native speakers of English work in foreign countries where the use of English in the workplace is a necessity. Even in newly industrialised nations like China, Japan and India, English is becoming more and more necessary at work. As Warschauer (2000) observes, many non-native speakers of English need to use English daily in workplaces for presentations, negotiations and international collaboration. Besides, migrant working is a common phenomenon of this age and English plays a central role because it acts as a shared or link language among migrant workers from other countries (Coleman 2010).

As discussed above, in current scenario, English has become a door to international commerce, tourism, technology, science and an empowering discourse. English is far more worldwide in its distribution than all other spoken languages. It is an official language in 52 countries as well as many small colonies and territories. In addition, 1/4 to 1/3 of the people in the world understand and speak English to some degree. It has become the most useful language to learn for international travel and is now the de facto language of diplomacy. Not only this, English is an international language used by many people across the world as a native language (ENL), second language (ESL), foreign language (EFL) or lingua franca (ELF). Jenkins (2003) refers to Kachru's categorisation of the use of English into the inner, outer and expanding circles (Kachru 1992). The inner circle is made up of those who use English as a native language or mother tongue like the UK, USA, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, part of Canada and some Caribbean Islands. The outer circle includes Commonwealth nations who use English as an official language though it is a second language to its citizens. This includes countries like India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Philippines and South Africa. In the expanding circle, English has no official role but is important especially for business. China, Japan and the rest of the world fall into this category. Statistics reveal that more people are learning English language as the second language and it is estimated that between 2010 and 2015, more than two billion people, which is a third of the world population will be learning English as their second language. Adding to the current number of people who are fluent in English, it is estimated that half of the world population will be proficient in English language compared to only 250 million people in early 1952.

Bilingualism in India

Bilingualism is the ability to use two languages effectively. Learning another language is a step towards joining the global community. It has been rightly said by Nelson Mandela "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his

head but if you talk to him in his own language that goes to his heart.” Now, when more than half the world’s population is bilingual, mastering a second language teaches ways of interacting with the world. Increased globalization is forcing a growing number of students and professionals to interact across linguistic and cultural boundaries. As far as use of English in India is concerned, Indians are to some extent fortunate because due to the century long British colonial rule in India and the current education system being based on British standards, Indians are proficient in English language in comparison to other countries. Moreover, the policy of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation initiated in 1990s had favoured acceptance of English as the language of wider communication in every field. The boom in computer education and rise of information technology along with increased trade in goods and services owing to the influences of WTO resulted in increase in the number of children studying in English medium schools. The lingua franca of the world, English is also the language of politics, economics, business, education etc. in India. Furthermore, all government documents and reports including the National Budget are prepared in English. Researches in the area of use of English in work place have shown that 70% to 80% of the total working time of a professional is spent on communication. In India where other languages are also used for this purpose, out of the total time spent on communication, 64.14% is on communicating in English as against 27.22% in Hindi and 8.64% in regional languages. Thus the role of English in the professional world is to a great extent dominant. Not only this, but after Hindi, English is the most commonly spoken or used language in India particularly in legal, financial, educational, business and communicative systems. India is the third largest English book producing country after United States and the U.K. in the world and the largest number of books published in India is in English. Not only this, we are the second largest English-speaking nation in the world. At the moment, there are about 300 universities excluding deemed universities in our country and over

20,000 colleges and more than three lakhs high schools where English is being taught either in the form of English medium or English as language and literature. Moreover, it is remarkable that the most of the people in India are convinced that learning English is important for higher education, getting job worldwide, travelling and socialising. Hence, as the aspiration of students, housewives and other professionals for learning English is increasing day by day, it has resulted into a large number of private institutions training the people to learn English.

Language and Culture

Languages have been crossing borders for a long time. It is a well-known fact that language forms an integral part of culture and the two are quite inseparable. A nation's language and culture are always manifestations of its distinctive national spirit or mind. In the present age, English language enjoys a global status. Language globalization brings with it culture globalization, resulting in biculturalism in language. Thus, when a language crosses the regional or national boundary into another region or country, it carries with it certain aspects of the culture to which it belongs. With the passing of time, the foreign culture grows gradually side by side with the native culture. This is what we call biculturalism – two cultures existing together in one nation, one native and the other foreign. This state of biculturalism may be noticed to a varying degree in India where along with Indian culture, existence of western culture can be felt everywhere which is brought into the country mainly by English language.

Importance of Bilingualism and Biculturalism

In today's competitive world, it is essential to prepare the children for facing the world by their overall development. Bilingualism and biculturalism carry various advantages and improve abilities for children who grow up speaking a second language and learning and accepting the culture of other country. Bilingualism increases mental flexibility of children. Bilingual children may get two

or more words for a single object, concept or idea and are more willing and able to learn a third language easily. It also develops their analytical skill to compare, use and express their opinion by using other language. Bilingual children also perform better in mathematics and logic skills than children with just one language. Learning a second language and culture helps children in building self-esteem, creativity, problem-solving skills and math ability. Bilingual children maintain a strong sense of their own identity while developing sensitivity towards other people and cultures. Furthermore, bilingual children can handle the situation easily by convincing the people in appropriate language and apart from that they can understand and respond according to the needs of the listener. A bicultural person is usually a bridge between two communities. Bicultural people, generally have one foot in each culture so they can function in two different worlds. Being bilingual or being exposed to two languages and cultures often fosters greater tolerance for other cultural groups and makes a person open-minded.

There are two aspects of bilingualism and biculturalism: the positive side and the negative one. On the positive side, the foreign culture and language enrich the native culture and language and help to promote understanding among the people of the world and paves the way for bright career opportunities beyond linguistic or cultural limits. On the negative side, biculturalism may develop into a superior culture and an inferior culture. This is a very natural form of negativism due to globalization. The best way to avoid negativism in bilingualism and biculturalism is not by adopting a policy of isolation and protection of the native language and culture but by training the people to make the right choice when he/she adopts a foreign language or the aspects of the foreign culture.

This is a fact that beyond national languages and cultures, there exists a universal state representing a universal language and culture. After all, similarities between the human beings of various countries are greater than differences. Language globalization should therefore be exploited to promote these similarities

as a basis to promote understanding among the people of various cultures in the world. We can join others who share our concerns, taking strength from solidarity. Previously, it was difficult to get information about the culture of other countries but nowadays Internet can help us a lot by providing required information worldwide and particularly social networking sites are also helpful in making friends anywhere in the world.

In addition to that International companies, industries and organisations often seek to hire those who are bilingual in the indigenous language along with English. Bilinguals are paid better salaries in many countries. In the United States ignorance of English has a negative impact on migrant workers; they tend to have lower earnings and less job mobility compared to those with greater competence in English. Today, the job market, for both migrant and international workers, is more competitive due to the large number of people who are proficient in English. Moreover, there is increasing emphasis on English for the workplace, necessitating the design of language courses for various professionals (businessmen, medical doctors, nurses and those working in technology, agriculture, aviation, etc.) The growing demand for proficiency in English opens thousands of job opportunities for English language teachers worldwide. Those who can use English to acquire more knowledge and information and to relate with others all over the world become personally and socially empowered. Communication based on mutual respect between two countries does not threaten the cultural heritage of either side but adds knowledge and coping skills to the cultural repertoire of those involved. Clearly both sides have much to gain and mainly false pride to lose from intercultural alliances. It has proven possible to part with mutually exclusive national and cultural allegiances.

In the last half century it has been convenient for Indians to use English as a link language for the diverse people of this subcontinent. Indeed, in the absence of some language that connects all the States or people in India, it is hard to see how

the business of this diverse Nation could have been conducted. Moreover, the linkages of India with the rest of the world would have been more difficult if this subcontinent did not possess the second largest English speaking population in the world. There are obvious advantages to share a common culture and language, even as a second culture and language with the rest of the world. Without that second language, IT Industry, BPOs, LPOs etc. in Bangalore, Pune or any other cities in India could not have happened.

Conclusion

Over the years, English language has presumed a great importance as a means of communication in the global world but across the globe, media and academicians have raised their concerns that depict English language as imperialist, predatory and killer to other languages and in a way it is undermining the linguistic diversity in the world. Even Coleman (2010) cautions that the importance of English to development should not be exaggerated, especially for those who have little access to it. Evidently, English is by no means the only route to development but it definitely plays a significant role.

In India, as Hindi or other languages are spoken as mother tongue, the foreign language or culture, even if it is dominant, cannot make these languages inferior under any circumstances. The roots of Indian languages and culture are still deep to keep up with new scientific and technological developments. Moreover, India is always follower of the principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam' which means that the whole earth is like a family and this is wonderfully proved by the framers of the Constitution who, while framing the Constitution of India, after Independence, unhesitatingly, adopted the best of all the Constitutions in the world according to requirement of our country. In addition to that, we should not forget the immortal words of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi who said, "Let all door and windows of my house be open. Let the air of different cultures of the world freely move through my house. But let my feet be firmly rooted in my

own soil because I do not wish to be blown off by that air." At present, it is the need of the hour to strengthen the foundation of values and attitude in the lives of our younger generation so that they can judge the positive and the negative aspects of any foreign language or culture and accept whatever may lead them ahead to progress in their life.

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Re-Visioning Myth: Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain*

Dr. Sunita Agarwal*

Abstract:

Borrowing from Yavakri myth from the *Mahabharata*, the playwright, Girish Karnad, had structured his play, *The Fire and the Rain*, on the binaries of destruction and construction, ordeal and reward, anger and peace. The confluence of these binaries in postmodern world makes the play a very interesting study rendering it new meanings and insights. The use of myth reinforces the universal conflict between good and evil, the strife between brothers, rivalry between the selfish and the innocent. Karnad links the past and the present, the archetypal and the real. In most of his plays, the contemporary playwright has appropriated and exploited Indian myths and folklore to deconstruct socio-cultural issues of Indian society. As Dhanavel says, the borrowed myths are "reinterpreted to fit pre-existing cultural emphasis".

The present paper will analyse the play *The Fire and the Rain* to explore 1. the contextualization of myth to discuss contemporary issues 2. the relevance of myth in bringing out the heterogeneity and diversity of meaning in the text.

Borrowing from Yavakri myth from the *Mahabharata*, the playwright, Girish Karnad, has structured his play, *The Fire and the Rain*, on the binaries of destruction and construction, ordeal and reward, anger and peace. The confluence of these binaries in postmodern world makes the play a very interesting study rendering it new meanings and insights. The use of myth reinforces the universal conflict between good and evil, the strife between brothers, rivalry between the selfish and the innocent. By using the 'grammar of literary archetype' Karnad links the past and the present, the archetypal and the real. In most of his plays, the contemporary playwright has appropriated and exploited Indian myths and folklore to deconstruct socio-cultural issues of Indian society. As Dhanavel says,

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the borrowed myths are "reinterpreted to fit pre-existing cultural emphasis". By using these myths, he tried to reveal the absurdities of life with all its elemental passions and conflicts and man's eternal struggle to achieve perfection. Roland Barthes (1971) takes up myth as a tool to analyse a wide range of images and activities in contemporary culture. According to him mythology builds upon the structures of denotation and connotation. As myth, the sign gives concrete and particular expression to abstract concepts, through which we make sense of a particular social experience. The mythical beliefs transform complex cultural processes into apparently natural unchangeable and self-evident ones. Vanashree Tripathy (2004) has said that "Literature and Myth merely dramatize, heighten and highlight what is theoretically possible in nature and science. By transcending the limits of time and space, myths provide flashes of insight into life and its mystery. They form an internal part of cultural consciousness of the land, with different meanings and it reflects the contemporary issues (89)

In the pretext of above propositions, the present paper will analyse the play *The Fire and the Rain* to explore 1. the contextualization of myth to discuss contemporary issues 2. the relevance of myth in bringing out the heterogeneity and diversity of meaning in the text.

Issues of the present world find their parallels in the myths and fables of the past, giving new meanings and insights reinforcing the theme. Karnad believes in the Jungian collective racial consciousness and so he resorts to the past habitually for the source material. According to Jung, "Myths are expression of the primordial images in the collective unconscious of man. In the beginning, man had certain experiences and received them in their psyche in the form of images. Since they are the first images they are called archetypes of the collective unconscious." (Jung 130).

Karnad's play *The Fire and the Rain* appropriates the myth from Mahabharata where the two elements of cosmos are taken up to symbolize mortification and

purgation. The play, abundant in, binaries like love and jealousy, dharma and adharma, justice and injustice, man and woman, Brahmanism and Shudraism, love and loneliness, personality and split personality, the real face and the mask, man and superman expounds the complexity of contemporary life. It affiliates to the belief that the present world share and suffer similar trials and tribulations which were a part of the past, but only with certain modifications. The playwright, very appropriately, also, exploits the concept of 'Purshartha'- the four ethical goals of human existence- i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. These morality principles, which used to govern human life, but whenever there was/is a dichotomy between the tenets and performance/action the result was/is chaos.

The play is based on the myth of Yavakri of Vana Parva (the Forest Canto of Mahabharata) as narrated by the rishi Lomasha to the pandavas when they were wandering across the land during their exile. The Indian mythology, according to Girish Karnad, expresses a deep concern over 'the fear of brother destroying brother'. The two complementary myths of Yavakri and Indra-Vritra about the betrayal of brother reinforce the theme of the play. Both the myths expose the sibling rivalry prevalent in all the ages, wherein in pursuit of Artha (symbolic of power: political, economic or spiritual) or Kama (symbolic of love) brothers slay/kill each other. The discrepancy between the four 'Purusharthas' cause calamity and catastrophe. In the play, the reason of estrangement between Parvasu and his father Raibhya is to acquire the powerful position of chief priest of the fire sacrifice ritual. Parvasu intentionally kills his father because he holds him responsible for disturbing him in the sacred 'yajna' consecrated to appease the God of rain. He tells Vishakha,

He deserves to die. He killed Yavakri to disturb me in the last stages of the sacrifice. Not to punish Yavakri, but to even with me. I had to attend to him before he went any farther (Karnad, 33).

Yavakri also seduces Vishkha, the wife of Parvasu (once his beloved) to appease his “kama”; to show his anger to Parvasu; and to avenge his father’s humiliations.

The Fire stands for the burning rage and hatred of Yavakri against Raibhya, the fire of Jealousy against Parvasu (by his father Raibhya, for becoming the chief priest). The fire symbolizes the cyclic hatred that never ends; it also stands for the fire sacrifice. The rain stands for the appeasement of the gods, reward, regeneration and redemption. By juxtaposing Arvasu-Nittalai’s selfless and innocent relationship to Yavkri-Vishka’s lustful and revengeful relationship, the playwright defines the binaries of the title of the play *The Fire and the Rain*. Arvasu- Nittalai’s benign love brings rain of happiness, harmony and hope while Yavkri-Vishkha’s relationship inflames and brings havoc and destruction. Love, like rain should cleanse, purify and sooth and it is only possible if human beings raise themselves above petty and selfish ends and work for the interest of larger humanity.

The story of Indra-Vritra indicates the game of power politicking in the contemporary world. To establish his unrivalled supremacy God Indra relentlessly slays his two step brothers Viswaroop and Vritra. The scene is reminiscent of Satan’s ‘slightest pride’ and injured pride’ in Milton’s *The paradise Lost* book I, Indra ,the King of Gods, vows vengeance against Brahma, the Father of All Creations, for preferring Vishwaroop to him. His plan is to kill Viswaroop by fair means or foul. By relating Indra -Vritra myth, the playwright places the heaven and the earth at the same platform and shows how power and corruption reduces the distinction between human and superhuman, making both of them condescend to sub human behaviour. The employment of such manipulative strategic tactics form a very essential part of all the political party’s repertoire to reach to the power

Knowledge is power. It can be acquired after rigors and consistent effort under the guidance of guru. In the play God Indra rejects Yavakri’s appeal to give him knowledge saying, “You cannot master knowledge through austerities. It must come with experience. Knowledge is time. It is space .you must move through

these dimensions.”(13) Tempo-spatial significance in acquiring knowledge cannot be undermined. Knowledge delivered/acquired through Internet and technology, wherein these dynamics are ignored, has its own ramification. Digression in the form of Yavakri ultimately succeeding in gaining the boon results in his adopting an arrogant attitude and it leads to his downfall and demolition. Yavakri cherished the dream of acquiring knowledge which is “vicious, destructive not the one which demands control of passions, serenity and, objectivity. (23)” The myth of Yavakri is the story of ambition to get universal knowledge without experience and the guidance of ‘guru’; and this might prove dangerous to humanity. Like Mary Shelly’s Frankenstein Yavakri wants to gain knowledge so that he can misuse it for destructive purposes. Like a man of materialistic world he needs it as a malevolent weapon for his own selfish ends. Yavakri’s superficial knowledge cannot save his life because it was full of falsehood, pride, lack of control of passions and serenity, and desire of revenge. Raibhya and Yavakri’s war for the supremacy deconstructs the myth of knowledge as well as the perennality of these myths. Neither Yavkri, nor Raibhya and Parvasu could use knowledge for the welfare of the human society. Gandhiji believed in the selfless search of truth which leads towards the path of light, life, goodness, existence, love and God.

Through these archetype myths, Karnad has addressed the contemporary social and cultural issues and affirmed his belief that religion is a living myth and associated with rituals, dogmas and principles. Carl Jung also considers, religion as a “peculiar attitude of man, which creates certain dynamic factors, observations and considerations which are conceived and named in the world as ‘power’, ‘spirits’, demons, Gods, ‘laws’, ideals, or whatsoever the name a man can give to such factors.”(Lal16) The presence of Brahmin rakshas at the fire sacrifice denotes the subversion of class and caste hierarchy. The upper class’s efforts to restrict the entry of low caste in religious precincts on the basis of pure/impure dichotomy no longer wield its power. The sacred precinct gets thronged by masses and the

looting of oblations of fruits and sweets indicates the fire (hunger and anger) against state, power and rule. The struggle for survival comes to fore and Agni burns as a sacrificial fire without its accompanying grace as a vision and light. The 'Agni' or the fire of the title of the play burns to deliver the message that it requires subjugation and suppression of 'self' to the Universal being. Prometheus stole fire from Zeus to render life to humanity and this 'Fire' should be used in its positive and productive meaning that is like 'light' to show one the right path not as the destructive fire which reduces everything to ashes.

Through the character of tribal girl Nittalai, Girish Karnad questions certain sham secretive religious practices. Nittali asks Andhaka and Arvasu-

Nittilai: But what I want to know is why Brahmins are so secretive about everything?

Nittilai (continuing) you know, their fire sacrifices are conducted in covered enclosures. . . . Look at my people. Everything is done in public view there. (Karnad 10)

Critiquing Brahmanical discriminatory practices, the play interrogates the caste and class hierarchies which are still remnant after 65 years of independence. The comparative positioning of religious practices by high caste and by tribes undermines relevance of such hollow religious rituals on the one hand and on the other, it underlines the openness and broadness of outlook in tribal communities. Tribal communities' strong conviction and belief in their constitution on which they base their decisions without any prejudice establish a kind of superiority over Brahmin caste in the sense that the feeling of animosity is for their firm faith in their religion, ritual and regulatory and disciplinary constitution.

Through Vishkha's continuous exploitation, the playwright has examined the unjust and oppressive practices of the patriarchal society where woman is subjugated and marginalized. Vishkha suffers at each stage of her life. First the

betrayal of Yavakri, her lover, secondly her marriage with Parvasu against her will, the use of her body by the husband Parvasu, "like an experimenter, an explorer. An instrument in search. Search for what? I never knew. But I knew he knew (14)." Again molestation by Yavakri; reprimanded by the father in law for her adultery and the vicious circle completes when Parvasu returns from the fire sacrifice stealthily to divulge the truth of the episode. The mythical narration explicitly exhibits the suppression of woman from the Vedic age to the present. In the epic 'Ramayana' it was Sita; in "Mahabharata" it was Draupadi; who were attributed the guilt of all sibling strife and the root of epic battles. In Bible it was Eve who was held responsible for downfall from heaven to earth. The incidents of honour killing, molestation of woman, subjugation of rights and subservient position of woman in the society indicate the unchanged attitude and outlook of society. Vishkha's willing surrender to her lover Yavakri also raises certain questions. Was it a kind of rebellion against masculine dominance over female body? Did Vishkha use it as trope to ridicule man's hollow ego and pride? And what did this episode refer to: to love, to lust or seduction.

In the play *The Fire and the Rain*, Yajna and Drama, the inclusion of these two activities are intentional on the part of the playwright to bring out the social issues of class /caste hierarchy. The play begins with 'yajna' and ends with the 'natya'. The positioning of these two performances is intended to complete the circle of the play in the sense that it subverts the very social hierarchy which these two activities demarcate. 'Yajna' and drama, these two distinct performances, are represented by different hierarchical class. 'Yajna' was considered to be sole proprietorship of Brahmin class where the entry of low class/caste used to be prohibited. These two performances, though, coexist simultaneously decide and mark the boundaries of class/caste. In ancient time, 'yajna' used to be performed to propitiate God for the fulfilment of various wishes. After a daylong rigors religious practices, the priests used to entertain themselves by oral story telling or

'natya' or drama performances. 'Natya' was created by Brahma, the father of universe, by taking the text from 'Rig-Veda', the art form performances from 'Yajurveda', the song from the 'Samveda' and rasa from the 'Athervveda' and thus a new Veda emerged out of combination of all these, which was called 'natyaveda'. God Indra passed it to Bharat, who with his hundred sons staged the first play, which was disrupted by demons and therefore Brahma ordered to build an enclosure to carry out the performance. Both 'yajna' and drama share similar structure in the sense of their parallel pattern. Both of them have Performance-disruption by demons-building of protective enclosure- discussion – second performance inside the closure.

The similarity of structure and pattern in these classified activities are indicative of universal Brotherhood and the futility of this class and caste divide. Breaking the caste boundary Arvasu joins a 'natak' group to advocate his cause for justice. Ironically, he plays the role of demon Vritra and wears the masque to expose the hypocrisy of his brother Parvasu. Very dexterously, Girish Karnad exploits the 'play within play' tactic and make Parvasu realize his mistake. Parvasu and Arvasu represent two different dispositions of human personality Parvasu, the selfish, self-cantered, shrewd and insensitive, while Arvasu an innocent, simple, romantic, and humane whose unselfish behaviour pleases the god Indra. Instead of asking for Nittalai's life back, raising him above shallow and narrow mind-set, Arvasu asks for redemption of Brahma raksha, who was suffering between life and death. He subjugates his self to the Universal being- to regenerate life around. Towards the end of the play, the perennial conflict between good and evil resolves in the victory of good in the form of downpour from God Indra. The fire ceremony fails to bring rain because Parvasu lacked human qualities like love and mercy. Arvasu and Nittalai's sacrifices bring rain of love, rain of regeneration and rain of redemption. The restoration of regenerative fertility of the land is a part of participatory process of transformation, a redemptive renewal of life. The affirmation of belief in

essentiality of this continuum of life beyond death at the individual and communal level is strengthened. Thus, Myths project an undifferentiated view of life. Beneath the superficial differences, there is the universal realm of noble humanity.

Myth can never be dismissed as belonging to the past, because a great deal of its charm lies in its principal quality that of repeating itself. Beginning with the myth of Yavakri, the action of the play moves to the conflict between mythical and elemental which ultimately leads to the quest for personal and social meanings. The conflict within man is the result of his excessive obsession with the pursuit of his own desires. The conflict between good and evil can be sorted out only when one transcends oneself from these egoistical and selfish desires and lives in harmony and amity. Myth and ritual are intertwined to unfold the deeper meaning of life. The fire of revenge, anger and anguish can only be extinguished with the rain of love and peace. It is through love only that the essential principle of *Satyam, Shivam, Sundram*: Truth as Eternally Beautiful can be achieved.

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Winners and Losers

Dr. N. G. Wale*

Winners and Losers,
Two inevitable parts of a coin,
Losers feel they are luckless,
Winners feel, very fortunate
 In game, competition, examination,
 Winners' and losers' integral participation
 It is sportiveness that counts,
 If defeated, don't be nervous.
Victory and defeat, inseparable parts,
Of the game of life, impossible to bypass
Emulate the Japanese Doll,
Only then will you be praised by all.
 Be a doctor and be a player,
 Be a master and be a singer,
 Whatever will be your achievements,
 To laugh at the losers is nothing but nonsense
We are all winners,
We are all losers,
Remember a winner will be a loser,
It is impossible to predict our future
 Winners and Losers, brothers aright,
 Knowing this make your life bright
 It is difficult to digest defeat,
 Victory is acquired by great effort

* Assistant Professor in English, Balasaheb Desai College, Patan, Dist-Satara

Life

Dr. N. G. Wale*

Oh! Almighty, give us strength,
Save us from thy wrath.
Teach us a good lesson,
To come up from this vast ocean
 Life is like a sea,
 Full of hazards and risks,
 The path is not so smooth,
 But we should make the most of our youth
Shelley's many coloured dome,
Shakespeare's tale told by an idiot,
Coleridge's golden dream;
Ours, it is a hope and beam
 It is a grim reality, in fact,
 Oh! Prophet, teach us how to act

* Assistant Professor in English, Balasaheb Desai College, Patan, Dist-Satara

An Interview with Thomas Keneally

Babasaheb B. Patil*

Since I have undertaken research on Thomas Kennelly, in regard to the representation of war in his novels, I paid a visit to Sydney (Australia) on 13th Feb, 2012. I met Thomas Kennelly on 16th Feb, 2012 at sharp 11 a.m., with his kind permission; I asked him a few questions in connection with my topic of the research. He, very humbly and humanely, welcomed me and responded to all my questions.

Mr. Patil: Good morning sir,

Thomas: Good morning

Thomas: Did you want picture taken by Crly O'bron

Mr. Patil: Ya, Ya.

Mr. Patil: I have already seen all about You Tubes on net. Opening Ceremony of Tom Kenelly Centre, Even though various commentary on the novels, especially, The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith, Schindler's List, you are so popular in our region. We have translated your novel in our regional language, Schindler's List.

Thomas: Yes,

Mr. Patil Take this, It is in Marathi language.

Thomas: Marathi, Oh ! I am very honour

Mr. Patil: It is my present to you.

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Thomas: Oh ! Thank You,

Mr. Patil: But I have never signed on it, please remember.

Thomas: Ok. Yes !

Mr. Patil: One more thing is, I am doing Ph.D. at Shivaji University, Kolhapur

Thomas: Oh, by the way do you want the picture taken by Carly O'ren ?

Mr. Patil: Ok. Sir, Particularly I choose the novels of the war background

Thomas: Yes, yes !

Mr. Patil: Not a cent percent theme covered to be war but there are approaches of war. Particularly 'Schindler's List' is the war background of Jews and Confederates is about the civil war, Part of civil war. The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith is the struggle for survival am I right?

Thomas: That's right !

Mr. Patil: So, I have chosen the novels and I want to find out the political perspective in the novels.

Thomas: Yes well;
I want to speak about this and you take what you want at this movement I am not sure what is your definition of political but. The reason, I think I was fascinated by war of two falls; one is that my father was involved with many Indian in North Africa. So I was only two degrees of separation from him and me and a survival beg in my imagination and I was aware J. M.A. on set questions are arise in my mind. I commitment of these atrocity, would I even in my histories of Australia, I asked myself have

committed my mind could I ? have committed the atrocity against the Aboriginal that committed were that the rippled five riffle in north Australia and throughout Australia, but the very big wars in the Australia, so these are the some of the reasons, but I am also interested in when we go to war we makeup miss aboriginal each other, we make miss Justine, meaningless the war. E.g. It is easy to point out the matter in the case of Hitler and myth of Jewish international Euro account Jewish rise even the sixth month of bible being like a virus on culture that justify 18 years, 19 years killed Jewish bible by we make up this miss make it possible for us to do this atrocity and here most remarkable young men given the soldier and remarkable men stand up against the myth and it is not always most educated stand this most cultured more part of the metro politician culture people and they are often the atrocity go along with these cultural myth about who the others are, whereas Schindler for e.g. was a rough man he was not appreciated, he was do philosopher, he never read manual that unlike lot of assessment and therefore it. I am very interested the people who despite the conditioning stand up for the humanity. I was also ask myself would I have guts to do silence secrets that is easy I bound to argue, on behalf of assistance in Australia but I never go to jail doing so. Would I have guts to do raising were criticizing the government would to send me jail. I still don't know, but I have lucky life because I know how much one attacks the government in Australia you very much way of it the question standing up against the majority thus love across the link of race, religion, culture that always interested me and of course, where does races religion, culture what is the biggest in armed struggle are separation is and they sum up the fancy

reasons as well as interested in more something primitively in me that is something formal primitive, that I can't put my understanding that something more in my gin. So it planned my subconscious, these are some of the reasons why war fascinated in me, it is most extreme, most extreme actual politics, and of course it is often distraction it is handy destruction for democratizes, politician to say look, you might people but those people of other side of the river want to take everything away from you. So I am going to give you justice, but I am giving you a rifle to attack on these people other side of the river that is destructive of from economics injustice, justice that's I am giving to you these some, so these some other more reasons. I am interested in, I think two influences made me in favour cultural differences, one was being catholic of time when I am suspected in Australia, where there is loyalty been.

Mr. Patil: Ya, Ya,

You have already taken stand against the Christian catholic, you supported the Jew people. Even though I read the letter of Stephan Spielberg, he admires your work.

Even though prior to read this letter I admit that he is the person of Christian community but highly supported to the Jew people, it is some sort of beyond imagination and it is of course sense of humanity.

Thomas: One other I rose clue and Jhon Fedricks I was you, I was conclude American Civil war I had American family in connection but I was interested because, but people had seen the people in Europe really look what happened that war would have been able predict world war I. By the way I also rose with the war letter of an uncle called of

John Keneally who was on western front and so I naturally read his letter let got me involve too. I don't know, what its probability I am fundamentally environmental person I do increase worth. I ask myself if I massacre the prisoners or would I freedom bind them or wounds are a question? Interestingly me rightly and I am not sure because you can conditioned to do nearly anything as you know I am studying to be a priest and in the seminar, we were conditioned to believe all sorts of rubbish were told that even that if auspicious tallest to do think stupid to do your auspicious what your priest believe the above seen said is God's will that perfect keep for assons they of us autonomous God's will and so. I have solely conditioned this kind. I wonder If I couldn't conditioned myself to one of these kids who majestically army shot to the pregnant women whether like. I would be conditioning to be greater thing. So that's the part of fascinations yes.

Mr. Patil: I have already seen the movie 'Scindler's list' whether the movie is 100 % percent copy of the novel or not.

Thomas: No, there is lot of the novel left out in the movie. In that I have many problems now one thing Spielberg hasn't time to put in the movie. Schindler selects fact never made the sell, reason because he was make the fortune of Black money market he was taking truck load of goods up into Poland selling them at a great price, he was buying diamond storing he was acting as a ware house, so German goods, cloth, liquor soon and so he was making a fortune and which he was why not making a sell, worth and it would been great to the sense of black marketing. The film was already very long three quarter hours that why sort of things left from the film and then you have

phenomena you have schindler was member of German intelligence, as he was all that is left out of the film.

- After all film is film.

Film is very time consuming because Stefan it gets through every then and writing a film script is very difficult thing beyond work because you have to find, decide which of the main thing beyond work because you have to find, decide which of the main thing you mainly presume one theme and of course Spielberg presume main theme Schindler has an operator, Schindler the saviour but the room the operator Schindler.

Mr. Patil: What is the reason Spielberg changes the name of the novel Schindler Ark to Schindler's List in the movie?

Thomas: In America at the insistence of the publisher, he may have two titles Schindler's Ark, Schindler's List. American chose Schindler's List and I arranged that, in Europe and Australia the book has been published Schindler's Ark and I arranged with them with three months. I still think. They were wrong 1993 Schindler list. But in 1983 Schindler's Ark has published in Britain as a Schindler's List. So Spielberg didn't change the title. I said to Spielberg in 1992 now you going to make the film would you turn the title back to Schindler's List to Schindler Ark which is called in English. Speaking well former empire former British empire and he said no he wants to use list as visual in the film. I didn't even the idea of Ark is abstract whole list is visual his reason is better than the Simon K. is American publisher. But I must thought this book is not going to do any, nobody wants to read the book in America. So ultimately I gave in and went with the Schindler List in U.S. That's why the movie

Schindler's List. At a few conference. I attended with Spielberg. Journalist could often said, why did you change the title ? He said I didn't change the title. The American publisher did in 1983 Ten years before the film.

Mr. Patil: Even though towards Asmara is it the real conflict in the Russian Society or communist. The real character Artem Samsurov central character Towards Asmara.

Thomas: Yes,

Mr. Patil: What conflict do you want to show through the novel?

Thomas: Well, that Novel 'Towards Asmara' is my only novel written with true purpose, I am trying direct political purpose, I was hoping the novel would publish that war would be settle, the major American state department my people should why did they are trained people. Liberties front. You should take that book around and show to the congressmen. It was a political book and it was criticized in some journals of America, so being didactic, that was didactic, it is beautifully reviewed by Robert. New York times and how I found in that book I was pursuing whether hunger is produce by politics or God and of course I wanted to show through that was the factor of people's hunger and I wanted to talk also hunger how unjust majesty, war, have humour right sadly same, whether war went African nation's given but the atrocity we committed in Atrocity and you can understand they are the important trained Art upraised rebel leader walking was promising ruler party, elocution democracy and people were giving their life for the prosecution. Many people already lost their families in the European Army and just served that the war an extraordinary war. One is writing about

the Ten thousands of people were dead every year and rebels of an Ethiopian soldier was it stop it is a ridiculous, he was just come emerge a famine in Ethiopia and spending its entire substances on buying Russian weapon to attack. Arotrain degradation so there, it is my most political book.

Mr. Patil: What about River Town

Thomas: River Town is also interesting. I read about these Punjabi halkers and that typical. So I got a figure that represents my grandfather Kim and he is low at he is not untouchable. The average mostly are untouchable the white man and women and they are reading about men halkers, stall, they are going up and down the river, I read a newspaper article on of these, man, in novel. He was riding on his horse. Speeding his horse and arrested suspecting. Three times, when the magistrate awoke him why ? he said that they won't let me to the joggiee club. and I thought learn in life it must be so the idea hostess there culture with each other that is an example that happened lot of in my book whether their entail suspension followed by friendship.

Mr. Patil: In 'Bring Larks and Heroes' you totally have touch the political surrounding and people's train is also concern with communism.

Thomas: Yes, Indeed, it is concern with Russian Revolution, of course, I am not a communist because I do not trust it. I believe regional trust. I believe sin I follow it. If you create a dictatorship in the political area, if you have to kill so many people to begin with, so I don't like that side but at that time he start to kill the people and he killed more and said that I have killed three million people and more and I will kill more and then the state will be perfect. I am a social democrat, but

real meant the social democracy for more from the left of the Tony Blea or Junnie Gitla.

I am sorry, what's your question again. Yes, people train, I am interested in system and if possible, until Stalin, that terrible famine, after the Russian civil war start and until the invention of hunger everywhere in Czechoslovakia in 1968, it was possible for communist to prove himself being a catholic to prove himself that look, what has been, so, I am very interested until the real revolution, until the Marxist revolution in Russia went bad.

I believe in Marxism Still Stalin, one may the catholic. The map of the universe and filled the risen and made sense in the world. Now the terrible things are that the Stalin became the dictator basically. Whole the risk temptation with of communism totalitarian system was very strong, because the policies of the people are of totalitarian system. I am very interested in belief and these men and women in people's train really believe they had great reason to believe, because the re-distributing of wealth was a necessity and just and stronger in the country is very interesting and just. In American good public health, good public education and good public communication. I do not believe in by the republications, not believe by the tea parties, where is in Australia every one believe these things, so there is little bit socialist, and in 1970 Ethiopian in Australia and French men describe in Australia. Sociality ideas being require guaranty minimum tea with dignity is very important.

It has one may globalize American research give, because society without this American doesn't believe that.

- Mr. Patil: Last one question. You wrote so many, huge books, not single side, huge books, how can you manage these all.
- Thomas: I don't know one thing I write very fast, I am writing history and novels. I just work industriously but yesterday I have to just mind all day my grandchildren, the whole day and I enjoy doing that but when I left him that 4'o'clock. I return of the four five hours and very efficiently wrote, because his company was so invigorated. So I think having grandchildren has a great to help to me, because one goes out a child you no longer to write you don't have think about writing because child absorb everything. The child doesn't care where you are school teacher, a doctor, a writer so sanitation man. You just a playmaker for him and you have to provide all things for him and you have to provide all things for him and get entirely such to the child's world. Even though I do produce lot of work. I don't get time off. Today I took time off to come here to deliver some books and so I have some answers being satisfied to you.
- Mr. Patil: I am very thankful to you, would you like to visit India ?
- Thomas: Oh ! Yes ! I have, I went to Kolkata book fare few years ago and I want to Jaipur Literary Festival. I went to Delhi, But I love to visit India. Yes I would. This year Jaipur asks me too late. You know the book fair, what his name, Tyranto runs the book fair.
- Mr. Patil: If you come to Jaipur, you will visit our University, Shivaji University.
- Thomas: I love to come, How log from Jaipur.
- Mr. Patil: I will manage, only you just inform me.

Thomas: Ok ! Ok !

Thomas: I got your email, I just read from him. I read email to him yesterday ?
or a day before, he sent me an email and that is very interesting,
what I will do you, if you will give me your address.

Mr. Patil: Ya ! Ya ! I will give you.

Thomas: I will try to send you a copy of my new books it probable
complicated your work.

Mr. Patil: One more thing, whether I can contact you personally if I have
problem.

Thomas: Yes,

I will write my email, Professor Shewale, he knows my email address
tkeneall bigpond. nut. au

Thomas: That's best you send me an email. I will give you the number.
How long are you in Sydney ?

Mr. Patil: Just ten more days.

Thomas I will give you my number, I am going to Pearth next week, but we
may have a coffee, you having being manly where I live. You catch a
ferry down here, we can make a coffee one day.

Mr. Patil: I don't mind.
I am very glad to meet you sir, nice to meet you.

Thomas: Yes, I also.

Mr. Patil: Namaskar, Namaste.

- Thomas: I will show you what I am reading at the moment if you have interested you like him. Onkindo he is my friend. I am reading 'Last Man in Tower' by Adiga. What's his first name, the man who won the Booker Prize a year ago for his work. Tiger.
- Mr. Patil: Tagore
- Thomas: No !
Arvind Adiga, Once I read the work of Kiran Desai in Kolkata.
Kiran Desai is a splendid writer.
- Thomas: Thank you to meet once again. Great pleasure to meet you.
- Mr. Patil: Do you like I am doing Ph.D. on your novels, whether my work will be amazing. Do you appreciate my work?
- Thomas: Yes, I am very flatterer, if you don't bother.