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Critical Space[®]

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Editors

P. A. Attar H. B. Patil



Critical Space®**A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal in English Language and Literature**

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EDITORIAL

It is my great pleasure to introduce you the October issue of Critical Space that will give you an opportunity to discuss and contemplate on variety of topics besides the fire that will eradicate the coldness of this winter and darkness of ignorance. As usual we have received a number of articles that bring to our attention the significant issues pertaining to culture, language and literature. India is nation of traditions that carries a long chain of heritage. The folklores, epics, myths and puranas have formulated such body of knowledge that not only open the doors of aesthetic pleasure but lead us towards the divine bliss. The first paper of the issue contributed by Ms. Ishrat and Dr. Daisy deals with Haryanvi Saang and explores us with the great flock tradition of Haryana. It can be seen that the minuet observation and meticulous documentation can save an art form which is at the brink of extinction in the age of digital world.

This is the age of cinema that has occupied a larger space of human consciousness and increased the possibilities of representation. Dr. Mallika. A. Nair in her paper takes an overview of the adaptations of autobiographies from different corners of the world and foregrounds certain principles that can be generalized into two broad areas one, autobiography as a genre study and second, film adaptation. Dr. Namdev Patil deliberates a valid theoretical frame of queer literature by encompassing the emotions and behavioural patterns which were generally attributed as taboo. In the light of the theory he has analysed Hollinghurst's *The Swimming Pool Library*.

Dr. Kumar Sushil analyses Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground* as an existential novel. The article is worth reading as it has considered the significant references of Philosophy but never distracted from the literary appreciation of the text. The article prepares a perceptive frame that will allow us to read an existential novel for its most possible meaning in the light of a proper philosophical context. Balveer and Dr. Devendra Rankawat point out that how the art of cinema can provide a wider space to the subaltern voices and may appear as an influential

medium of social enlightenment. The article strengthens our belief that the art cannot be separated from society but develop reciprocally.

Dr. Fatimah Alotaibi analyses the works of Wollstonecraft and Woolf in order to highlight the contemporariness of the feminist thought. The reading of article is really an academic exercise to revisit the feminist classics and realize it in the contemporary scene. In the similar line of thought we have another article of Swati Suri that analyses the short stories of Rabindranath Tagore in order to understand the women's predicament reflected in them. The analysis has considered the socio-cultural ethos that allowed her to reach at the feminist truths of the period and pin point its universality.

Aditi Swami analyses Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* in the light of Northrop Frye's 'Myth, Fiction and Displacement'. Article is a good example of how to apply a theory in the practical analysis of the text. Dr. Namadev P. Khavare deals with J.G. Ballard's *The Kindness of Women* and points out social and psychological realities reflected in it. His understanding of post-modern psyche and the appropriate use of primary and secondary sources make this article interesting to read. Dr. U. N. Kurrey explores 'Ethnicity' and 'Identity' reflected in Girish Karnad's plays. The article reflects how the behavioural sets of the characters were under the influence of their ethnic identities. Indrayani Jadhav and Dr. Satish Ghatge explore how Julian Barnes depicts personal history in his novel *Before She Met Me*. In contemporary socio-cultural ethos the fabric of ethics is blurred in the name of materialism which is so influential in the case of Julian that it also affects his aesthetic expression and produces a mixture that cannot be recognized as a fact or fiction. Vanya Jaiswal in his article revisits the concept of orientalism and analyses Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* in that perspective. The article becomes interesting as the researcher has explored how Lahiri has used certain western stereotypes regarding Indians.

I hope that you will find time to read and contemplate on the issue and give us feedback.

- **Professor P. A. Attar**

- **Dr H. B. Patil**

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Haryanvi Saang '*Cheer Parva*': An Analytical Study

Ms. Ishrat*

Dr. Daisy*

Abstract:

The paper, "Haryanvi Saang '*Cheer Parva*': An Analytical Study" try to focus on richness of Haryanvi folklore and its literary and linguistic merits. Folk Theatre has been there since ages all over the world in many societies, but India has the longest and richest tradition in theatre. Whereas the earlier stage drama was mostly religiously oriented or was staged for teaching moral behavior, it turned its face towards the depiction of social problems and entertainment purposes later on. Also, it has always been closely related to ancient rituals and seasonal festivities of the country. Indian drama combines all the forms such as literature, mime, music, dance, movement, painting, sculpture and architecture wonderfully. The tradition of folk theatre in Haryana (called *Saang*) is very old. Plays, to begin with were staged in the open with audience sitting around. A combination of music, dance, poetry and speech was initially called '*Natya*' and thereafter was named '*Saang*' (or *Swang*). The present paper is an analyses Haryanvi Saang '*Cheer Parva*' an extract from the well-*Mahabharata* that reveals confidence and courage Draupadi.

Key Words: folklore, Mahabharata, Saangs, Pandavas, Panchala, Kauravas, etc.

Folk Theatre has been there since ages all over the world in many societies, but India has the longest and richest tradition in theatre. Whereas the earlier stage drama was mostly religiously oriented or was staged for teaching moral behavior, it turned its face towards the depiction of social problems and entertainment purposes later on. Also, it has always been closely related to ancient rituals and seasonal festivities of the country. Indian drama combines all the forms such as literature, mime, music, dance, movement, painting, sculpture and architecture wonderfully. Therefore, folk drama has been the chief source of entertainment before the invention of television and radio. In Indian aesthetics, it has been given a reputed place

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and is looked at with great regard. In *Natyasastra*, it is clearly stated that folk drama would not merely be a source of entertainment but would be a source of knowledge for all. Music and dance are major parts of folk drama. Some of the famous drama forms in India are – *BhandPather* (Jammu & Kashmir), *Swang* or *Saang* (Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh), *Nautanki* (Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab), *Maach* (Madhya Pradesh), *Jatra* (Bengal), *Tamasha* (Maharashtra), *Yakshgana* (Karnataka) and *Koodiyattam* (Kerala).

The tradition of folk theatre in Haryana (called *Saang*) is very old. Plays, to begin with were staged in the open with audience sitting around. A combination of music, dance, poetry and speech was initially called '*Natya*' and thereafter was named '*Saang*' (or *Swang*). Drama was created not merely for pleasure but for conveying moral truths and the gods themselves figure as supreme dancers. There is a variety of themes combined in a *Saang* – from mythological love to popular history to religious themes. Haryana *Saang* is among the most popular variety of performance based on the 'open stage' technique. A typical *Saang* is an all male cultural troupe of twenty to thirty artistes, including the director, producer, musicians and actors. The female roles are also played by males, but female troupes are not altogether unknown.

The stage of *Saang* does not require all the paraphernalia and elaborate arrangements of the modern dramatic performances as there are no curtains or a green-room for make-up. There is only a square wooden platform of around three and a half metres length and breadth. The rest is all a display of skill and stamina of the artistes who perform as long as six hours. Also they speak without loudspeakers. An hour before the show, the musicians of the orchestra begin to create the proper atmosphere. The artistes sing some religious or other songs connected with the play. Then the Guru appears and the artists touch the feet to evoke his blessings. The play opens with a prayer/song/*bhajan* in praise of the Goddess of knowledge (Saraswati). Then the play is briefly introduced before the actual performance. As said earlier, various borrowed or adopted themes enrich the *Saang* of Haryana. It includes romances like Sorath, Nihalde, Padmawat, Nautanki and epic based historical/semi-historical themes such as Raja Rissalu, Keechak Vadh, Draupadi Cheerharan, Amar Sing Rathor, Sarwar Neer, Jaswant Singh etc. Themes from old literature such as Gopi Chand Bhartari Hari, Harischander, Raja Bhoj and mythological themes like Prahlad Bhagat, and Punjabi romances like Puran Bhagat, Heer Ranjha etc have also become a part of the

[2]

vast and varied themes on which the Haryanvi rural theatre operates. In the *Saang* of Haryana, though primacy is always given to the verse form but prose form also plays a vital role in creating a connection between the audience and the main plot. And whenever there is a need of switching over to the next plot or theme to focus on something very important the performers use prose form (Dwivedi, 176).

Though earlier, the types of *Saangs* available were *Ramleela* and *Raasleela*, with times the themes shifted to social themes. In the regional types, Dr. Shankar Lal Yadav talks about '*Hathras*' and '*Rohtaki*' types. (Yadav, 387) Today, there are mainly five major Types of the *Saangs* that can be named after the propagators: Pandit Lakhmichand, Pandit Mangeram, Baje Bhagat, Dhanpat Singh, Ram Kishan Vyas.

Pandit Lakhmichand is a celebrated name in Haryana. Ragini (called as the Kauravi style of singing) was established properly by Pandit Lakhmichand. He was an illiterate, but his creations like Saint Kabir never indicate this fact because he handles the subject and beauty of words in such a way that no one can. Lakhmichand never wrote *Saangs* and *Raginis* himself but fortunately these were written down by others. And one can easily analyze and appreciate the beauty and richness of his work. A well known critic Puranchand Sharma writes in his book that though Lakhmichand was an illiterate, one can see his deep knowledge of Vedas and Puranas from the deep themes he chooses and the language he uses (Sharma, 71). He was an excellent performer as well and during the performance of his *Saang* he generally used to play the character of females.

Pandit Lakhmichand's *Saang* '*Cheer Parva*' is an extract taken from the well-known Indian epic *Mahabharata*. It is about the strong lady Draupadi who never lost her confidence and courage even in the time of great difficulty. She is a representative of modern woman who is fully conscious about her status. The *Saang* '*Cheer Parva*' is dedicated to the well-known episode of *Mahabharata* – '*Cheer Haran*'. This episode of *Mahabharata* is centred on Draupadi, who was insulted cruelly by the kinsmen of Pandavas in the royal court and then saved by Lord Krishna himself. The legend goes like this. Drupadi is the daughter of Drupad, the king of Panchala. It is believed that she was born from the sacrificial fire (*yajna*) and that's why she was also called '*yajnaseni*'. It is also believed that when she was born from the fire, a

heavenly voice announced that she would bring destruction to Kauravas. She chooses Arjuna (the best archer among five Pandava brothers) as her husband in 'Swayamvara' but coincidentally is married to all the five Pandavas. Kauravas were their cousins who had snatched their kingdom from the worthy Pandavas by deceit.

Cheer Parva depicts a situation in which Kauravas, especially Duryodhana (the eldest and the most crooked), with his maternal uncle Shakuni (the master mind of all evil doings), conspires to call on the Pandavas to Hastinapur for the game of dice (gambling). Their evil intention behind this game is to win Pandava's kingdom. Duryodhana and his brothers had always been jealous of Pandavas due to their gathering appreciation and popularity everywhere with their supreme valour and excellent qualities. Yudhishtira (the eldest Pandava) loses all his wealth, property and even his four brothers in gambling. Now, Duryodhana had a personal grudge from Draupadi too, as she had commented adversely on him on one particular occasion and made fun of him. Now, Duryodhana intends to take revenge on her by any means. So, he convinces Yudhishtira to put 'her' at stake so that he has one more chance to win back everything he has already lost. Yudhishtira does the same but finally, he loses Draupadi too. A few stanzas of the folk drama are chosen here for detailed study. The *Saang* begins with the description of this incident. After winning Draupadi in the game, Duryodhana sends a messenger to call her in the assembly. But Draupadi becomes furious on hearing the messenger's words. Logical enough and highly vigilant of her status, caste, and creed, she speaks out of rage in the stanza seven of the *Saang* -

Stanza 7:

Dhanwanpitam hue binakhatam,

Isa hulm sitam, koe kara nahin sakta ||tek||

Astr-Sastr gaj aur vastr rath ghode palki.

Mahal mavdi kunven bavdi mhare shobha talki.

Mhare naukar hain dhani heer lalmani,

fauj ghani, koe dara nahin sakta ||1||

Pati ek char sukarm ki kaar har baar maante.

Karen preeti,reeti neeti dharma sut baalam jaante.

*Wo issa Karen na mel, mille ghee me tel, jue ka khel,
pati saraah nahin sakta ||2||*

Karke hisaab lyaa de jawab mere sawaal ka.

Nahin himaati koe duja saathi iss kangaalka.

*Mere paancho se sutr lyaade uttar, ekla dharamputr,
manne haraa nahin sakta ||3||*

Lakhmichand dwij jaat baat ve kehte gyan ki.

Manjhdaarpaar hoygi khud nayya imaanki.

*Bura jue ka daav, dushton ka chaav, paapiyon ki naav,
koe tira nahin sakta ||4||*

[Draupadi says that no one can dare to torture me like this till we have all the wealth in the world.

Draupadi describes their prosperity in terms of weapons of all types, elephants, clothes, chariots and palanquins. She continues by saying that they have the grandeur of palaces, wells, and beautiful ponds. Even their servants are rich with gems and diamonds; no body can dare to frighten us as we have armies with us.

Among my five husbands, the younger four follow their elder brother in good deeds and actions. He believes in love, traditions and moral deeds, as he is a son of Dharma himself. Such a husband of mine can never mix ghee with oil, meaning thereby that he can never indulge in so wrong activities and appreciate the game of dice.

Now Draupadi asks the messenger to bring her the answer to all her questions, as nobody else can help the poorest soul (herself) now. She asks him to fetch answers from all her

five husbands because Dharmaputra 'alone' cannot lose her in the game.

Lakhmichand, who belongs to the supreme community of writers, says that the people (the great old philosophers) have actually stated 'the real knowledge' in the old sayings. It is said that the boat of honesty will get through all obstacles 'itself' (without the help of anybody). And that 'the stakes at gambling' and 'the lust of corrupts' are bad; no body has the capability to help the boat of sinners sail through.]

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the above stanza is as follows.

- Alliteration:** Mahalmavdi, koekara, kika, mel mile, kangalka, se sutra.
- Consonance:** hulam sitam, astra sastra, mhaare naukar, mani ghani, sukarm ki kar, sarah nahin, nahin himaati, hara nahin, manjhdhaar paar, nayya imaan.
- Assonance:** preeti reeti neeti, jaat baat, manjhdhaar paar.
- Rhyme:** a, bba, cca, dda, eea.
- Metaphor:** wo issa karen na mel, mille ghee me tel
 'Wo' directly refers to the Pandavas where 'ghee' (the clarified butter) refers to all their good & moral practices so far, and 'tel' (oil) refers to the bad and wrong practice of gambling.
- Recursiveness:** Recursiveness in poetry is where a sentence or phrase is repeated to enable formulaic language. In Haryanvi *saang* it is known as 'tek'. In the above stanza, after coming at the end of first line, it is repeated after every three lines with the word 'sakta'.
- Rasa:** 'Veer' Rasa can be easily noted. Draupadi is such a stupendous character that even in present negative situation, she not only 'does not' lose her confidence but shows her excellence intelligence by interrogating. Showing the sheer strength of her character, she bravely

and logically asks ‘how can only one husband put her at stake when she is married to five?’

Futuristic Statements: The statements like

*Manjhdhaar paar hoygi khud nayya imaan ki
Bura jue ka daav, dushton ka chaav, papiyon ki
naav, koi tira nahinsakta||4||*

have didactic tone which proclaim to be true in future too. The first one represents that honesty will win in spite of all obstacles, whereas the second statement is about the bad effects of gambling and the fatal end of all wrong doers in future.

Proverb: The following proverb was found in the stanza.

Ghee me tel milana

Author: The name of author usually comes in the last lines of the stanza. The writer of a *saang/ragini* is always an integral part of the work.

Stanza 9:

This stanza refers to the same situation, which is mentioned in previous stanza. Now the messenger again comes to Draupadi with the same message and urges her to go with him to the assembly. Draupadi becomes angrier and speaks furiously about everyone.

*Satpurushan ke nyaa hoya kare se doodh aur pani chhanke.
Tahal karan ka hukam diya kisne,
rahun kiski daasi ban ke ||tek||
Buggi tum-tum arath paalkio ont aur hathi ghoda.
Paltan fauj risale mhare na kise cheej ka toda.
Paanch pati balwan mere naa koe baat ka moda.
Dharamputr nyaa karya kare rahe haath raaj ka koda.*

[7]

Sab prajaa adheen pati ke jaise sarp bharose man ke ||1||

Sabha beech koenaa bolya ke dhaaran maun hua re.

Tu sath bata yo hukam deniya manas jaun hua re.

Tu le ke hukam ure ne chaalya tera khota saun hua re.

Main daas bhav manjur karun issa kaaran kaun hua re.

Gandhari ne gaam gher liya moorkh bête janke ||2||

Duryodhan ka naam sunyaa jab karti khyaal bhatere.

Ye sab kairon Draupadi ke jaane haal bhatere.

Sinhani gail maskhari karke margye syaal bhatare.

Mhare mohar asarfi kani mani aur here laal bhatere.

Dhan maya ke bhare khajaane khade santari tan ke ||3||

Duryodhan ne kis gurde pe mujhko hukam diya se.

Dasi ban kai tahal karun issa kartab kaun kiya se.

Lakhmichand guru gyaan ka pyala karke prem piya se.

Duniya me das din ka jeena nyun sadaa kaun jiya se.

Duryodhan ne janm liya se naash honki than ke ||4||

[Filled with rage, Draupadi says that justice is always done very appropriately at gentle people's places. And then asks the messenger regarding who has commanded her to be a slave and to whom?

It is actually very difficult for her to believe that someone has ordered her to be a slave to someone. Emphatically she tells the messenger again that we royal people have every possession from chariots, palanquins, camels, elephants and horses to big armies. So we don't have any dearth of anything in the world. I have five husbands who stay on their words. And the eldest Dharmputra always go with justice with the ... of rule in his

hands. My husband has full command over his subjects just like a snake has control over his stones (divine pearls).

How come that nobody protested in the assembly? What kind of silence is that? Unable to digest all this, Draupadi continues in her aggression and asks the messenger to tell her who exactly has ordered thus. And she calls it his bad omen that he (the messenger) had to carry forward this order. For what reason should she accept to be a slave, she angrily asks. Gaandhaari has done nothing but increased the population by giving birth to foolish sons.

Oh ! I've heard the name of Duryodhana while listening to so many other things. All these Kauravas know this brave lady Draupadi very well. She calls herself a lioness and says that many wolves have died while doing mischief with her. And all kind of jewels are with herself, she says and reiterates that they (the Pandavas) possess big treasures along with many soldiers as bodyguards who are always alert to guard them.

On which power, that Duryodhana boasts and orders me like this, she asks. Which sin she has committed that she should walk like a slave, she asks. Lakhmichand says that he has drunk the cup of knowledge from his Guru and one can enlighten oneself thus only with a loving heart. Man is mortal and his life span is very short, no body lives forever. Duryodhana has taken birth only with the intention of meeting his disaster, as his misdeeds will surely lead him there.]

ANALYSIS

Alliteration:	<i>karanka, kiski, paanchpati, mharemohar, kaarankaun, khajanekshade, kartabkaunkiya, prempiya, das din.</i>
Consonance:	<i>nyaa hoyaa, pani chhan, deniya manas jaun, kani mani.</i>
Assonance:	<i>risal-mhare, haath raj, daas bhav, jaane haal.</i>
Simile:	<i>Sab praja aadheen pati ke jaise sarf bharo semanke.</i>

(Here the control of Yudhishtira over his kingdom is compared with the control of snake over his stone.)

Metaphor: *Sinhani gail maskhari karke margye syaal bhatere.*

(Here Draupadi is full of anger and out of her rage she compares herself with a lioness and Duryodhana and his brothers with wolves.)

Hyperbole: *Sinhani gail maskhari karke margye syaal bhatere.*

(The above can also be an example of hyperbole because comparing a woman with a lioness is an exaggeration. On the other hand, a lady can't fight with so many people.)

Parallelism: *Kani Mani*

Proverb: The following proverbs are found in the stanza.

- ❖ *Nyaa hoye kare se doodh aur pane chhanke*
- ❖ *Kise cheej ka toda nahona*
- ❖ *Maun dhaaran karna*
- ❖ *Khota saun hona*
- ❖ *Gaam gher lena*
- ❖ *Dhan maya ke bhare khajane*
- ❖ *Kis gurde pe hukam dena*
- ❖ *duniya me das din kajeena*
- ❖ *Naash honki than lena*

Imagery: *Buggi tum-tum arath paalki oont aur hathi ghoda*
Paltan fauj risale mhare na kise cheej ka toda

(These phrases create an imagery of a prosperous kingdom.)

Rasa: Veera Rasa can be noted easily in the use of the phrases below.

- ❖ *Tu sath bata yo hukam deniya manas jon hua re*

- ❖ *Tu leke hukam ure ne challya tera khotta son
hoa re*
- ❖ *Mei daas bhav manjoor karu isa karan kon hua
re*
- ❖ *Sihne gail maskhare karke marge siyaal bhatere*
- ❖ *Duryodhana ne kis gurde pe mujko hukam diya*

(One can easily observe the challenging power and brevity of Draupadi. She doesn't seem to have any kind of fear from anyone.)

Futuristic Statements: *Guru gyaan ka pyala karke prem piya se.*

Duniya me das din ka jeenan yun sadaa kaun jiya se.

(These are futuristic statements because knowledge can be gained only with love and emotion.

Life of a human is just for a short span as man is mortal being.

Both these phrases are universal truths.)

Sarcasm or Irony: *Satpurushan ke nyaa hoya kare se doodh aur pani
chhanke.*

Tahal karan ka hukam diya kisne, rahun kiski daasi ban ke

(These are ironical statements. In her agony, Draupadi is exposing the gentleness/greatness of the so-called gentry. On one hand, they claim to be honest and virtuous but on the other they quietly observe injustice done on me, a daughter-in-law of the royal family.)

Rhyme Scheme: aabbbbacccccaddddaeeeee

Stanza 10:

Draupadi has refused twice to go to assembly. The messenger is still there to fulfill Duryodhana's desire to take her to the assembly, but she refuses and again asks him some very logical questions to be asked in the whole assembly. In the second and third couplets of this stanza, she demands:

Laga hua maharajan ka darbaar, ke jua khele bina bichaar.

Kisne lai taar badyan ki aab re, manne jaiye bataa ke. //2//

*Hukam haasil bin kara den ki,
triya jue ke daa pe dhara den ki.*

Kiski sai haraa den ki taav re, manne jaaiye bataake. //3//

[Shocked Draupadi asks that all the people of royal assembly are great kings and they are considered as noble personalities. How could such noble gentry permit such a game of dice without even thinking of the consequences? Who are the ones that have brought disgrace to all the elders? When you get the answers to these questions, do come and tell me. Who has the right and the courage to put a lady (a wife) at stake? Draupadi orders the messenger to go back and fetch answers for her.]

ANALYSIS

Alliteration: *Hua maharajon, bina bichaar, hukam haasil*

Assonance: *Jaiye bataa ke*

Proverb: *jua khele bina bichaar
Taar badyan ki aab*

The language of Lakhmichand is idiomatic, spontaneous and has the quality of using different words for a single expression or emotion (Sharma, 69). The deep, powerful themes of many *Saangs* revolve around mythical and Puranic figures. (Vats, 37)

As far as the characterization is concerned, it is also done so carefully that great critics like Puranchanda Sharma have to agree that these *Saangs* successfully fulfill the three criteria of characterization in the folk drama of Haryana (Sharma, 64). The three criteria being that a particular character shows,

- The poet's opinion about the character
- Other characters' opinion about the character

- The character's own utterances

For example, one can see in stanza 9 of *Cheer Parva*, the words of Draupadi give an image of her boldness and richness of her kingdom with ' *Sinhani gail maskhari karke margye syaal bhatare*' and ' *Buggi tum-tum arath paalkio ont aur hathi ghoda.Paltan fauj risale mhare na kise cheej ka toda*'.

As for the literary features in *Cheer Parva*, these indicate the figurativeness of a text or the use of figures of speech and other ornamental items of writing, which enhance the beauty and rhythm of it. Linguistic merits are there of course for the kind of vocabulary and types of words used in the *Saang*.

After studying closely the folk theatre of Haryana, especially the *Saangs* created by Lakhmichand, one can do nothing but appreciate the richness of Haryanvi folklore because of the literary and linguistic merits it has.

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Filming the 'Self': Biopic Autobiographies

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Abstract:

Films are the most vibrant genre of artistic representation in the post-modern era. The intimacies, evocative and visual power associated with the film medium makes it a matrix of subjectivity and expression of the self. The audio-visual vistas and nuances of representation offer unlimited possibilities of making sense of living and reliving.

This diverse, yet vivid mode of self-enquiry done on screen enlivens the contemporary graffiti. The present paper would analyze the various modes of representing the self on screen, which is in fact a quest for space and voice, speech and resistance, thus making the 'Self' one of the best subjects that an artist could express or work on. The notion of the real is formed with in these plural formations of the constructed images of the worlds and times. The narrative fragments in cinema and such visual arts make visible the fragmented and stratified world in a variety of ways. If representation itself is such a puzzling affair we could assume that representing the 'Self' would not be much simple.

Key Words: films, biopic, Self, space, voice, etc.

"Seeing was equal to believing in the olden times, but now believing is seeing." -Raymond Williams

Film is closer to human life than any other art form today. The intimacy, evocative power and visual desires associated with the film medium makes it a turbulent locus of subjectivity and expression of the self. The infinite nuances of representation and the engaging narrative that results offer unlimited possibilities of making sense of living and reliving life. The notion of the real is formed within these plural formations of the constructed images of the worlds and times. Thus, the claim of film theory that editing and scenography are ways of creating reality stands justified. History, biography, autobiography, genealogy, geography and culture are continually problematized and fractured by the episodic and polyphonic

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operations of the visual. The narrative fragments in cinema and other visual arts make visible the fragmented and stratified world in a variety of ways.

The present paper attempts to analyze the genre of Biopic Autobiographies or the visual medium of exploring the self through the study of a few films that claim to fulfill the said definition. Biopic Autobiography refers to that deviant and vivid mode of self-enquiry done in the visual medium that enlivens the contemporary graffiti as well as filming which may in many ways be equated to the pre-historic cave paintings, the murals and frescos of the middle ages, and the Italian Renaissance portrait paintings where the artists expressed the subjective element of reality through painting the visual details of their models as human subjects in history, time and place. Later European expressionists and impressionists like Van Gogh exemplified the art of portraiture and self-portraiture with immense psychological and socio-political implications. The art of painting the self was a struggle for Van Gogh as he was in continuous conflict with the dominant ethos and values of his society. This is reason enough to reiterate the fact that the self becomes an immediate subject for the artist to express and expose.

Representing the self is a way of questioning one's identity, an effort to find a space and voice, as well as emphatically pronounce the resistance within the "I". The huge chunk of self- portrait paintings that followed Van Gogh and the European exponents around the globe registers this reality. Modern feminists like the Mexican, Frida Kahlo has made use of elaborate self-portraiture in wider compositions to enhance the politics of representing the self in visual arts. Although self-representation is misappropriated and contextualized as part of the narcissistic western metaphysics, attempts towards the same are not unknown from the Orient as well.

Jean- Luc Godard, one of the illuminating explorers of the cinematic medium comments: "We visualize our desires and diseases through this modern medium of artistic expression." His pioneering effort in this genre finds light through his autobiographical film *JLG/JLG* and is often considered as a sequel and visual rendering of his written work *Godard on Godard* (1972). The film showcases how Godard has visualized his self and subject position as a radical film maker through the medium of cinema in an age of corporate capitalism in the West. The movie resonates with an intricate and imposing self-enquiry evidently making it a path breaker in the

genre of Biopic autobiographies. The lawless violence in a fragmented world is metaphorically articulated and visualized in this self- portraiture as chaotic cuts and startling jumps.

Even before the French genius of Godard, the Italian master Federico Fellini has shown his self- critical engagements with films through an intimately personal film memoir or in other words, a visualized personal narrative titled *Intervista* (1987). In this elaborately profound and playful cinematic self attempt, Fellini touches upon the self and the other, the social and the secretive. He explores his pasts and present as a film- maker by invoking the inter-textual and inter-visual possibilities of reality. This master craftsman takes expressionist and even surreal modes of representation and fancy in the process of self-search within his favorite medium. He goes to the origins of his art, the still images of photography and painting in its sheer materiality. With the help of technology, he goes back to the rudiments of the visual and the resultant representation.

Video Diary (2002) shows the self-representation of Gina Kim, a Korean woman, and the effort at such a Biopic autobiography was acclaimed across the world especially in connection with the third phase of feminist movements. This autobiographical narrative in video format has been in vogue in the West in recent times. Marta Meszaro's fictional autobiographies in film are also remarkable in their perspective. A neo- historical Hungarian society is juxtaposed along with her personal and domestic memoirs from childhood and adolescence. The personal "I" thus transcends into a social and political narrative.

David Perlov's *Diary* (1983) along with Dominique Cabrera's *Tomorrow and tomorrow* (1997) and *The Milk of Human Kindness* (2001) actually did the ground work for the video autobiographies in Israel and France respectively. These were the pioneers that inaugurated the democratization of visual or filmic autobiographies in an attempt to digitize memoirs.

As Foucault who probed reality and representation by invoking Rene Magritte, the French surreal painter, and Derrida who questioned reality itself as a mediated and constructed version within the textuality of the world by critiquing Cezanne's famous statement that the artist awes the truth in painting to the viewer, tells the viewer that we could also conceive the ontological and cognitive complexity of representation in the visual realm. If

representation itself is such a puzzling affair, we may well assume that representing the self would not be much simple.

Any attempts toward the same have yet to surface in our country. In a country that has seen much of period films, historical movies and biopics, like *Gandhi* and *Babasaheb Ambedkar*, Biopic autobiographies are still a distant dream. Irrespective of the subject matter, all these genres attempt to depict the person and his past, the Age and its events etched through the life of the person from whose perspective the film is born. These films tend to transcribe the politics of an age, foregrounding those eternal footprints left in the sands of time, to be shunned or shined by the generations that follow. Biopic autobiographies contextualize and empower the “I” in “Me” eventually transcending it to mean “I” the “Mob”.

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Gay Culture Reflected in Hollinghurst's *The Swimming Pool Library*

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Abstract:

The present paper focuses on the gay culture reflected in Allan Hollinghurst's novel *The Swimming Pool Library*, which unravels the life of wealthy gay men with all passions and emotions. It unfolds the friendship between two men and their complicated response to the situations in which they are trapped which leads one of them to re-examine his family background and assess his emotional world in the light of the life-events of another. Using enchanting style, Hollinghurst observes sensational world with the meticulous selection of events in the lives of William Beckwith, the protagonist of the novel, and Lord Nantwich, the old and rich man; who accidentally meet together while William was cruising a boy.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the conception of queer culture; the second section analyses the novel; and the third section sums up with concluding remarks.

Keywords: gay, queer, homosexuality, sex, erotic pleasures, homoerotic Love, etc.

Section I

Queer theory is a relatively recent and evolving school of criticism, which questions and problematizes the issues of gender identity and sexual orientation in literary texts. It has been developed out of the concerns of feminist conceptions of gender issues and investigations of gay and lesbian studies regarding sexual identities. It not only covers the topics of bisexual, lesbian and gay subjects, but also focuses on the topics such as intersex, gender ambiguity, gender-corrective surgery, cross-dressing, etc. It claims to understand sexuality in terms of shifting boundaries, ambivalences, and cultural constructions in socio-cultural and historical contexts. It challenges heterosexuality, which is traditionally considered as the natural sexual norm

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in the society, to bring forth the strange and unsettled sexual behaviour which is binary to the hegemonic ideology.

Since the emergence of the queer theory, number of philosophers focused on the representation of the sexual identities. They addressed whether individuals of changing sexual introductions had the same political objectives, and whether those in the sexual minority felt that they could be spoken to alongside others of various sexualities and introductions. As a result, the term is, as Brooker composes, “revised, dispelled, rendered obsolete to the extent that it yields to the demands which resist the term precisely because of the exclusions by which it is mobilized” (19). French philosopher Michel Foucault concentrates his thoughts on the three zones where the systems of power need to change. They are law, the right to speak freely, and codes of sexual ethical quality. He believes in new dynamic ways at the primary level to deconstruct the traditional power constructions established by the new Victorians. His arguments about power and its control shaped new theoretical grounds. He writes that “we will not be able to free ourselves from it except at a considerable cost: nothing less than a transgression of laws, a lifting of prohibitions, an irruption of speech, a reinstating of pleasure within reality” (45). Foucault’s thoughts are quite revealing in the area of queer culture. However, it is not possible to deal thoroughly with the concept of queer culture in this paper as it would widen the scope.

Section II

Alan Hollinghurst is a significant writer writing in the present era. His novels are remarkable for their subtle depiction of the emotional world with particularity. His novel *The Swimming Pool Library* opens with William Beckwith, the protagonist, who lives in London. He is twenty five years old and wealthy man as he has received a huge estate of his grandfather Viscount Beckwith who was a statesman of London. William is the perfect example and representative of sophisticated upper-class society, who need not think about the daily livelihood. He is well educated and handsome young man who always tries to maintain his body with regular exercise. However, he has an excessive drinking habit and being a gay man, he is always busy in casual but frequent sexual relationships. He continuously searches for the sexual

pleasures and therefore the bodies of other men are the centre of his attention.

William has numbers of successful homosexual affairs with various men including Arthur, a working class black teenage boy, and Phil, a waiter in the hotel. He always thinks about sex whenever he sees the other men, especially the lower class men. It can be witnessed in the beginning of the novel, when he encounters a couple of London Transport maintenance men and is drawn towards the thirty-five years old severely handsome black man. He feels “more than respect, a kind of tenderness for him. I imagined his relief at getting home and taking his boots off and going to bed as the day brightened around the curtains and the nose of the streets built up outside” (1-2). He is sexually attracted towards the black man and intends to have a sex with him. When he is thinking about the sexual relations, he notices the pale gold wedding ring band in the hands of the black man and then his thoughts of having sex with him disappear from his mind.

William’s sexual encounters with Arthur clearly show his preoccupations with physical attractions to other men. When he is going back to home, there are only the thoughts of sex with Arthur. It can be observed in the novel when he writes that “the idea of Arthur, too, which I had suppressed to make it all the more exciting when I recalled it,” reveals the way he tries to suppress his thoughts of sex with Arthur (2). In his excitements, he thinks of Arthur as:

. . . before I found my beautiful, cocky, sluttish Arthur – as Arthur it was impossible to imagine old. His smooth face, with its huge black eyes and sexily weak chin, was always crossed by the light and shade of uncertainty, and met your gaze with the rootless self-confidence of youth. (2)

The seventeen years Arthur’s body seems to be very appealing to William. He imagines Arthur to be alone in his flat looking his pictures in the swimming costume, which would have created erotic feelings in him. In the thoughts of Arthur, William reaches to home and consumes sex with Arthur, which is thoroughly expressed here in the novel as:

I kissed him, my left hand sliding between his high, plump buttocks while with the other I stroked the back of his head. Oh,

the ever-open softness of black lips; and the strange dryness of the knots of his pigtails, which crackled as I rolled them between my fingers, and seemed both dead and half erect. (3)

Sex with Arthur gives William a kind of satisfaction and he feels as if he is “riding high on sex and self-esteem – it was my time, my *belle époque* – but all the while with a faint flicker of calamity . . . something seen out of the corner of the eye” (4). Being a rich man, he need not to work or care for his livelihood. He has everything – education, upper class, physical beauty, sophisticated culture, etc. which further helps him to enjoy his life.

William strolls through the London Park in order to cruise a young man, where he spots a lone Arab boy and instantly attracts towards him. The strong urge to have a sex with the boy leads William to chase a boy. While pursuing the boy, he enters in the public toilet and decides to wait for that boy to come there. Meanwhile, he comes across some older men who have lodged there. All of sudden one of the older men perchance received a minor heart attack and fall down on ground. William rushes to help the suffering man and in order to save his life attempts different ways including artificial respiration. He remembered the exercises in the school of using artificial respiration to save the life of casualty: “I gripped his nose with two fingers and inhaling deeply, sealed my lips over his. I saw with a turn of the head his chest swell” (11). He is aware that he has brought a man to life from his death.

After the incident William returns to home where he discovers Arthur in horrified condition. Soon he comes to know that Arthur was involved in a quarrel with Harold, his big brother and his friend. The argument between them about the drugs leads Arthur to kill Harold’s friend accidentally and consequently Arthur is wounded and bleeding. He further tells William that he cannot go back to his house as his brother will kill him. Therefore, William decides to protect Arthur and provides him shelter. The terrific condition of Arthur and the frightened William feel alienation in the house. In fact the feeling of loneliness leads them to involve in the homosexual relationships. It is clearly witnessed in the relationships between William and Arthur:

Sex took on an almost purgative quality, as if after hours of inertia and evasion we could burn off our unspoken fears in vehement, wordless activity. Sex came to justify his presence

there, to confirm that we were not just two strangers trapped together by a fateful mistake. (41)

Sex has become the only tool to get rid off from the alienation for the two men. It has also becomes a symbol of security as both feel protected, and especially Arthur. Sex with Arthur becomes a daily routine matter for William: “once these practical measures had been taken that the impractical day after day of Arthur and me in the flat began” (43). Arthur finds himself confined in the company of William, which leads him to live most of the time in loneliness. To avoid this loneliness and the tensions of being caught in the murder case, occasionally William and Arthur are involved in an abusive sex. It shows that homosexuality can provide the other world free from the tensions of the everyday world.

William’s possession of the Arthur is not only his attempt to find security, but it is also an attempt of ruling class to dominate the lower class. He states:

I was eight years older than Arthur, and our affair had started as a crazy fling with all the beauty for me of his youngness and blackness. Now it became a murky business, a coupling in which we both exploited each other, my role as protector mined by the morbid emotion of protectiveness. I saw him becoming more and more my slave and my toy, in a barely conscious abasement which excited me even as it pulled me down. (*ibid*)

The master-slave relationships between William and Arthur are seen in the way they accept each other. Arthur’s awareness of being guilty for the murder of his brother’s friend Tony makes him submissive to his present master. On the other hand, William’s role of protector gives him an authority to dominate Arthur. William knows that he is living with a man who is a murder and can be dangerous for him any time. Besides this, there are chances of being arrested in the murder case. He expresses his feelings as:

It did not take me long to fear the consequences to myself of any of these possible events. If it had not been for our week of love I would perhaps have been frightened of Arthur too; but I was never even critical of his crime. A rare, unjustified trust kept me on his side. (47)

It is the homosexual love that gives a security to both William and Arthur. His feeling of love overcomes his awareness about the possible consequences. He has not even tried to think critically over the crime of Arthur. The homosexual pleasures lead him to take the side of Arthur.

William, in his attempt to escape from the loneliness, goes to the cinema based on the gay pornography where he involves in the anonymous sex. While he is watching a movie, a boy sat down next to him and begins to stare at him. The boy intends “to try and make out [his] face in the darkness, and [he] felt his breath on [his] cheek. Then there was the pressure of his shoulder against [him]” (73). He escapes himself from the boy and moves to the empty place on the other side. After some time a group of half dozen boys comes there; one of them sits beside him. He observed the boy and comes to the conclusion that the boy may be watching the porn movie for the first time. Then he tries to establish sexual relations with the boy, who is now confused and remains passive in his response. Therefore, he forces the boy to have a sex:

I continued stroking the back of his neck, thinking it might relax him, but he kept on feeling my dick in a very polite sort of way, so I brought pressure to bear, and pushed his head firmly down my lap. He had to struggle around to get his stocky form into a new position, encumbered by the padded arm between our seats; but once there he took the crown of my cock into his mouth and with me moving his head puppet-like up and down, sucked it after a fashion. (75)

He feels something thrilling, an electric intensity. However, the boy’s apparent defiance leads him to stop his behaviour. Yet whatever he did with the boy gives him the feeling of satisfaction as if he has a random sex. Then the boy goes out and on the staircase, he recognises the boy as the light sheds on him. He comes to know that the boy is, in fact, Phil, one of the members from the Corry.

William decided to meet Lord Charles Nantwich and goes to his home, in a street off Huggin Hill. Lord Nantwich shows William the Roman mosaics in the basement of his house, where he asks William to write his biography for him. At first William feels that he is going to ask for something like physical pleasure. He feels that:

[24]

. . . I am sure for a moment that he had some physical demand in mind. Would I let him take my clothes off, or kiss me. A don at Winchester had asked a friend of mine to masturbate in front of him, and though he didn't, such things harmlessly be done. (115)

However, Lord Nantwich asks him to write his biography. At first, William refuses to write as he thinks that it will come in his way of sexual life; but then he has realised that writing about someone will not be an obstacle in his consumption of the sex. Therefore, he accepts the proposal that, in the beginning, he will read journals that Lord Nantwich will send him. However, his research suffers because of his ignorance as the person like Lord Nantwich requires attention. He is the symbol of English homosexual people and their privileges and trials. He is also the representative of the sophisticated upper class society where the homosexual relations were considered as the illegal acts. On the other hand, William is the representative of the same society but in the altered situations where homosexual relations have got identity in the illegal way.

William is involved in Phil so much that he cannot live without him. He has even forgotten Arthur and has not felt his absence in his life since his disappearance. He expresses his feelings as: "It was only a few weeks since his disappearance and I had done nothing about him and already was so absorbed in someone else that I didn't even think of him for days at a stretch" (186-187). William talks with Phil about the Swimming-Pool Library as he was one of the librarians of the Swimming-Pool Library. He tells Phil that in his school-days the perfect persons were called as the librarian. During the period he was called as the Swimming-Pool Librarian as he was perfect in the swimming. He tells Phil about the swimming and also shows his Swimming-Pool Librarian badge which he has kept in a round leather stud-box. Then they go to the roof of the hotel, where they spread towels, lay down naked and take the sun bath: "We were very happy on the roof, sometimes reading, sometimes stroking and exciting each other . . . Phil would rub my tits . . . or send his fingertips over me more gently than tickling" (204). He is aware that he is obsessed with the body of Phil and every time intends to have sex with him. But he also notices a difference between the erotic pleasures of Phil and Arthur. He points out the difference between them as:

[Phil] lacked the illiterate, curling readiness of Arthur, his instinct for sex. Both of them were teenagers over whom I had many advantages; both of them watched me for the moves I would make. But where with Arthur, when I did move, there was an immediate transport, a falling-open of the mouth, a mood of necessity that was close to possession, with Phil there was a more selfconscious giving, callow at times and imitative. When I was rough with him it was to break through all that. (206-206)

William finds the absence of readiness in Phil which is present in Arthur. Phil is affectionate but his affections cannot be called as his readiness of sex. He believes that Phil's shyness is responsible for his behaviour while having a sex.

In the home, William reads aloud the diaries of Lord Nantwich to Phil, and especially the section of his life, where the North African boy tries to sell him pornography consequently leading him to feel alienated in the foreign land. Then William and Phil go to The Shaft club, which is famous for homosexuality. They meet various gay men including a bodybuilder belonged to the Brazil. William finds there Arthur in the bathroom and tries to have sex, subsequently resulting in frustration as Arthur now works for Harold.

William, while reading the diaries of Lord Nantwich, comes to know that Lord Nantwich has suffered a lot when he was arrested in his attempt of having a sex with a policeman. When the African boy with whom he has sexual relations, got married, he became frustrated and began to go to anonymous club for sex. While cruising in the bathroom, he was arrested for his indecency in the public place. His condition becomes more worse when one politician tried to exploit the situation, who incidentally happens to be the grandfather of William. He also comes to know that Bill was also arrested for his homosexual relations with a three years younger boy. William, who has learnt the past of his grandfather, now decides to do not write the biography of Lord Nantwich because he has also homosexual relations and he has been brought up in the gay environment.

William visits to the hotel in which Phil works, where he meets a rich Argentine man, who offers him sex. At first, he accepts the proposal, but as he discovers that the man is preoccupied with gay conventions, he rejects his

proposal. He goes upstairs and finds that Phil is engaged with Bill in having sex. William is confused with the incident and leaves the place. He goes to the Corinthian Club where Lord Nantwich exposes his purpose of giving diaries to him. In the end of the novel, William goes to a film with James.

Section III

The novel pin points the incidents in the life of William Beckwith who only wants to have homoerotic pleasures in his life. There is nothing important for him except than the bodies of other men. He even does not want to be disturbed in his sexual enjoyments and therefore avoids writing for the old man Lord Nantwich. However, the past life of Lord Nantwich reveals him the sufferings in the lives of gay men during the period of Labouchère Amendment where homosexuality was a crime. He also comes to the realization of his family background, revealing him the political career of his grandfather. In the end, the gay William is shown as an ambivalent in his response towards the homosexuality.

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The Perspectives of Existentialism and Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground*

Dr. Kumar Sushil*

Abstract:

The paper is an attempt to critically examine and explore the contours of the philosophy of Existentialism in Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground*. Existentialism is a vague and scholastic philosophy that represents mumbo Jumbo, Insecurity, culture decline, alienation, industrial revolution and race for armament. Existentialists strongly emphasize on the philosophy of hope amidst the encircling gloom. *Notes from Underground* is considered as the beginning of new fiction and its style is a diversion from nineteenth century fiction. He includes psychological and psychological insights into his fiction that paves the way to 20th century existential and psychological literature. Existentialism and Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground* are more relevant in 21st century when human beings are dangerously trapped by market and media. On the other side, the problems of unemployment, sharp economic inequalities, intolerance and fundamentalism are rising day by day. The philosophy of Existentialism and *Notes From Underground* inspire us to understand the current discourse and find out solution.

Key Words: Existentialism, psychological, psychological, etc.

Existentialism is a vague and scholastic philosophy that represents mumbo Jumbo, Insecurity, culture decline, alienation, industrial revolution and race for armament. Existentialists strongly emphasize on the philosophy of hope amidst the encircling gloom. It is a philosophy that emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. It is a fact that human life is in no way complete and fully satisfying but it has meaning. Existentialism is the search and journey for true self and true personal meaning in life. Existentialism gives emphasis on human existence. It was originated by Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55) in the nineteenth-century. In the beginning of 20th century, it was propagated by Heidegger, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus and Kafka from the atheistic point of view. Existential scholars argue that existence precedes essence. They challenge and negate

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preconceived beliefs and life is incapable of being described in its essential nature. The previous philosophers used to explain life in this manner. Jean-Paul Sartre provides new vistas to existentialism through his novels, plays and philosophical writings.

Most of the existentialists surrender in despair but some writers like Dostoevsky have courage to resist. Dostoevsky (1821–1881) is a novelist, short story writer, essayist, journalist and a philosopher. His *Notes from Underground* is considered as the beginning of new fiction and its style is a diversion from nineteenth century fiction. He includes philosophical and psychological insights into his fiction that paves the way to 20th century existential and psychological literature. He has created the characters who are emotionally and spiritually downtrodden. *Notes from Underground* is also known for representing the melancholic and saddest character in the literature. The protagonist is a first-person narrator underground man and an unnamed 40-year-old civil servant. He has quit his service and spending his time in a basement flat. It is situated outside Saint Petersburg. He vengefully ridicules the modern world.

He has no faith in reason and hope in life. At every phase of history of human existence, the creative and sensitive human beings suffer from loneliness, isolation and displacement. He has lost interest in logic and reason. He has become against the society and himself. Even he harms the person who is liked by him. The first part of the text contains a long monologue of the anti-hero. It presents the life philosophy of Dostoevsky through the protagonist. It critiques polemically the utopian socialist principles and ideals.

Underground man is unable to fit into society. His free will is supreme for him. Dostoevsky represents pain as a product of society and does not write directly about the necessity of change in political and economic structures. He does not polemically state why the society is bad in *Notes From Underground*. He attempts to find psychological solutions of deep rooted crisis. The novel indicates that individual is above the society. He does not depict that economics is the root cause of the evils prevalent in society. Underground man is so much engrossed in pain that he does not see the dream of better healthy society. He believes in the completeness of society in its own way. According to him life is more than logical reasoning. Reason can be the small part of human personality.

He reacts strongly on the mathematical, mechanical and scientific rationalism and it seems that these principles and theories have the capacity to define the best interests of human beings. These theories believe in perfection of human beings. Every person has some interests and ideas which are more valuable than anything else and one can work hard to turn them into reality. Dostoevsky wants to run away from the harsh reality of the present to the memories of his youthful days. The theme, situations and characters of *Notes From Underground* are completely imaginative but in the present historical context, such type of circumstances is not only possible but also inevitable.

The Underground man tries to find his individuality in his own sufferings. Even he attacks the society to reassert his individuality, "Excuse me, gentlemen, but I am not justifying myself with this *allishness*. As far as I myself am concerned, I have merely carried to an extreme in my life what you have not dared to carry even halfway, and what's more, you've taken your cowardice for good sense, and found comfort in thus deceiving yourselves (130)".

The underground pays the price of "One's own free and voluntary wanting, one's own caprice, however wild, one's own fancy, though chafed sometimes to the point of madness – all this is that same most profitable profit, the omitted one, which does not fit into any classification, and because of which all systems and theories are constantly blown to the devil... Man needs only *independent* wanting, whatever this independence may cost and wherever it may lead (25-26)". The underground man strongly believes that conformity with the establishment is like the nonexistence of personality or individuality. To be antiestablishment is a gesture to come out of the inertia of a normal human being. Underground man observes, "The final end, gentlemen: better to do nothing! Better conscious inertia! And so, long live the underground! Though I did say that I envy the normal man to the point of uttermost bile, still I do not want to be him on those conditions in which I see him (though, all the same, I shall not stop envying him. No, no, the underground is in any case more profitable!). There one can at least... Eh! but here, too, I'm lying! Lying, because I myself know, like two times two, that it is not at all the underground that is better, but something different, completely different, which I thirst for but cannot ever find! Devil takes the underground!" (37).

The underground man does not want to lose his human essence at any cost. He has a strong disliking for the people surrounding him. His head of the department Anton Antonitch Syetotchkin is a miser and he never give money to anyone. He decides to borrow money from him, "I was horribly worried. To borrow from Anton Antonitch seemed to me monstrous and shameful. I did not sleep for two or three nights. Indeed, I did not sleep well at that time, I was in a fever; I had a vague sinking at my heart or else a sudden throbbing, throbbing, throbbing! Anton Antonitch was surprised at first, then he frowned, then he reflected, and did after all lend me the money, receiving from me a written authorisation to take from my salary a fortnight later the sum that he had lent me" (54). Even he hates his servant Apollon and considers him, "It was a good thing Apollon diverted me at that time with his rudeness. Drove me out of all patience! He was my thorn, a scourge visited upon me by Providence. He and I had been in constant altercation for several years on end, and I hated him. My God, how I hated him! I think I've never in my life hated anyone as I did him" (112).

He is completely lonely and in dire need of some company. He is waiting for his old schoolmates at the same time, he does not want to remind his tormented school days when he meets his school friend Simonov. He does not like to meet his other school friends and he wish to "cut off all at once the whole of that hateful childhood of mine. Curses on that school ... on those terrible years of penal servitude! In short, I parted ways with my fellows as soon as I set free" (60). When he comes to know that his school fellows are arranging dinner party, he wish to be the part of the party. But he is not in a condition to pay contributory money for it.

In the dinner, he feels that he is being ignored and ridiculed by the class mates. All the fellows throw him into exclusion as he does not want to shun his intelligence. They also hate him very much. All the school fellows consume lot of alcohol. He delivered a passionate speech to show his anger and shame. In the end, he seeks Simonov help to pay the money for the dinner. He feels lonely when his school friends leave the place. He wishes apology from his friends. He wants to weep and talk to himself. He does not like the idiotic behavior of Zverkov. Similarly, he treats Simonov. He writes a letter to Simonov on the next day of the party blaming him for the ill treatment in during the dinner. He sent the money for the party which is paid by Simonov, "I put six roubles into the letter, sealed it, and prevailed upon

Appollon to take it to Simonov. On learning that there was money inside, Appollon became more respectful and agreed to go.... My head was still aching and dizzy from yesterday (108)".

The underground man came across Liza but he does not behave properly with her. The underground man wants to know about the background of Liza in a bookish manner. She is a good girl but she is thrown into the prostitution by the circumstances. He turned hostile to her while listening her miserable story. Liza starts weeping in sadness and the underground man requests her to visit him again. He is worried if Liza comes to visit him and at the same time he wants that she must come such is the ambivalent situation of the underground man. She comes to meet him when he is very angry with his servant Apollon. At once he started heat argument with her but she bears all this very compassionately. He wishes that she should leave him alone and he feels shame and disgrace when she leaves him in solitude, "I longed for 'peace,' I longed to be left alone in the underground. "Living life" so crushed me, unaccustomed to it as I was, that it became difficult for me to breath" (126).

The underground man does not want to lose his individuality under the impact of outer atmosphere and surroundings at any cost rather he feels that he is unique connected with nature. He strongly asserts, "Human beings are still human beings and not piano keys, which though played upon with their own hands by the laws of nature themselves, are in danger of being played so much that outside the calendar it will be impossible to want anything" (30). He has to decide whether he can become an antiestablishment or a rebel against the state or he can establish conformity with that state. First idea is full with suffering, self-destruction second idea leads towards the life in peace. But he follows first option and does not care about any damn authority. He does not allow them to curtail his freedom. He declares that he is "Not just wicked, no, I never even managed to become anything; neither wicked nor good, neither a scoundrel nor an honest man, neither a hero nor an insect. And now I am living out my life in my corner, taunting myself with the spiteful and utterly futile consolation that it is even impossible for an intelligent man seriously to become anything, and only fools become something. Yes, sir, an intelligent man of the nineteenth century must be and is morally obliged to be primarily a characterless being; and a man of character, an active figure—primarily a limited being (5)".

But in real sense he is a hero who continuously protects his freedom. He considers his plight better than others fellows who dare not challenge the authority. His gestures are the symbol of the dynamism and dignity of life.

He was against the relentless positivism, logic mania for hope and believed in facing the bleakness of dark reality. To resist materialism and scientific logic means to acknowledge that we are living in a world where freedom is supreme. Noncooperation with authority means defying radicalism. He was not only rejecting nihilism but also depicting complete human nature. He was depicting the overall impression of the rationalism on the contemporary Russian society.

The Underground man is one of the representatives of the contemporary generation. He is in search for his own individuality and his quest for himself. However, he is very conscious “to keep an eye on this goal through all enthusiasms and little volumes of lyrical verses, and at the same time also to preserve “the beautiful and lofty” inviolate in himself till his dying day, and incidentally to preserve himself quite successfully as well, somehow in cotton wool, like some little piece of jewelry, if only, shall we say, for the benefit of that same “beautiful and lofty” (46).

He desires freedom as an ideal and he is desperate to attain it, “I know that I will not rest with a compromise, with a ceaseless, recurring zero, simply because according to the laws of nature it exists, and exists really. I will not take a tenement house, with apartments for the poor, and a thousand-year lease, and the dentist Wagenheim's shingle for good measure, as the crown of my desires. Destroy my desires, wipe out my ideals, show me something better, and I will follow you” (36). At the same time underground man believe in the relevance of speech, “Our discussion is serious; if you do not deign to give me your attention, I am not going to bow and scrape before you. I have the underground” (36).

In the later part of *Notes from Underground*, he lampoons the romanticism of socialist sentiment. The underground man is a learned person full with bookish ideas. He is influenced by the romantic ideas of European and Russian socialism. He writes about his book reading habit, "At home, I mainly used to read. I wished to stifle with external sensations all that was ceaselessly boiling up inside me. And among external sensations the only one possible for me was reading. Reading was, of course, a great help. It stirred, delighted, and tormented me (48)".

Notes From Underground is also a kind of confession. The underground protagonist wants to maintain his inherent superiority and pride. The window is the symbol of the psychological struggle. Dostoevsky negates the idea of thinking human being as a natural phenomenon. In the current atmosphere thinking hyperconscious human being is a costly affair and makes one inactive.

He combines the creative as well as destructive nature of human beings, "Man loves creating and the making of roads, that is indisputable. But why does he so passionately love destruction and chaos as well" (32-33). The underground man is not able to understand the reason behind his plight. He does not believe in simplistic, unproblematic and mechanical solution of the human predicament but he does not believe that hyper consciousness is also not able to find answers, "But all the same, I am strongly convinced that not only too much consciousness but even any consciousness at all is a sickness. I stand upon it" (7). He further points out, "Though I did declare at the beginning that consciousness, in my opinion, is a man's great misfortune, still I know that man loves it and will not exchange it for any satisfactions" (35). Reader gets educative experience in reading the text. The underground man seems unfamiliar and strange in the beginning but the reader finds some kind of similarity with him.

The underground man is not a hateful creature. However, he declares openly that in the beginning of the text, "I am a sick man...I am a wicked man. An unattractive man. I think my liver hurts. However, I don't know a fig about my sickness, and am not sure what it is that hurts me. I am not being treated and never have been, though I respect medicine and doctors. What's more, I am also superstitious in the extreme; well, at least enough to respect medicine (3)". The main motif of the writer is to depict the hellish atmosphere of the time in which the protagonist is living.

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Bakhtin rightly observes that the underground man is a complex character with polyphonic voices. The characters of Dostoevsky do not merely follow the command of the writer rather they have their own individuality. The underground man is at same time angry and feels lonely. His emotions vary widely from one moment to another, “The self-clarification, self-revelation of the hero, his discourse about himself are not predetermined (as the ultimate goal of his construction) by some neutral image of him, does indeed sometimes make the author’s setting “fantastic”, even for Dostoevsky. For Dostoevsky the verisimilitude of a character is verisimilitude of the character’s own internal discourse about himself in all its purity – but, in order to hear and display that discourse, in order to incorporate it into the field of vision of another person, the laws of that other field must be violated, for the normal field can find a place for the object-image of another person but not for another field of vision in its entirety. Some fantastical viewpoint must be sought for the author outside ordinary fields of vision (54)”.

D.S. Mirsky points out in *A History of Russian Literature: From Its Beginnings to 1900* that *Notes from the Underground* is literature as well as philosophy. It is difficult to comprehend the paradoxical and unexpected behavior of underground man. The underground man is self-absorbed, irrelevant, malicious, and cruel in spite of the fact that he is a part and parcel of every human being. He represents the mental and psychological picture of human beings. He shakes the reader from deep slumber for the betterment.

Existentialism and Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground* are more relevant in 21st century when human beings are dangerously trapped by market and media. On the other side, the problems of unemployment, sharp economic inequalities, intolerance and fundamentalism are rising day by day. Life today has become alarmingly insecure. Large scale manufacturing of nuclear weapons and greed of power hungry politician have touched new heights in present scenario. The world has broken up in fragments and a common person has become a rootless, lonely and alien to society. The common people don't find any alternative, solutions or way out to come out of this vortex. The situation has become more complex and intricate in present scenario. The philosophy of Existentialism and *Notes From Underground* inspire us to understand the current discourse and find out solution.

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Media within Media as Saviour of Human Values in Select Bollywood Films

Balveer *

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Abstract:

There are a great many films in which media, despite all its corrupt/commercialized way of functioning, does dig in the heels for the oppressed whom A. Gramscis calls 'subaltern classes'.

The paper is an attempt to bring out how media can, if it will, actually make a difference to the society by using its exceptionally wide reach to gather popular support for the cause of humanity. By way of illustration, the paper proposes to analyze the *modus operandi* of media in a variety of tension-filled situations depicted in Bollywood films like *Ganajal* (2003), *Peepli Live* (2010), *Satyagraha* (2013), *PK* (2014). The issues focused on in these films range from a case of absolute minority in the film PK--where media comes to an alien's rescue as he is stranded on this planet-- to the issues like caste-based reservation, political corruption, systemic malpractices etc. Thus, the 'subalterns' covered are of a wide variety including political subalterns, economic subalterns, planetary subalterns. The study proposes to operate on the content analysis methodology to establish its conclusions.

Key Words: Media, films, society, subalterns, corruption, etc.

"People are sheep. Media is the shepherd". - Jess C. Scott

Media today is more ubiquitous, powerful, and erratic than ever before. So, its role in society is also more volatile than ever. While it can ideally serve as the custodian of truth and a watchdog on all corrupt practices in the society, it may as well turn into a lethal weapon in the hands of those using it to do the 'politics of representation' in matters religious, political or any. Film, as a major form of mass media, plays a crucial role in shaping the minds of the people. And, within the films too there does appear media in all its various forms like electronic, print, digital etc. Just as media can speak up

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for the subalterns in the real world, so can it in films. Because films are more or less reciprocal with life, media itself gets portrayed through media in a like manner. It is this phenomenon that interests us as the point of research.

Human capacity for communication is what has made possible all the civilizational progress in the last few millennia. From its crudest form this human ability has evolved into an institutionalised phenomenon which is socio-politically significant, especially in the democratic orders of human society. As an established agency, it is known as media, ideally the fourth pillar of a democratic framework of a nation.

Malcolm X writes extolling the power of media, “media is the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and the guilty innocent, and that’s power. Because they control the minds of the masses.” (Goodreads quotes) Of all the functions that media performs in a society, its task to raise public consciousness, spread awareness about vital issues is the most important one. It works to bring about ‘change’ (Eric Qualman) and its duty is to inform and entertain the people. And, for any change to occur, there must first come about a change in the popular perceptions about the issues involved. This is what media alone is capable of.

Over the years media itself, keeping with technological advances, diversified into different forms-- as traditional media, print media, electronic media, new media—stretching its reach to the maximum. In its ideal form, it is the voice of justice and a means of reformative changes. In the present-day order, while its reach is incredibly wide, its modes of functioning are highly erratic.

Cinema too is a form of mass media with incomparable reach and effect. “Films are cultural artifacts created by specific cultures, which reflect those cultures and in turn, affect them. Film is considered to be an important art form, a source of popular entertainment and a powerful method for educating- or indoctrinating- citizens.” (199 qtd. in Jawara D King) Film as a major part of media plays a vital role in ‘shaping’ and ‘reshaping’ people’s minds. They do influence the way in which people perceive their own lives and the society at large. If films depict the cultural heritage of any region, they also bring to light the downsides; they provide a forum to the long-unheard voices of the oppressed people. Much of the impact films make on masses is because of its nature as a medium. “The film through its visual images and

fluidity is a closer proximation of reality.” says Jasbir Jain. (01) They gingerly reflect social realities in all their shades.

The reciprocity between cinema and society is beyond debate; of course the degree may vary. And the analysis is grounded on this premise. But, of course, this is not to say that representations of reality are always and necessarily truthful and valid in all cases. There is a possible mismatch between reality and its representation as in comic books and caricatures where there is much imagination and less reality. The crux of the matter is that it is intention with which a representation is done that determines its validity. While representation may or may not be absolutely truthful despite being factual, there is no reason to discount the possibility that an edifying representation may also encourage imitation in life.

There is a wide array of Bollywood films in which media, despite all its putatively corrupt/fake practices, stands for the oppressed whom the Italian Marxist A. Gramsci calls ‘subaltern masses’ and it makes a difference to the society by using its enormous hold and wide range to bring people together for the betterment of humanity. However, there is always its flipside of commercial gain.

The term ‘subaltern’ has attracted accrual of various politico-social associations evoking images with great potential to elicit emotional responses. It is often used to designate people who have no ‘social status’ and are at the margins of a society and inferior in rank due to their colour, race, sex, ethnicity etc as a Portuguese scholar (Boaventure de Sousa Santos) observes “the counter-hegemonic practice, social movement, resistance, and struggle against neoliberal globalization, especially the struggle against social exclusion.” (30) In general, the term is also used for women, tribes, workers, and others (postcolonial) who are religiously, politically, culturally, economically, socially marginalized. In a word, it is victimhood status that seems to bind a huge variety of people otherwise differing in their own contexts. Though, the ‘mechanics of the discriminations’ (Gaytri Spivak) may differ, what strikes unmistakably is their common experiences of being victims, one way or the other. Taking a cue from this version of subalternity, a few films have been briefly analysed.

In the movie *PK* (2014) an alien lands on the earth for some research, and ends up losing his remote-controlling device, and thus getting stranded

on a planet not his own. Deep in distress, he acts on the advice that 'god alone can help him out'. So he goes from temple to temple to worshipping different idols, prostrating at mosques, praying at churches, offering wine to deities. During all this he learns that there is no clue to God's whereabouts. As an alien—unable to comprehend anything—he, quite surprisingly, thinks of distributing leaflets about the missing gods. This is a big point. Even an alien with little idea about the ways of the world is able to notice this. Then, he comes across Jaggu, a TV reporter, who consoles him and assures him that 'one day he would definitely go home'. She, despite her contrary professional needs, goes for the right cause rather than going for a 'burning story' and wants to help him genuinely.

Soon PK's predicament and his unusually ideology-free views turn into the 'wrong-number' campaign on air and it becomes a mass movement throughout the country. This is the second point where all the news channel agencies stand with PK. At the end of the movie Tapasvi Ji, played by Saurabh Shukhla, invites PK on a program called 'one question more', wherein Tapasvi is exposed and PK gets back his device with which he returns home safely.

Another instance of media shown to be working ideally within media is in the film *Satyagraha*, directed by Prakash Jha. With its political overtones, the film stirred popular interest. What might get neglected in the sensational and sentimental content is how media becomes instrumental in gathering popular support for an ordinary retired school teacher. A correspondent of a big media house Yashmin, played by Karina Kapoor, arrives at the scene and the whole scene changes. An insignificant spark flares into flames that engulf the entire system of hierarchized bureaucracy and corrupt politics.

The film is about the helplessness of millions who have no say in the administration, who cannot but suffer silently because of bureaucratic indifference, who feel compelled to bribe at every rung of the ladder. Now, in our view, such people are the subalterns, let us call them system's subalterns as their cries for help go unheard for generations. Towards the end of the film when a mass movement runs wild through the politicians' chicanery, Daduji (Amitabh Bachhan) wants to give his last message to the society, it is time when media wields its power for a cause. It reaches out to every corner of the country instantly, and situation returns to normalcy.

Yet another illustration of how media can usher in revolutionary change occurs in another Prakash Jha directed film *Gangajal*, in which acid is ironically termed as *gangajal*. Though it is based on a real life incident of the blinding of a few criminals by pouring acid into their eyes in Bihar, the film has an edifying message for the media too. In all its hyper-paced action, there is left some scope for a journalist who asserts the rights of a journalist and becomes the voice of the victims of such atrocities. In the narrative, however, where these victims appear to well deserve such treatments, the idea is that media must stand unshaken by the truth, no matter which way the wind blows. The journalist gets a thrashing but does not bow relent in his honest journalism. Taken out of the film's ambience, the journalist's voice is quite significant as far as it challenges the validity of inhuman treatment of even criminals. This is exactly how the victims can be spoken for.

The last film taken for this analysis is an Amir Khan Production *Peepli (Live)*, an off-beat attempt. The reality shown in the film turns upon one Natha in the village Peepli in Madhya Pradesh (Pronounced Mukhya Pradesh for political reasons). Natha and his brother are an epitome of helpless farmers in the country who have no one to turn to in the times of need. The banks are hell bent upon auctioning their land, their only asset in the world. Desperate and despaired, they go to the village landlord who, in jest, suggests committing suicide for the compensation money worth about one lakh. The poor farmers take the idea into their mind. The younger of the two Natha is tricked by his own brother into declaring his intention to commit suicide. Interestingly, it catches the media hype through Rakesh (played by Nawazuddin Siddiqui) a local reporter. As a Natha is overnight a hero, a symbol of sacrifice that farmers are compelled to make. With by-elections round the corner, politicians queue up outside Natha's scanty hut with their offers and promises. The way media catapults an unknown figure into the lime-light is a matter of humor and serious concern. Alongside this farce of democracy, there is a farmer Hori Mahto, whose land having already been auctioned digs the earth to make both ends meet. His hardships catch Rakesh's eye but to no avail as the entire media is after only Natha's story.

This is a picture of how erratically media may function just in the hope of better TRPs. They lose all sense of ethics, their duty and their commonsense too. In one scene they all lock horns to shoot Natha while he is defecating. This is height of media's irresponsible behavior. But on the other

hand, in the same film, in the same situation, there is Rakesh who is concerned about Hori Mahto, the farmer who succumbs to hardships and poverty and dies of hunger. Rakesh too dies in a blast, of course not even reported by the very media of which he is part. The entire news media projects Rakesh's dead body as Natha's and winds up the Natha and Peepli story abruptly. This is where it all goes wrong. The idea is that media, despite all its resource constraints, is meant to be the voice of the suffering humanity, exposing all ills and seeking action through relentless questioning of the defunct systems.

Summing up, the analysis leads to the simple conclusion that for media to be able to wield its enormous power in democratic set-ups will first need to set its priorities. It must first clear up all confusion between sensationalism and ethical journalism. Just because it has the instrument of doing politics of representation does not mean that it should always lust after TRPs and petty pleasures. Rather, it can, as shown in these films, usher in changes that the society has long need and desired so helplessly.

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The Voice of Feminism: The Echo of Wollstonecraft and Woolf

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Abstract:

Feminism refers to a movement that is inclined towards the empowerment of women in the political and social settings. The movement gained popularity in late 19th century and early 20th century. It was aligned towards the achieving economic, political and social equality for women. Before the movement, women were often relegated to domestic settings and were not allowed active participation in the administrative process both nationally and domestically within the family settings. Many people believe that feminism ended with the emancipation of women in the society. However, women continue to experience inequality in the 21st century. This paper examines some of the feminist concerns today as captured by Virginia Woolf and Mary Wollstonecraft. The use of “A Room of One’s Own” by Virginia Woolf and “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” by Mary Wollstonecraft as theoretical inferences in the analysis is intended to establish the history of the feminist movement to the present day.

Key Words: Feminism, empowerment, equality, discrimination patriarchy, etc.

Introduction

Women in the 21st century continue to grapple with discrimination in the political, economic and social settings. For instance, only a handful of women form a part of the administrative bodies globally. Alternatively, recent times have seen increased calls for the levelling of pay rates that is extended to the male and female employees. Thus, many employers tend to pay better wages to male employees than the female employees for regardless of the homogeneity of their productivity and qualifications. Similarly, the underrepresentation of women in the technical and mechanical industries comprises a reflection of the patriarchal structure of the modern day society. Overall, there are very many problems that women continue to grapple with

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in the society that their male counterparts are not subjected to. The objectification of women through advertisements and music such as rap songs negates the feminist principles and further impedes the emancipation of women in the society.

Feminism is a term that is subject negative connotation in the society today. An increased number of individuals negate the plausibility of feminism in the 21st century. Such inclination is predicated on the idea that feminism has long achieved its objectives given the establishment and enactment of legal frameworks that protect women against inequality. Indeed, there are several milestones that have been achieved since the establishment of the feminist movement. However, majority women continue to experience hindrances which are occasioned by the inefficiency of the enacted policies and the lack of goodwill in the enforcement of the same by the relevant institutions. The assumption that feminism outlived its usefulness is further augmented by the increase in radical groups which are often inclined towards the framework. Such notions negate the intention of feminism as it was mainly intended to improve the lives and position of women in the society vis-à-vis the male members of the society. Given the resistance that is often extended the feminist initiatives, it is plausible to state that feminism is under threat. The threat still hovers long after the establishment of metrics which were enacted to prevent such an outcome. Given the potency of the threat that is posed by the detractors of feminist principles in the 21st century, there is an overriding need to trace the roots of feminism and to capture some of the literary voices that globalised the movement and enabled the creation of policies which protected women's rights in the society.

Virginia Woolf comprises a significant factor in the feminist movement (Freedman 26). Similarly, Mar Wollstonecraft provides another leading proponent of the feminist stance. Working in different centuries, the authors engage different narration elements in expounding on the topic of feminism. The portrayal of women in the texts "A Room of One's Own" and "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" converge around the notion that members of the female sex are subjected to inequalities and operational limitations that members of the male sex are not subjected to given the patriarchal nature of the society. Woolf established that "women have sat indoors all these millions of years, so that by this time the very walls are permeated by their creative force, which has, indeed, so overcharged the

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capacity of bricks and mortar that it must need harness itself to pens and brushes and business and politics” (112). Similarly, Wollstonecraft, with regards to the aims of feminism, determined that “virtue can only flourish by equals” (34). Thus, both authors were inclined towards the promotion of equality for women in the society and the negation of the discrimination based on gender. Whereas this goal is often overlooked in the modern day arguments against feminism, it provides the major intent of feminism. Feminism was not intended to undermine members of the male gender. Instead, it was intended to streamline the rights that were being extended to both men and women to better the standards of living among women and allow them a greater influence in the social processes.

The primary objective of this analytical exploration is to learn the origins of feminism through the analysis of the literary opinions established by Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf. The two authors approach the feminist topic from different angles. However, all of them converge around the notion which reinforces the emancipation and empowerment of women in the society. Woolf and Wollstonecraft project different stances with regards to the degrees of freedom that women should be extended. However, this is a consequence of the cultural disparities that existed in Wollstonecraft's and Woolf's era. In reflecting on the issue of the origins of feminism, it is necessary to examine the differences and similarities in the opinions of the two authors with regards to feminism. Similarly, the study will seek to determine the influences of the two authors on the spread of the feminist stance in the 18th and 20th century respectively. In achieving its goal, the paper will augment its analysis through the use of feminist theoretical perspectives.

Methodology

Theoretical Contexts

The analysis of the roots of feminism will be predicated on several theoretical contexts. Similarly, it will engage the analysis of related texts to establish the background of feminism in the society. To begin with, the employ of the social-cognitive theory can be used to establish the motivations behind the development of feminist calls in the society. The social-cognitive theory was developed by Albert Bandura and provides an appropriate theory in the attempt to determine the structure of the society and why it tilts against the

women. Essentially, it explores the influences of social norms and gender inequality. Gender inequality, which gave rise to feminism, could be a consequence of indoctrination and the socialisation that one is subject to during growth from childhood to adulthood. Based on the social-cognitive theory, a society that is patriarchal is more likely to discriminate against women. Such a society is often divided along the lines of gender roles. As children grow up in such settings, they are often informed of the limitations of their initiatives depending on their genders. Consequently, such children begin "to form expectations about the response of others to her or his behaviour and interests" (Galliano 54). Societies that align themselves to the gender roles framework encourage disintegration among women and men by alluding to the differences that exist between members of the male sex and the females. For instance, when girls are exposed to certain toys, while in equal measure, discouraged from engaging other toys that are accessible to the boy child, they develop the idea that they are not qualified to engage certain careers. Thus, there are presently more men than women in the scientific field. In communities that align themselves to the gender disparity framework, girls are discouraged from pursuing careers in the scientific fields while boys are encouraged to pursue technical careers. Ultimately, members become more empowered than the female. Such inclinations justify the rise of feminism. Women sought ways through which they could permeate the barriers that were set forth by the social norms. Feminism provided the medium through which they could negate the prevailing norms which hindered the growth of the woman in the society. Overall, the social norms prevailing in the 18th century and the 20th century played an immense role in promoting feminism in the society.

Similarly, gender inequality can be explained through the employ of psychoanalysis as a theoretical background. Psychoanalysis explains that feminism was a consequence of the need to transcend the barriers that socialisation had erected in the minds of the members of the society against women emancipation. Explored by Nancy Chodorow, gender stereotyping was ingrained in the minds of individuals in the society and portended danger to women's freedom since it negated women's development while advocating for the growth of the male individuals in the subject society. Essentially, communities that practised gender inequality focused on the mother-child relationship as the source of socialisation for the children. In growing up,

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children were exposed to the notion that women were supposed to be attentive, effeminate, and mother-like. In the era, women provided the primary child caretakers whereas the male in the society performed the role of providing for their families (Galliano 53). Equally, the socialisation process in the subject societies decried effeminate characters among men. For instance, whereas men were expected to be demanding and aggressive, grace provided the major virtue that was encouraged among women. Thus feminism provided a forum through which shared responsibilities in parenthood could be advocated for. Communities that aligned themselves to gender segmentation predicated their beliefs in the physical and psychological differences of the male vis-à-vis the women. Therefore, since men were considered to be stronger than women, it was assumed that women were inferior to men (Galliano 53). All these analyses support the idea that gender inequality was a consequence of stereotyping which was mainly reinforced by parents and the communities that prevailed in the 18th and 20th century.

The similarities in the two theoretical contexts are projected in the inclinations that the two frameworks present with regards to gender stereotyping. Both converge around the notion that the society was responsible for the propagation of gender disparity in the community. Each of the theories' understanding of inequality towards women is predicated on the understanding that the society assigns gender roles and determines the behavioural patterns of the males and the females in the subject community. Mainly, it alludes to the stagnated nature of traditions which encourage the empowerment of men above the women. Communities that practice such retrogressive practices limit the progress of women and thus, in turn, inspire feminism in the given communities. Bandura's theoretical framework comprises the next theoretical principle that can be used to explain the rise of feminism as a result of gender inequality. It, however, fails to explain the factor that inspires the given communities to assign different roles to different members of the subject community. Lakoff provided another insight into the gender role discourse. He established that "if we do learn all the ... the language of our sex, we are ridiculed for being unable to think clearly, unable to take part in a serious discussion, and, therefore, unfit to hold a position of power" (Lakoff 65). This is an allusion to the negation of women's progress based on gender disparities that exist within the society today. This argument is predicated on the negative influences of the languages used in a given

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community on the overall position of women in the society. The language that members of a certain community engage with regards to males and females in that society provides a reflection of the gender roles in the subject community. The author further alludes to other instances of inequality between men and women. For instance, in the majority of the communities that lived in the 18th and 19th century, women were not allowed to retain their names after the death of their husbands while men were never referred by their wives' names long after they had died (Lakoff 67).

Literature Review

The origins and ultimate spread of feminism can be subdivided into three segments. Historians in the 21st century have found traces of feminism in the late 15th century. Prior to the establishment of the modern day feminism, there were many authors who explored gender inequality during the 15th century. One of the notable texts to have been developed in the 15th century, which captured the aspects of feminism, entails the "Epistle of the God of Love" written by Christine de Pizan (Ferree and Hess 53). Other pundits in the given era included Modesta di Pozzo di Fori and Anne Bradstreet. The documented origins of feminism establish the movement began in the 18th century with the rise of the suffragettes. In 1918, after the struggle for recognition that spanned over 10 years, women were allowed the right to vote. The Representation of the People Act of 1918 empowered women to vote in public elections as long as they were above the age of 30 years old (Ferree and Hess 56). The enactment of the bill furthered calls for equality in the society. The first wave of feminism was inclined towards equality in marriage, property rights and contracts. This initial wave mainly took place in the US and the UK. Some of the Acts that were enacted as a result of feminism in the 19th century UK include Custody of Infants Act of 1839 and the Married Women's Property Act of 1870. Other pioneer countries include Australia and New Zealand. At the shift of the century, feminism shifted from the domestic setting to the larger social setting. This shift provided the second wave of feminism. In the second wave, women were mainly concerned with augmenting their power in the political scene. Before the introduction of policies that protected women's rights in the society, the overall assumption was that women were deviant (Bauer 21). Overall, the second wave involved the Suffragists. The Suffragists were advocates of the feminist movement who advocated for women's rights to vote. It is their direct efforts that led to the

creation of the Representation of the People Act of 1918 which had been mentioned earlier. Other policies to have been created in the second wave of feminism include the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution of 1919 which allowed all the women across America to participate in the public voting system (Reger 32).

Feminism continued to spread to other parts of Europe and quickly found its way to Arabian countries such as Iran and Asia. In China, the Chinese Communist Party played a pivotal role in the emancipation of the Chinese women. Essentially, the second wave of feminism in the late 20th century aimed to completely eradicate discrimination which was predicated on gender bias. The third wave of feminism which began in the early 1990s encourages the use of sexuality as a medium through which women can empower themselves in their communities. The third wave of feminism is subject factions. Whereas one faction believes that there are innate differences between men and women, the other faction contends that the differences are a culmination and socialisation. Similarly, the latter further negates the essences of femininity. Essentially, it assumes that the virtues which are heaped on women do not reflect their true nature as they were constructed by a patriarchal society. The third wave of feminism continues today and provides a framework through which women advocate for increased participation in the economy. For instance, the increased calls for the standardisation of wages among male and female workers is a reflection of the sentiments that are projected by advocates of the third wave of feminism. Still, despite the several milestones that have been achieved by the feminist movement, women continue to experience several challenges in the 21st century. They have not been able to achieve ultimate emancipation. For instance, the majority of the political position are still occupied by members of the male sex. Similarly, women are underrepresented and underpaid in the corporate world. Consequently, there is an overriding need to explore the literary heritages of Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf and the impact that their sentiments had on the feminist movement. The analyses of the mentioned authors further allow the opportunity for assessment of the progress of feminism and the establishment of ways through which future feminist call can be streamlined.

Literary Analyses of Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf

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The authors Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf provided pioneer insights into the feminist debate and the factors that promote the gender inequality against women. Considered the literary pioneers of the feminist movement, the two authors used literary elements to determine the origins of inequality and the partiality of social institutions.

Mary Wollstonecraft

Mary Wollstonecraft is one of the earliest pioneers of the Feminist movement. She played an active role in advocating for the rights of women in the 18th century. Born in 1759 to Elizabeth and Edward Wollstonecraft, her adult inclinations were shaped by the instability of her family where her mother performed the majority of the household chores and motherly duties. Her father's constant change of occupation ensured that Mary and her family were always moving from one region to the other (Garner 83), Mary did not receive formal education as a kid since it was not considered critical among women at the time. The majority of the educated men in the community were men who had committed themselves to overseeing administrative and military duties. As a child, Mary Wollstonecraft projected a compelling desire to pursue the formal learning process (Garner 85). However, since neither her father nor mother were willing to negate the social norms, she undertook to study on her own. She constantly immersed herself in books that explored humanity and the nature of relationships between men and women in the society.

Intrinsically, her love for exploratory texts only served to reinforce her austerity. As a second-born child in a family of six, Wollstonecraft was compelled to constantly play the mother role to all of the remaining siblings. It is in this early stage of life that Mary Wollstonecraft was able to observe the injustices that were committed against women in her society. Her father was a vile-tempered man who constantly bludgeoned Mary's mother and made it a priority to undermine her authority in the household through constant abuse. Mary's father provides a reflection of the pervasiveness of patriarchal societies in the 18th century. At the time, women were projected to be no more than servants to the demands of their husbands. They served the purpose of bearing children and further submitted to the family and the husband. Seeing the cruelty that her mother and most members of the female sex in the community had to bear, Mary made it a priority to avoid the same for herself. By the time her mother died, Elizabeth Dixon had suffered immensely in the hands of her brutal husband who treated her like a slave (Johnson 2). The

desire to change the situation for all women in her community inspired her to develop a school for girls.

Nevertheless, it was not long before the school collapsed due to inexperience and inadequate funds. Similarly, the majority of the residents in her community, having been exposed to solely male hegemony, refused to help her in the venture and as such, she was compelled to close the school at its infant stage. Later on, without an option with regards to sustenance, Mary was forced to move back into her father's setting where she quickly learnt that her abusive father had married off his daughter to an equally abusive man. She resorted to aid her sister in escaping the shackles that had been imposed by her husband and further resorted to seeking a more pronounced medium of communicating her desires. Subsequently, she solicited the help of Joseph Johnson, a renown radical publisher at the time. It was Johnson who introduced Mary to the world of literature (Caine 24). Her interactions with the publishers led to the development of the book "Thoughts on the Education of Daughters" (Burke 54). The book captured the immensity of teaching the girl child in the society. It further captured the overriding need for parents to take better care of the children that they sire. It reinforced further freedom of women with regards to their sustenance. By empowering girls in the society, the girls would be able to provide for themselves without the need for dependence on their husbands which inspired brutality among the men. At the time, given the patriarchal nature of the society, the book saw only a mild success. However, it provided Mary with the platform that would enable her to quickly draft another book.

Mary's ultimate recognition came after the French Revolution. The "Vindication of the Rights of Women" was met with ire and alacrity in equal measure. Her promotion of women's right to equality provided the initial feminist stance in the modern world. Nonetheless, Mary Wollstonecraft did not live to see the fruits of her labour as by the time she died, the majority of the women were still considered an inferior gender in many settings. Mary Wollstonecraft gave birth to her daughter Mary Godwin who became famous later on for her intriguing novel "Frankenstein" (Jeanneney 81).

The Vindication of the Rights of Women:

"The Vindication of the Rights of Women" by Mary Wollstonecraft provided the basic foundation for feminism. Essentially, it provides the foremost textual analysis that reinforced the need for the promotion of equality

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between men and women in the society. Whereas it did not capture the empowerment of women in the administrative roles, it demanded that girls be educated just as were boys in the prevailing societies. The book was published in 1792 and provides the metric by which future feminist inclinations were predicated on in future England. The book hoped to justify the empowerment of women through education. Essentially, it was based on the belief that the empowerment of women will not only aid the economies of the family settings but further allow women more power to determine their fates as individuals and not wives or mothers. Still, despite the aims of the book, it was met with significant criticism from both the public and administrative realms. The major belief in the 18th century England was that women's roles were limited to the domestic settings. The ideas represented in the book proved to be controversial. At the time, education for women was unheard of, and many assumed that educating women would only serve to propagate sentimentality and foolishness in the society. In the “Vindication of the Rights of the Women” Wollstonecraft determined that “it is vain to expect virtue from women till they are in some degree independent of men; nay, it is vain to expect that strength of natural affection that would make them good wives and mothers, whilst they are absolutely dependent on their husbands they will be cunning, mean, and selfish” (Wollstonecraft 221). Essentially, this statement was a negation to claims of cunning and selfishness among women.

Principally, it was impossible to expect women to avoid cunning given that all their initiatives were controlled by the men in the society. Thus, women chose to be cunning as a means of promoting their individual interests. Without equality in the society, such acts would continue to form part and parcels of the affected communities. This is because without equality, women would continue to suffer impositions that were instituted by the male members of the society. In the traditional family setting, women were domestically taught to address the needs and desires of their husbands. Thus, it was erroneously assumed that they could be no more than that which had been defined by the men. In such family arrangements, most of the time women would channel their frustration towards their children which would, in turn, inspire moral decay. Wollstonecraft was of the idea that educating women would mitigate the social ills in the prevailing society (Ford 199). The less frustrated the women were, through educational empowerment, the more likely that the society would develop. This is because educational

empowerment would provide women with various options which would significantly aid their progress economically and socially. The “Vindication of the Rights of the Women” further captures the contentious sexual topic in the 18th century. Wollstonecraft contended that women, like men, had strong sexual desires but were forced to suppress them given that an exhibit of their desires would be considered immoral in the prevailing 18th century English society. Many at the time felt that her sentiments were a reflection of the frustration she suffered in the hands of an abusive husband and the horrors she witnessed as a child growing up in a household that was mainly controlled by an abusive further. Thus, she established that women “might as well pine married as single, for she (they) would not be a lot unhappier with a bad husband than longing for a good one” (Wollstonecraft 98). Major criticism of the sentiment originated from the male members of the society who had grown up in patriarchal family settings and had been exposed to a system that promoted the desires and needs of man above those of a woman (Hawley 12).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Edmund Burke provide two of the major recipients of Wollstonecraft’s ire with regards to equality in the society. The two philosophers played a pivotal role in reinforcing freedom and independence among individuals in the society. However, they failed to capture the need for women’s emancipation. This, according to Wollstonecraft, was hypocritical since she was aligned to the notion that an appropriate freedom framework should entail the emancipation of both men and women (Monroe 145). Mary’s exploration of the lives of the bourgeoisie provided another source of criticism that was levelled against her. The “Vindication of the Rights of the Women” failed to succinctly address the challenges that were facing women in the lower end of the social classes in England (Monroe 147). However, this act can be forgiven on the premises that Mary had mainly based her arguments on the setting that she was conversant with in the middle-upper class society. Conclusively, with regards to the political scenery, Wollstonecraft predicated that the constitution in England, given its disregard of the rights of women “was settled in the dark days of ignorance, when the minds of men were shackled by the grossest prejudices and most immoral superstition (11). Modern day feminism is a direct result of the principles that were propagated in the book “The Vindication of the Rights of the Women”. It provides the earliest textual emphasis on the emancipation of women in the society.

Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf was born on the 25th of January, 1882 in London. Woolf is a pseudonym that she assumed later on in life. At birth, Woolf was known as Adeline Virginia Stephen. Her feminist inclinations were augmented throughout her childhood as a result of her love for study and introspection. Unlike Wollstonecraft, Woolf had unlimited access to her father's library which gave her an opportunity to assess the philosophies behind social freedoms. Woolf, like Wollstonecraft, did not attend formal schooling. Instead, she undertook to educate herself from the books that she could find in her father's library (Clarke 63). It was in the process of reading that her authorship dreams were formulated and primed. However, at this early stage, Woolf had not indicated any inclinations towards feminism. Woolf did not have enough motherly nurture given that her mother died when she was still a child. Her mother's death inspired a series of trauma that would follow her into adulthood (Briggs 25). Her father's and sister's loss, which followed in the wake of her mother's death, significantly impeded her psychological well-being which led to her being institutionalised in the later years of her life. Her initial feminist desires were inspired at the King's College where she undertook language lessons.

Still, it was not until she met members of the Bloomsbury that she resorted to employing the pen to challenge the existing social inclinations with regards to equality between men and women. The group had been converted by Woolf's brother, Thoby; before his death in the 1900s (Briggs 39). Her mission began in the aftermath of World War I. During the war, women were called upon to assume duties that were traditionally executed by the men given that the majority of the men had gone off to fight in the World War I. Nonetheless, the writer's life was marked by incessant depression and restlessness which culminated in her suicide in 1941. The most notable feminist textual analysis comprises "A Room of One's Own". Other than the book she was able to draft several poems and stories which documented the struggles of women in the society and the morality of human actions.

A Room of One's Own: "A Room of One's Own" provides the most significant text that was developed by Virginia Woolf. The book reinforced the freedom of women in the society. She determined that women's potentials and imagination were being curtailed by the constant impositions of the family life and the demands of the spouses who assumed that the only duties

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befitting the women were the domestic affiliated. Conventional family settings at the time did not encourage the participation of women in the administrative systems and instead relegated their efforts to the confines of their home settings. Therefore, "women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size" (Woolf 6). In reinforcing her inclinations towards feminism, the text documents the tribulations that other notable women who lived in the previous centuries had to contend with as a result of the impositions of the prevailing patriarchal society. In the last days of her life, Woolf suffered immense psychological challenges which significantly affected her writing styles (Majumdar and McLaurin 59).

Some of the notable literary icons, inclined towards the feminist stance in the previous century and captured by Woolf in the essay "A Room of One's Own" include Jane Austen and Emily Bronte. Of the two icons, she determined that they "dashed her brains out on the moor or sopped and mowed about the highways crazed with the torture that her gift had put to her" (Woolf 120). The text received a fair amount of criticism with pundits indicating that it did not reinforce freedom and empowerment for the women of colour who were at the time the subject of segregation in England. Equally, some of the sentiments expressed in the text were considered to be offensive (Maze 175).

Origins and Spread of Feminism According to Wollstonecraft and Woolf

"A Room of One's Own" by Virginia Woolf can be said to be a continuation of "The Vindication of the Rights of the Women" by Mary Wollstonecraft. It acknowledges the immensity of the previous feminist writers in the calls for the empowerment of women in the society. As a reference to the past efforts that were extended by authors in the 18th century, Woolf predicates that "towards the end of the eighteenth century a change came about which, if I were rewriting history, I should describe more fully and think of greater importance than the Crusades or the Wars of the Roses; the middle-class woman began to write" (Woolf 64). This is an acknowledgement of the gradual process of feminism from the previous generations to the 21st century.

Woolf and Wollstonecraft project similar experiences which significantly augmented their inclinations towards the feminist stance. To begin with, both the authors were compelled to contend with limited formal education. Wollstonecraft was only able to pursue her literary desires later on in life as a result of the resistance that she was extended by her society with regards to her education. Similarly, both were the subject of traumas that led to their untimely deaths. It is possible that the resistance and criticism they faced may have inspired their trauma. Essentially, the authors used their backgrounds as the basis by which they could champion for women's empowerment in the largely patriarchal societies of the 18th and 20th centuries. Their textual explorations were intended to achieve emancipation, education and political empowerment for the women in the society (Zalewski 22). Their stance provides the foundation of the present-day feminism.

Conclusion

The history of Feminism is deeply rooted in Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf's textual analyses. Principally, the two authors provided the sentiments that led to the development of modern-day feminist. Through the analysis of "The Vindication of the Rights of Women" and "A Room of One's Own", this paper establishes that the major inspiration behind feminism was predicated on the desire by women for more freedom and education in order to mitigate the controls that their husbands, and the men in general, had over their lives. Feminism in the modern world is thus a reflection of women's desire for equality over the centuries. Essentially, both Woolf and Wollstonecraft were able to rise beyond the limitations of their positions in the society to become an icon in the literary discipline. Likewise, Feminism challenges convention and seeks to explore the possibilities of peaceful and empowered existence for both men and women in the society. Nonetheless, despite the progression of the framework, it has not succeeded in fully addressing all the afflictions that hamper the growth of women in the society.

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The Space of Women in Rabindranath Tagore's Short Stories

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Abstract:

Rabindranath Tagore is a pride of India, and a jewel in the crown of Indian English Literature. His creativity has manifested itself in a variety of literary forms like poetry, essay, novel, short story, drama, dance drama, music, and painting. He, in the eight decades of his life contributed so much to the Bengali literature that its treasures were enriched with the wealth of his great thoughts. He was also a social reformer and educator. Whatever he received, like Shakespeare, he made his own. He was a proponent of the freedom of individuality. The ever-changing reality of life inevitably reflects itself in the writings of Rabindranath Tagore. The position of women in society is no exception to this phenomenon. The status of women all over the world, particularly in India, changed between the beginning of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. This paper is an attempt to see how Tagore presented the women and their concerns in his short stories.

Key words: women, exploitation, pain, courage, heroes, etc

Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali polymath, who gave new shape and form to his region's literature and music. The highly acclaimed author of *Gitanjali*, he became the first non-European to win Nobel Prize in literature in 1913. His best-known works-his verse, short stories and novels were acclaimed for their lyricism, naturalism, colloquialism and unnatural contemplation. His compositions were chosen by two nations as national anthems: India's *Jana Gana Mana* and Bangladesh's *Amar Shonar Bangla*. Rabindranath Tagore is mainly acclaimed as a poet. But his short stories are world renowned and they are equally brilliant and competent as his poetry. Tagore has nearly one hundred short stories to his credit.

Rabindranath was one of the earliest theorists of the form of the Bengali short story. In the '*Monsoons*' section of his famous long poem '*The Golden Boat*', Tagore says:

"I desire to create short stories one after the other

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About small lives, and tiny pains, simple and lucid
With no excess of descriptions, didacticism or moralizing.
The closure will open up insatiated thirst for more and
The ending will defer ending..."

In the words of Vishwanath S. Naravane, "The modern short story is Rabindranath Tagore's gift to Indian culture."

Rabindranath Tagore was not only one of the greatest literary minds India has ever seen but also a man of high philosophy, an active educationist, a social reformer and a communicator. The treatment of women and the position they have in the society was of serious concern to him. Being a sensitive man and the supreme romantic poet of Bengal he always understood women in all their happiness and sorrows, pain and joy, hope and despair. Tagore believed that the women of our country are a source of immense wealth- their courage against all odds, their power to survive under any situation and oppression, their self sacrifice and gentleness. It pained him deeply to see such colossal loss of human treasure. Indian women with all their super powers is the theme of many of his short stories. It is said that Tagore had a unique natural genius to read women's minds and he analyzed their strange structure, through his stories. He tells the world that Indian women are highly sacrificing, loving obedient, religious and kind. They adore their husbands, love their children deeply and give due reverence and consideration to their in-laws.

The social reformer in Rabindranath Tagore gave priority to women. They took the centre stage in his prose works. Tagore's portrayal of women characters in his short stories and novels changed consequent to the contemporary changes in the society. Due to English education and the influence of Western culture, women characters were no longer the submissive sufferers of patriarchy. They started to assert their individuality. The heroines created by Tagore during the third phase of his literary career (1913-41) are bold to have a futuristic outlook. They are more emancipated and empowered to transform themselves in the twentieth century. They are all forerunners to the later day women characters depicted by the so-called staunch feminist writers. This made Tagore a visionary for the cause of feminism. Tagore's short stories and novels of the Post-Gitanjali period

portray the emancipated women. His heroines of this period become a vehicle for the attack of male-domination, advocacy of women's education, and cause of the emancipation of women. Santosh Chakrabarti observes:

Rabindranath Tagore's socio-familial concept took a new turn as he began to probe the husband-wife relationship within the joint family set up. Gone is the tyrannical in-law and submissive son syndrome in which subservience to the patriarchal norm is the rigor, as Rabindranath Tagore sets out at the beginning of the 20th century, to apply his mind to the taboo subject of women's emancipation.

Today we are talking about crossing the barriers of society and how women are trying to prove their equality to their counterparts before the world. Although as an excellent communicator Tagore often encoded his messages in his scripted works to a society that considered women as parasites. When rights and freedom of women were completely neglected Rabindranath Tagore successfully brought out his women out of the four walls of the house and placed them in the active stream of life.

Women in Tagore's days were highly exploited by the feudal society. The out-dated, cruel, feudal customs enhanced the miseries and tortures of women. Through his stories Tagore pointed out those injustices. He was never influenced by patriarchal views. That is the reason that he depicted his heroines as more powerful and brighter than the spineless men. Tagore not only reveals the spirituality of his heroines but also shows their keen practical sense and determination. Tagore's stories confirm the fact that he truly believed in the progress of women and in their freedom from the feudal bondage. He also believed that given equal powers and rights, they might occupy their rightful place in society side by side with men. In the words of Tagore: "... (women) will have their place, and those bigger creatures(men) will have to give way."

While analyzing Bengali women's fate, Tagore depicts two kinds of intellectuals in Bengali society who played central roles in the stories. The first category of intelligentsia wanted to preserve feudal customs for their personal gains. They amass wealth through exploitation of the poor. Some of them held important positions like judge, police. The second category is of those who are not directly involved in the exploitation of women but they

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remain passive towards everything and this only adds up to the burden of Bengali women. Tagore brought out the pathos of women caused by various situations in the house. Women had to face several problems in their house. Tagore treated these problems and created immortal images of women in the minds of the readers.

The story '*Living or Dead*' was written and published in 1892. Through this story Tagore criticized the feudal morals and customs which ruled over the life of women. The story presents how the patriarchal system is a source of inhumanity and cruelty towards women. Kadambini is a widow living at the mercy of her brother-in-law. None but the child in the family loved her. They had been in so much hurry to burn her and they lacked the patience and willingness to check her body and confirm her death. Her death was a great relief to Sharadasankar and others. They could never wish her to return to life. Hence even when she proved her physical existence by shedding her blood, Sharadasankar was not willing to welcome her. Since the society would not admit her, Kadambini had no option but death.

In '*Debts and Credits*' or '*The Deal*' published in 1891, Tagore tells the story of Nirupama, a victim of the cursed dowry system. Through the character of 'Mahamaya' Tagore tells the world that man-woman relationship cannot continue without passion and love and such artificial marriage ties will only make the rosy paths of married life a thorny one. Bahaminicharan's inhumane treatment of his sister by forcefully marrying her to a dying old man is contemptible and villainous. By focusing more on the pains and problems of women his stories acquired a didactic tone. In the story '*Punishment*' or '*The Sentence*' published in 1893, Tagore was able to showcase the spiritual richness of women in peasant families, though they lived in utter poverty and so had to face humiliation at various levels.

In Rabindranath's early thinking, women had two principal roles—mother and lover. The loving nature of a mother has been portrayed in many of his stories; Anandamoyee in '*Gora*', Jatin's aunt in '*Shesher Ratri*' (The Last Night) are a few examples. Romantic love between a man and a woman is the basis of his stories such as '*Dalia*' and '*Joy Parajoy*' (Victory and Defeat). In addition to the roles of a mother and a lover which Tagore initially gave to women he had discovered another facet of women as well. He did not give it a

name though, but we all know what it was. Yes, it was the 'new woman' in this new age.

During the last period of his life, Rabindranath's perceptions relating to women were fully developed. He discovered that:

A women's identity is no longer limited to the role of a mother or a wife.

He could feel that a new age was replacing the existing one:

I can feel a new age has dawned in the world.... Women are coming forward to build the new civilization. The purdah over their faces has vanished, and along with it has gone the purdah that kept their mind away from exposure to the outer world.

Being a true feminist, Tagore sends his message through the story 'Woman Unknown' story that gender equality can be achieved only by educating the women. In creating Kalyani, Tagore has envisioned the New Women of India. The character of Kalyani provides another testimony to Tagore's feminist approach. Tagore has pooh-poohed the patriarchal notion that women are innately unfit to assume responsibility and require masculine guidance and protection. Given proper training that women themselves can act independently is Tagore's strong message sent out to men. Tagore deconstructs their social roles, which represents the patriarchy defined female and male traits. He has inverted the active male and passive female syndrome. This strategic decision helps the artist to achieve space for female growth, which is the tenet of feminism.

Rabindranath gave us some very powerful women characters befitting the new age. The above analysis cannot end without a mention of a short story 'Laboratory', which Tagore wrote in his last days. In the short story 'Laboratory' Rabindranath Tagore has depicted a new age where there is no more patriarchal oppression. There is the reversal of role to that of matriarchal force, where women gain the upper hand. Beyond physical charm and chastity, a man attempts to perceive the intelligence and spiritual beauty of a woman. A woman has the choice of selecting her man. Equality of the sexes is maintained. A mother and a daughter break all the social conventions and values with regard to sexuality. Sohini the protagonist is a rare woman character with a social consciousness who violated all traditional values for

the sake of her idealism. As a widow, she regains her right to the property of her husband through a legal battle. In uniting individualism and idealism, Sohini is the New Woman of Tagore. Considering the fact that this was his last short story just a few months before his demise, it is obvious that Tagore has envisioned the advent of Feminism in Indian society by the creation of such a bold woman with a futuristic outlook. Tagore in his Selected Essays says:

She is not in the world of the fairy tale where the fair woman sleeps for ages until she is touched by the magic wand. . . . At last, the time has arrived when woman must step in and impart her life rhythm to this reckless movement of power.

The depiction of the pathos of women in his short stories is commendable. It exposes the sad predicament of women in contemporary Bengali society against the odds of feudal system and points out the unjust suppression of the feminine wants and their rights. At the same moment, it never fails to present the strength, courage, love, and determination of these women. Though they are shown as victims of patriarchal society, their courage and spiritual wealth make them very inspiring heroines. Some of the pathos of the women in the stories include: the unfruitful and unfulfilled desires of an orphaned girl in *'The Postmaster'*; the pain of a dumb girl who finds a lasting relation with nature in *'Subha'* or *'The Dumb Girl'*; the pathetic story of a woman named Kusum, narrated by an inanimate object in *'The Landing Stairway'* or *'River Stairs'*; the extreme faith of a poor wife on her husband's intellectual caliber and his eventual failure in *'Taraprasanna's Fame'*; the consequences of child marriage and Sati pratha in *'Mahamaya'*; Bengali peasant women, full of spirituality being molested and dehumanized by men in *'Punishment'*; the sacrifice of a lovable elder sister to save her younger brother from her greedy husband in *'Elder Sister'*; the suppression and oppression of women in *'The Judge'*; the exploitation of helpless women in middle class Bengali society in *'Atonement'*; the sufferings of women because of their excessive love and care for their husbands in *'The Middle One'*; the deadly act of women to satisfy her inner urge in *'Skelton'*; the reflection of "suppressed emotions and passions of the dead women of the palace" in the *'Hungry Stones'*; and many more.

'Letter From A Wife' (1914) is an epoch-making short story which Tagore himself had admitted that this short story was his ". . . first attempt at

writing a pro-woman text” (Ray 181). It is a treatise on the liberation of women. It is a powerful story about an emancipated woman, Mrinal, in an epistolary form. A woman depicted as writing a letter itself was a revolution in those days. Then it was thought that, according to Hindu religion a woman who took up writing was a prelude to becoming a widow very soon. Tagore portrays Mrinal as a child-bride of twelve years entering as the second daughter-in-law into an orthodox family. After fifteen years, at the age of twenty seven, she leaves the house forever to Puri, determined not to return. She relieves herself from the shackles of patriarchal oppression. How the metamorphosis of womanhood of Mrinal, from the status of a traditional wife to that of a freedom-seeking woman happens is forcefully expressed by Tagore.

Starting from his first short story, ‘*Beggar Girl*’ in 1877 to his last work, ‘*The Bad Name*’ in 1941, the reader discovers how a woman “is the most creative transformative factor within social life”. Her personality develops with each plot and this in turn brings about a transformation in the social consciousness of the people especially of the Bengali society. Tagore’s attitude towards women is similar to that of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, who first introduced to the Bengali literary tradition a fresh outlook on women and romance. Even in the novels of Tagore widows are very carefully presented. They serve the two-fold purpose of expressing the conflict both within the Bengali society and within the women themselves. The widow, Binodini, struggles with her own passion and unfulfilled love. Damini, for her part, ignores all the social norms and conventions and prepares for life with her new husband.

In the later works of Tagore, women do not hesitate to voice her feelings openly against the ills of society like untouchability, the caste system, religious hypocrisy while she undertakes education and a professional career. According to William Cenkner:

(women) emerges as a catalytic figure in the dynamics of society, the nation and even the world. Tagore finally imagines woman with a global consciousness.

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Representation and Transformation of a Mythical Identity – Reading Stephenie Meyer’s *Twilight* in the Light of Northrop Frye’s ‘Myth, Fiction and Displacement’

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Abstract:

Vampire has spurred writers and human imagination for years by being one of the most memorable mythical characters whose evil, motivated by its thirst for blood, lust and a mania for power, is fully comprehensible. From accursed, abused and abhorred to seductive and romantic, this mythological or folkloric creature has undergone many transformations over the ages and across the continents. In other words, it has transcended the rationalism of the readers and audiences, as well as those of the authors and directors, respectively. It is noteworthy how an immortal, blood-sucking mythical creature of the past has metamorphosed into a romantic hero of many contemporary literary fictions and visual forms of entertainment. Although the myth of vampires has an ever-changing metaphorical meaning associated with it but what remains constant is its role in projecting the unnamed fears of those societies which conceive, sustain and celebrate it. The paper seeks to examine how Northrop Frye’s concepts of “myth”, “fiction” and “displacement” help in understanding Stephenie Meyer’s gothic sensation – *Twilight*. The paper also analyses the contemporary American myth of vampire through the Freudian method of psychoanalysis. The paper also seeks to differentiate between the traditional myths of vampire and their contemporary, American counterparts.

Key Words: Displacement, folklore versus fakelore; Freudian model of psychoanalysis; magic realism, myths, popular fiction, transformation of identity, etc.

In “Myth and Folk Tradition in Scandinavian Literature”, *Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature*, Reimund Kvideland states, “In modern literature, tradition is no longer used to build up an identity based on the past; it is used instead to understand the “everyday myths” of contemporary culture in a present and future perspective” (Kvideland, 590).

If Kvideland’s statement is used for understanding the contemporary American vampire tradition, then one realizes that the American myth of

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vampires rarely keeps up with the tradition of European myths. Evolving from entirely distinct socio-cultural and socio-political conditions, it has been displaced drastically in the American literary tradition and popular culture. Earlier, the myths of witches and black-magic became popular in America but were seldom entered into the mainstream American literary tradition. With the advent of visual forms of entertainment, the role of technology in modifying the myth of vampires became more significant.

As per the Freudian model of psychoanalysis, when the “self” talks about the unconscious and pre-conscious states of a human mind, the unconscious becomes the site of all repressed and unrepressed desires whereas the pre-conscious becomes the site of action. When the “self” gets perturbed through anything which creates disturbances, havoc, violence or anarchy in a society, at a given point of time, a sort of disjunction gets created in the human mind between “utopia” (fulfilment of the realm of desire) and “dystopia” (the opposite of utopia; undesirable and frightening) where the “self” fails while constantly struggling to fulfil its utopian desire, the mind develops a sense of fractured “self”. Without a secure primary attachment, the fractured “self” involves coping strategies to provide support to the withering self. Here, the idea of “Eros” (the life instinct) is challenged by the idea of “Tanatos” (the death instinct). When the fractured “self”, which is full of fear and paranoia, is metaphorically projected, it gets circulated in the forms of fables, folklores, myths, etc. The idea of “self” may also refer to the collective consciousness of a society.

Hence, the myths of vampires could also be the direct results of the metaphorical projection of the fears of various societies. To understand how they evolved, one needs to refer to various cultural, historical and literary accounts. Like in “*Dracula*”, Clover Williams explains a possible connection of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* with several legendary, historical European figures. He explains that the fear in the minds of the then Europeans led to the popularization of the myth and formation of stories around it. He writes that the name – Dracula refers to several overlapping figures (1448). Historically, Vlad Tepes’s, (a Romanian prince, b. 1428) cruelty inspired legends throughout much of Europe, even during his own lifetime (1456-62). The vampire in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) was modelled in part on him... (1456-62). Borne to Vlad Dracul (“dragon” or “devil”), then prince of Wallachia, the nickname “Dracula” (“son of Dracul”) was first used by the

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people of Wallachia and later adopted by Tepes during his own reigns... (1456-76). Williams writes that most historical and folkloric accounts (German, Latin, Greek and Czech) emphasize Dracula's cruelty... (166). Despite Tepes's legendary cruelty, no record associates him with vampirism (166). Vampirism was inspired by a legendary Slavic noble, a Transylvanian countess – Elizabeth Bathory, who closely fits the description of Dracula (166). She tortured and killed at least six hundred girls and used their blood as an elixir of youth (166). She was also famous for biting victims on the breast and neck, and sources also identify her with werewolves (166). "The term – vampire was popularized after the early eighteenth century CE after an influx of vampire superstition into Western Europe from the Balkans and Eastern Europe where it was frequent, although local variants also had different names ("vrykolakas" in Greece and "strigoi" in Romania) (Silver and Ursini, 22-23).

In the post 9/11 era, the vampire myth has been resurrected by transforming vampire's stereotypical, horrid image. The villain of the earlier centuries is being re-written as today's heroes where, the portrayal of subjectivity is seen in two forms – (i) normal human beings and (ii) vampires.

In *Twilight*, vampires are of two types – (i) the good, ethical vampires and (ii) the bad, unethical ones. They project what is against the established notion of culture (cannibalism) which tendency to corrupt the super-ego transactions. The idea of the self, humans or anything which can be termed as ethical, lies on one extreme end whereas the idea of the other, vampires or anything unethical, lies on another extreme end. These two ideas are poles apart. The cannibalistic vampires pose a constant threat to the lives of human beings. Since Eros is projected through human beings, Tanatos is left unto the vampires. The human mind has three levels – (i) id, (ii) ego and (iii) super-ego. The id is the seat of desires whereas vampires represent the site and extrapolation of all repressions i.e. super-ego (blood, gore, alternative worlds and fears). The good vampires protect the "self" or human beings but can neither be completely represented through Tanatos nor through Eros. So, they lie on the border line – swinging somewhere between these two extremes.

Northrop Frye's essay begins by explaining that by the term – myth, he not only means by the classical sense in which it is always perceived but also

by its more common and easily recognised narrative form, and by what it means in literary criticism today (587). He states that it is relatively easier to see a myth's place in a mythology, and one of the main uses of myth criticism is to enable one to understand the corresponding place that a work of literature has in the context of literature as a whole (604). By broadly categorising the literary works into two types – the fictional and the thematic, Frye stresses that the kind of myth that is seen in the fictional work, comprises of literature (novels, plays, narrative poetry, folktales and anything which tells a story) with internal characters (587). He argues that myths have been integral elements of literature because the interests of poets in myths and mythology have been remarkable and constant since the time of Homer (587). He explains that a myth may be told and retold; modified or elaborated, rephrased or rewritten or different patterns may be discovered in it (599). When a system of myths loses all of its connexions with beliefs, it becomes purely literary (599). Such developments were impossible unless myths were inherently literary in structure (599).

Frye clarifies that “myth” refers to a certain type of story wherein some of the chief characters are gods or other beings larger in power than humanity (597). He elaborates that like a folktale, myth is an abstract story pattern (597). The mythical characters can do what they like, which implies what the story-teller likes (597). Also, there is no need to be plausible or logical in motivation (597). Whatever happens in myths are the things that happen only in stories – in a self-contained literary world (597). A myth always has the same appeal for the fiction writer which the folktales have because it presents one with a ready-made framework, hoary with antiquity, and allows one to devote one's energies to elaborate its design (597-600).

This explains how the myths work their magic in *Twilight*. To put it in Frye's words, the well-established myths of vampires provide the main outlines and circumferences to Meyer's imagination by helping her to create the character of Edward Cullen. She brings these myths so well to her use that even the stereotypical image of vampires has started to lose its negative connotations for the twenty-first-century readers.

In the essay, Frye also tells that a myth has the quality of bringing or introducing a sort of mass hysteria in public due to its popularity (605). This is true for the myths of vampire as well as for *Twilight*. From an anti-hero to a

hero, vampire's evolution presents a play of moral contraries when both – the good (as in the novel, the vampires such as Edward Cullen and his foster family) and the evil (vampires such as Victoria and James), become questionable and render themselves to doubts, signifying the fluidity of identities. After the production of *Twilight Series*, *Twilight Saga* and several American supernatural drama television series, vampire has evolved as one of the most favourite fictional characters of the young generation of the West, hugely influencing its notions and fashion.

Twilight is a vampire romantic fiction narrated in the first person narrative style by the female protagonist, a seventeen-year-old girl – Isabella Swan (Bella) who falls in love with a century old vampire – Edward Cullen. However, Frye suggests that very seldom is a myth located in history: its action takes place in a world above or prior to ordinary time, in *illo tempore* (597). Although, the novel does refer to a specific time period but the readers automatically realize that it is set in the contemporary world. In “First Sight”, Bella narrates, “In the Olympic Peninsula of northwest Washington State, a small town named Forks exists under a near-constant cover of clouds (1). It rains on this inconsequential town more than any other place in the United States of America (1).” Mobile phones, emails, cars like BMW and Volvo, the twenty-first-century American classrooms, etc. project it as the work of an author's imagination who wove a story in the contemporary scenario.

Meyer's usage of myths could have become questionable, had Frye not discussed his concept of “displacement”. He explains that the opposite extreme from such deliberate exploiting of myth is found in the general tendency of realism (naturalism) to give imaginative life and coherence to something closely resembling one's own ordinary experience (602). Such realism begins by simplifying its language, and dropping the explicit connexion with myth which are the signs of an awareness of literary tradition (602-3). By displacement Frye refers to the techniques which a writer uses to make one's story credible, logically motivated or morally acceptable – lifelike, (603). One of the reasons for calling this technique displacement is that fidelity to the credible is a feature of literature which affects only the content (not the myth) (603). Frye enumerates that life presents a continuum, and a selection from it can only be what is called a *tranche de vie*: plausibility is easily sustainable, but except for death life has little to suggest in the way of plausible conclusions which do not necessarily round out a shape (603). The

realistic writer soon finds out that the requirements of literary form and possible content always fight each other (603). Just as the poetic metaphor is always a logical absurdity, so is every inherited plot in literature more or less mad (603). This explanation can be used to understand Meyer's novel. For example, Edward's rash decision to avoid Bella, subtle references to Jacob's jealousy, and the "lived happily ever after" hint to the concluding novel (*Twilight*) (excluding the epilogue which it follows), etc. do not help the story to get a plausible conclusion and suggest that there still exists a continuity in the story.

In several genres of writing, the manipulated happy endings of comedy or the equally manipulated ironic endings of modern realism – were not suggested by any observation of human life or behaviour – all exist solely as story-telling devices (603). Frye explains this by stating that literary shape cannot come from life; it comes only from literary tradition, and so ultimately from myth (603). However, he accepts the fact that there is one difficulty that comes from the lack of literary term which corresponds to the word "mythology" which means it is difficult to conceive of literature as an order of words, as a unified imaginative system that can be studied as whole by criticism (604). He pin-points the drawback here by stating that if there were such a conception, one could readily see that literature as a whole provides a framework or context for every work of literature, just as a fully developed mythology provides a framework or context of every work of literature can be found in mythology as well, when its literary tradition is understood (604).

Twilight, as a piece of fiction, also does not seem to come with a very decisive conclusion (however, it is followed by three other sequels namely, *New Moon* (2006), *Eclipse* (2007) and *Breaking Dawn* (2008)) not because its story fails to establish a permanent union of two lovers (one of who is a mortal – Bella, and the other one – a living dead, a vampire – Edward), through marriage; but also, because it has a very abrupt and ambiguous epilogue. For example, a part of the epilogue has been quoted:

I took the little package, rolling my eyes at Edward while I stuck my finger under the edge of the paper and jerked the tape.

'Shoot', I muttered when the paper sliced my finger; I pulled it out to examine the damage. A single drop of blood oozed from the tiny cut.

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It all happened very quickly then. . .

There was noise, grisly snarling that seemed to be coming from deep in Jasper's chest. Jasper tried to shove past Edward, snapping his teeth just inches from Edward's face.

Emmett grabbed Jasper from behind in the next second, locking him into his massive steel grip, but Jasper struggled on, his wild, empty eyes focus only on me.

Beyond the shock, there was also pain. I'd tumbled down to the floor by the piano, with my arms thrown out instinctively to catch my fall, into the jagged shards of glass. Only now did I feel the searing, stinging pain that ran from my wrist to the crease inside my elbow.

Dazed and disoriented, I looked up from the bright pulsing out of my arm – into the fevered eyes of the six suddenly ravenous vampires. . .

“Epilogue” leaves the readers clueless about the conclusion. But Frye explains that the total shape of the fiction also belongs to a category (comedy, tragedy, etc.) (605). With the literary category, one reaches a dead end until one realizes that literature is a reconstructed mythology with its structural principles derived from those of myth and that literature is in a complex setting while a mythology in a simpler one: a total body of verbal creation wherein everything, possessing a mythical shape, leads one towards the center of the order of words... myth criticism pulls one away from ‘life’ toward a self-contained and autonomous universe (605).

Richard M. Dorson's article in *American Mercury* (1950 CE) attacks the popularization, commercialisation and distortion of traditional materials passed off as authentic folklore. He writes, “Fakelore falsifies the raw data of folklore by invention, selection, fabrication, and similar refining process... for capitalistic gain [or totalitarian conquest]. The end result is a conception of the folklore as quaint, eccentric, whimsical, droll, primeval” (Qtd in Baker, 203). He categorises fakelores into two types – (i) folklore material so extensively reworked that it no longer resembles authentic folklore, (ii) outright fabrication of materials passed off as authentic folklore (Qtd in Baker, 203-204).

Contrarily, Frye's essay presents a counter argument which stresses that a myth means many things besides literary structure, and the world of words is not so self-contained and autonomous after all (605). Dorson coined the term – fakelore when the study of folklore was just beginning its struggle for academic legitimacy when there was a shortage of trained folklorists and oversupply of amateurs but the way in which the myth of vampires has been reworked in *Twilight Series*, it represents Frye's idea of displacement rather than Dorson's idea of fakelores.

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The Reflection of Social and Psychological Reality in J.G. Ballard's *The Kindness of Women*

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Abstract:

The present Paper is an attempt to analyze Social and Psychological Reality in J.G. Ballard's *The Kindness of Women*. James Graham Ballard is one of the most popular and respected post-modern science fiction writers. He explores in his work the interior landscape of isolated humans in a postmodern world transformed by science and technology. The inner space he chronicles lies between the external world of reality and the internal world of the psyche. The main focus of the paper is on the social and psychological reality reflected in the novel. Realism is, in the broadest sense, simply fidelity to actuality in its representation in literature; a term loosely synonymous with 'verisimilitude'; and in this sense, it has been a significant element in almost every school of writing in human history.

Key Words: realism, society, psychology, postmodern world, etc.

James Graham Ballard is one of the most popular and respected post-modern science fiction writers. He explores in his work the interior landscape of isolated humans in a postmodern world transformed by science and technology. The inner space he chronicles lies between the external world of reality and the internal world of the psyche. His characters interact with an Earth made surreal by environmental degradation, media intrusion, and perversity, and they typically appear in the midst of a quest and strive for an individually defined transcendence. *The Kindness of Women*, sequel to *Empire of the Sun*, reflects personal reality and social reality. It brings his autobiography up to the 1970s. It discusses Jim's departure from China, where he had been born and had been inherited, to visit England, other parts of Europe and the U.S.A. Here, Ballard is honest, self-deprecating and wildly vivid in laying out the tracks of his adult life. George Carte describes Ballard's life in his essay *Sourdough* as "the story is a great look through a child's eyes at the W.W. II experience in Eastern China for British citizen captured by the

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Japanese. It goes from pre-war opulence to devastating prison camp existence to liberation” (Carte 2008: 1). The adult life of Ballard’s (Jim’s) is fused in to the development of the plot and it determines the character of the novel. The language of the novel is realistic and so it is appropriate to the incidents which Ballard has described.

Realism has been defined as “The truthful treatment of material” (Thrall, Hibbard and Holman 1960: 397).

The Kindness of Women Ballard has realistically presented Jim’s (author’s) real experiences in Shanghai, China during the Second World War and after in England. The novel begins at a point in Ballard’s life just before the opening of *Empire of the Sun* and proceeds, selectively through the next half century. The book’s biographical blur is careful to describe his life in terms that make it clear that we are reading an autobiography: internment in a Japanese prison camp; arrival in England; reading medicine at Cambridge; the RAF and so on. In this sense Ballard himself has mentioned in his letter, *Reply from J.G.Ballard to David Pringle* in 1993 as “I have always stressed that both *Empire of the Sun* and *The Kindness of Women* were novels, though based on my own life without which they could never have been written at all. They represent my own life seen through the body of fiction that was prompted by that life.” (Ballard 1993: 1)

The social reality is dominant in this novel as the picture of China during the Second World War is portrayed. The novel opens during 1937 in Shanghai. Jim, a 7-year-old boy, has witnessed the bomb explosion which killed over 1000 people at the Great World Amusement park on the Avenue Edward VII. Ballard describes the continuous fighting and the ‘mass death’ caused by bomb as:

Months of fierce fighting took place around the International Settlement before the Japanese were able to drive the Chinese from Shanghai, during which tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians were to perish. But the Avenue Edward VII bomb, dropped in error by a Chinese pilot, had a special place in the mythology of war, a potent example of how mass death could now fall from the air (Ballard 1994, 26).

This reflects the very crucial picture of the Chinese society during World War II. About the opening of the novel David Pringle, in his essay *Fact and Fiction* in J.G. Ballard's *The Kindness of Women*, describes:

This fiction is based on a factual background such a bomb did fall on Shanghai; it's also referred to in *Empire of the Sun*. However it's extremely unlikely that the young Ballard actually saw the event with his own eyes (Pringle Aug 1993: 25).

One more incident in the novel shows the picture of society and children like Jim during war in Shanghai. During 1943 in Lunghua camp, the food was not getting sufficiently. Many old prisoners and children were dying from starvation, while some youths were trying to escape from the camp.

When Jim was 13 year old, he had attempted to escape from the camp; at the same time he had tried to raid the food store with the help of a broken bayonet. Jim's physical condition was very poor and he had to lead many days half-stomached. Ballard describes Jim's life as:

Far more worrying, the food ration had been cut. The sweet potatoes and cracked wheata coarse cattle feed-were warehouse scrapings, filled with dead weevils and rusty nails. Peggy and I were hungry all the time (Ballard 1994:37).

The fiction is based on a factual background and portrayal of daily life in Lunghua, where the real-life Ballard was interned from 1943 to 1945. Most of the incidents in this novel are actually true. After August 1945 the guards disappeared from Lunghua and Shanghai. Jim also left the camp and walked back to Shanghai along a railway line. At a station on the way he encountered a group of Japanese soldiers frustrated and mad with rage. This incident in the novel is much factual. The event, Jim witnessed at the railway station, was clearly traumatic for Ballard.

The chapter *In the Camera Lens* deals with a film festival in Rio. It also depicts with social life which is affected by war. Jim and Dick Sutherland attended a film festival in Rio during 1969. Everywhere the crowds jammed the movie theatres, and hotel terraces were packed with television crews, starlets and producers. Fleets of lumousiness and buses ferried the delegates from one lavish embassy party to another, while gangs of prostitutes and their pimps so packed the streets of Copacabana that they squeezed out any hope of

finding a customer. Many prostitutes were trying their level best to attract customers towards them, the children like Jim were leading life half-stomached, beggars were starved and the prostitutes were also starved because there was lack of customers. It means that in this novel social realism is dominant because the social life during the Second World War in Shanghai is reflected.

The psychological reality is also reflected in this novel. It brings his autobiography up to the 1970's. It discusses Jim's departure from China, where he had been born and had been inherited to visit England, other parts of Europe and the U.S.A. In 1950, Jim was (like Peggy) a medical student at Cambridge, where he met his future wife, Miriam and Dick Sutherland, a rising psychology don. The fourth chapter of this novel is very famous for the love-affair of Jim and Miriam. This love affair at Cambridge between Jim and Miriam is very factual and real. Ballard describes their love affair as:

Jim goes every weekend Miriam took my arm pressing her cheek to my leather jacket, as if trying to read the wind in its bruised seams (Ballard 1991:96).

The character of Miriam is totally factual which is based on his future wife Helen Mary Matthews. And the character of Dick Sutherland is largely based on Ballard's friend Dr. Christopher Evans. In this sense Montrose David has described Jim's life in the essay, *After the Sun Had Set* as "In 1950, Jim is (like Peggy) a medical student at Cambridge, where he meets his future wife, Miriam, and Dick Sutherland, a rising psychology don. But Jim cannot shake off memories of China and apocalyptic fantasies" (Mantrose 1991:41- 42).

In one more incident Ballard's personal experiences are reflected Jim abandoned medicine during 1954. Jim and David Hunter were trainee pilots in the RAF, stationed in Canada. When Jim was at Shanghai, China as an interned boy, he had seen many air-crafts flying in the sky. At that time he had his mind that he would be a pilot. So he decided to join RAF. The real reason of Jim for joining the RAF was preparing himself in the most practical way for the Third World War which had already begun at Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and whose first installment were in the Berlin crisis and the Korean war. Ballard did serve in the RAF in Canada, but left after a short time. Jim and David also shared in sexual adventures with local prostitutes. Ballard very vividly describes his adult experience as:

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One of the women was a strong – shouldered blonde, naked except for the silk stockings rolled down to her ankles. The other, kneeling with the grubby soles of her feet towards me, wore a black slip around her waist. It rode over her buttocks, which David parted with his left hand as he fondled the dark hair and pink combs of her vulva (Ibid: 113).

This is an appropriate point to state that the recurring character of David Hunter is completely fictional. It may be based in small ways on a number of people, but clearly his role in the novel is to act as a dark alter ego to Jim. He represents the wild side of Ballard's own character, the man who goes out and does various things particularly sexual activities. So in this incident the writer has presented psychological realism with the help of David Hunter. In this sense Slavitt David R. describes Jim as a monster in his essay *The Monster He Became*:

....When the protagonist, Jim, comes home from Spain, where he has just buried Miriam, his young wife, and makes love with Dorothy, Miriam's sister, it is beside the point to wonder whether such a thing actually happened to J.G. Ballard (Pronounced But – LARD), whether there was or is a Dorothy, or how she or her family might feel about this revelation. Such questions are interesting but idle. The more pressing issue is what kind of monster Jim has turned out to be. (Slavitt 1991: 2)

Jim's wife Miriam wants to spend their holiday at Costa Brava, Spain. Jim also wants to fulfill the wish of his wife. In summer 1964, Jim, Miriam and their children are holidaying the sun. But unfortunately, Miriam dies there after injuring her head in a fall. This incident is also personal and autobiographical. In this sense David Pringle has commented in his essay *Fact and Fiction in J.G. Ballard's the Kindness of Women* as "Ballard's wife Mary did die in Spain in 1964; however, the cause of her death was an infection, not an injury. Presumably, in the novel he has changed the circumstances slightly in order to make the event seem more dramatic and sudden" (Pringle David 1993: 24).

An exhibition of crashed cars also reflects personal touch in this novel. The idea of staging an exhibition of crashed cars came in the mind of Jim during 1969, after the road accident near Fair Oaks airfield. In that accident

Sally and David Hunter were involved. But luckily neither of them was hurt in any way. After the exhibition of three months Jim saved from car crash. The crashed cars exhibition really took place, although it did so in April 1970, not a year earlier as seems to be suggested in the novel. At the end of the novel during 1987 at Hollywood Jim participated in the filming at Sunning dale of a movie based on one of his novels. Then Jim and Cleo fly to California for the films premiere. There Jim encounters once again Olga, the Russian women who was his governess in Shanghai and they make love. This experience Ballard describes as:

She held my wrist in the same firm grip she had used half a century earlier to steer me towards the bathroom. Standing beside the bed, she closed the wardrobe mirrors so that no reflection of her back would reach my eyes. She began to undress me as if preparing me for a party, her fingers never leaving my skin as they moved around my body (*Ballard 1994:322*).

All the movie business is of course closely based on the filming of Steven Spielberg's version of *Empire of the Sun*, the Hollywood premiere of which Ballard attended in December 1987. The meeting with Olga is surely fictional and is added to provide the novel with an appropriate feeling of closure.

The Kindness of Women is one of the most extraordinary novels which gripped the readers with the shock of seeing deep into a man's hurt but inspired psyche, it also left the readers weeping in pity for Jim (Ballard) and marveling at his survival. The account of Ballard's life after Singapore, is no ordinary narrative autobiography rather, a series of chapters each of which might stand a small masterpiece alone, each like the fragment of a smashed mirror reflecting a piece of Ballard's life in microcosm- his wife and her tragic death, his friends, his children, his involvement with the 60s through his crashed car exhibition and his fascination with television. Women provide the linking thread through it all- the ones who Ballard made love, made to love, or in turn loved him- his wife, Miriam, most unforgettable. To sum up the novel describes personal experiences of Ballard during World War II at Shanghai. It also portrays grim social pictures of small children, soldiers, prostitutes, thieves and common people. The novel is good example of realistic novel which reflects personal and social reality.

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Ethnicity and Identity in the plays of Girish Karnad

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Abstract:

The theme of most of the plays of Karnad's reflects the issue of ethnicity and identity. Girish Karnad on the one hand explores the idea of man's identity within the frame work of body hierarchy, gender hierarchy and social hierarchy and on the other hand he is caught within Indian ethnicity of caste, region, language and racial supremacy. Karnad plays are based on the theme, which are primarily Indian in nature and the language used by his characters immediately ring a bell to indicate his social, geographical and cultural position. His plays clearly reflect the Indian temperaments, mindsets and sensibilities. Girish Karnad is much concerned with the eternal truth of society. In *Tale-Danda*, King Bijjala was interested neither in sharana movement nor in the Brahmins who opposed it. In *Tughlaq*, Karnad confronts us with the dilemma of governing a state – the trial that an ambitious king faces in translating his dreams to action. This true picture of Indian society finds an apt delineation in the plays of Girish Karnad. It is a remarkable note that caste and religion are the main issue of ethnicity in the play *Tale-Danda* and *The Fire and The Rain*. The ethnic consciousness is aptly delineated by Karnad in his plays *Tale-Danda*, king Bijjala is barber, though he is powerful yet not able to get labeled the caste of Kshatriya on his forehead.

The scene created by Karnad in his plays indicates the ethnical division of the society. The important characters rarely appear in the street scenes and in the deep scenes the lower classes strictly keep their place. Language and names of the characters are the other parameters to determine the ethnical status of the people in the society.

Key words: hierarchy, temperaments, sensibilities, delineation, parameters, traits, completeness, illusion, crisis, etc.

The writers of the post-Independent India developed sensibility and that encountered tensions between cultural past of the country and its colonial past, between modern thought and native traditions and between the various visions of the future which opened up for them. It was this situation that led comprehensive negotiation and opened new vistas for creative writing. The

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thought processes and activities in reaction to these new approaches are bound to be coloured by the territoriality, society and culture of the writers. In fact, ethnicity and identity are indexes to complex phenomena in all societies which feature in all intellectual deliberations in any forms. Literature at times is also politicized in the creations, readings and interpretations. There are occasions when attempts are made to particularize the general and generalize the particular thereby making a fuzzy appropriation of the systems of meanings. Moreover, contrary to the belief that globalization might mitigate the globalised issues but something opposite has erupted and added a great dimension to ethnicity and identity.

Girish Karnad is one of those modern writers who encountered a state of identity and ethnicity not only on the social and cultural level but on the personal and regional front as well. The theme of most of the plays of Karnad's reflects the issues of ethnicity and identity. It manifests itself through various features such as in the use of myth, masks, allegorical names and bringing together of the human and non-human worlds. Girish Karnad on the one hand explores the idea of man's identity within the frame work of body hierarchy, gender hierarchy and social hierarchy and on the other hand he is caught within Indian ethnicity of caste, region, language and racial supremacy.

Karnad's plays are based on the themes, which are primarily Indian in nature and the language used by his characters immediately ring a bell to indicate his social, geographical and cultural position. His plays clearly reflect the Indian temperaments, mindsets and sensibilities. Girish Karnad is much concerned with the eternal truths of society. His protagonists struggle to find perfection in an imperfect world. In public and private domain his characters want to defy the conventional bonds of morality and loyalty. Karnad's daring finds literary sanction in the riddles that have stood on their heads for centuries. He packs in supporting stories and has a knack for making his larger than life characters acceptable to the audience. In *Tughlaq*, Karnad confronts us with the dilemma of governing a state – the trials that an ambitious king faces in translating his dreams to action. He uses the Sultan only as a back ground to make the people understand, judge and interprets contemporary reality. His purpose is to show that in true history faces change, but forces don't change. The play *Tughlaq* should be studied to find parallelism between the 14th century India ruled by a king and the 20th

century democratic country governed by a prime minister and his colleagues in the cabinet. Similarly, in *Tale-Danda* the playwright's aim, is not so much to give a historical account of incidents based on the life of Basavanna but to show their relevance to the contemporary Indian society when the 'Mandir' and 'Mandal' movements were beginning to show their ugly faces. The horror of subsequent events and the religious fanaticism has gripped our national life and society. In *Tale-Danda*, King Bijjala was interested neither in sharana movement nor in the brahmins who opposed it. As a king of the country, he wanted to rule it without any trouble to himself. But the power politics in the Fire and the Rain is not between King and subject but between two families of the same community Bharadwaj and Raibhya. Power, prestige and recognition of a person is not easily digested by the other people and hence jealousy and hatred is the natural outcome, which is enough for destruction of man and society. This true picture of Indian society finds an apt delineation in the plays of Girish Karnad.

It is a remarkable note that caste and religion are the main issues of ethnicity in the play *Tale-Danda* and *The Fire and the Rain*. This delicate matter is brilliantly developed and handled in a masterly way to achieve new dramatic heights. In *Tale-Danda* Madhuvarasa, a Brahmin by birth and under influence of sharana movement, is inclined to give his daughter Kalavati in marriage to Sheelavanta the son of Haralayya, a cobbler by birth and the inter-caste marriage is arranged by elderly people where as in *The Fire and the Rain*, Aravasu a Brahmin falls in love with Nittilai, a tribal girl and inter-caste marriage takes place. The powerful king Bijjala, the social reformer Basavanna and other elder sharana are reluctant to give their blessings to new couple and father of Nittilai is also reluctant to give his consent for marriage and doubts about the success of marriage as he says 'these people can share the bed but can't wed.' The hesitation and unwillingness to inter-caste marriage is not because of success and failure but aftermath rage of the people may destroy them. For there are characters like Damodar Bhatta, Manchanna Kramita and Paravasu who do not want varnasankara mixing of caste but uphold the varnaashrama, sanatana dharma.

The ethnic consciousness is aptly delineated by Karnad in his plays *Tale-Danda*, king Bijjala is barber, though he is powerful yet not able to get labeled the caste of Kshatriya on his forehead. He feels one's caste is like the

skin on one's body. You can put it off top to toe, but when the new skin forms there you are again, a barber a shepherd a scavenger. Similarly, sharana's discussion over the inter-caste marriage reveals that they themselves are hesitant to shake off the caste traditions of varnasharama. "A sharana boy marries a sharana girl no need but a Brahmin girl marrying a cobbler's son – we don't know how to answer will they accept, take kindly to it?"

Thus, there is intense ethnic conflict in the minds of the king, Basavanna and sharana but the play *Tughlaq* presents another form of ethnicity. Hindu and Muslim do not trust each other. A deep-rooted suspicion, doubt and distrust is there in the mind and hearth of people. The sultan tried his best to bring the Hindus and Muslims together and unite them in one blood of brotherhood but he failed. In the play a old Muslim warns the young Muslim by saying that. "Beware of the Hindu who embraces you, before you know what, he'll turn Islam into another caste and call the prophet an incarnation of his God."

The scene created by karnad in his plays indicates the ethnical division of the society. The shallow scenes are generally reserved for the lower-class characters and played in the foreground of the stage with a painted curtain while the deep scenes are reserved for main and upper-class characters and which shows interiors of palaces, royal parks and other opulent sets etc. The important characters rarely appear in the street scenes and in the deep scenes the lower classes strictly keep their place. This racial or class division is clear enough to show the gulf between the rulers and the ruled, between the mysterious inner chambers of power politics and the open public areas of those affected by it. The Play *Tughlaq* carries number of court and royal scenes and various street scenes while *Tale-Danda* begins with the scene of the house of Shastri. The major part of the play is performed on village and street background that shows the spatial division of the society. In the court of king Bijjala, who is a lower caste by birth, sharanas are not allowed to enter there.

Language and names of the characters are the other parameters to determine the ethnical status of the people in the society. The rough harsh and flat words are used by the ordinary characters whereas polished, refined and kind words are used by the important characters. Even the mode of address also changes according to ethnical status of the characters. The

names of the characters are framed and designed on the basis of their society and groups he belongs. For example, Padmini, Vishakha and Kalavati are names of upper class female characters, Devdatta, Shastri Jagadeva, Aravasu, Paravasu the upper class male characters, while Kapila, Harallya, Mallibomma, Nittilai such are names of lower class characters.

It is striking to note that Girish Karnad has used the form of writing play as an art and as an instrument of social change. After the freedom, social reform is acknowledged as a goal next only to independence in importance. Indian realism cannot progress beyond analysis of social problems with its ultimate values. Unlike other writers of the age Karnad also encountered a state of identity crisis.

Karnad's *Tughlaq* is a classic play on account of ambiguities of Tughlaq's character, a person embodying contradictory traits. What we find in this character is that the idealist and his idealism do not go hand in hand just as a politician and his politics. On one hand he is tortured inner self and the other corruption at its very source. The whole play is structured on the duality of Tughlaq's character; his internal aspirations and external manifestations the play is highly symbolic of the crisis of the character of present day politicians who are skilled in the art of gaining power and the craft of retaining it even at the cost of national unity and integrity. *Hayavadana* explores man's identity within the framework of the head hierarchy. All the important characters whether human or non-human seek for completeness. They all search for wholeness due to their divided self. The play presents Devdatta Kapila and Padmini as a personality suffering from want of integration. After the transposition, Devadatta and Kapila become fragmented creatures. Padmini is also torn between the two. Hayavada wants to change into a complete man. The problem that is discussed in the play is that of human identity in a world of tangled relationships. In *Nagamandala* Karnad's deals the gender or feminine identity. Rani's identity hovers over illusion and reality which brings about a strange connection between illusion and anxiety and between reality and sirinity. Illusion entails loss of identity and reality restores it. Rani comes as Appanna's wife, but as the new identity has not been given to her by Appanna. In the eternal triangle of adultery situation Naga is prince rescuer, Appanna the demon-persecutor and Rani the princess victim. And in this triangle Rani has travelled very far in life from innocence to experience and has come out of the dream to know

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her identity. The play *Tale-Danda* explores the man's identity in social hierarchy with special reference to caste. How far these social institutions shape his role and identity. While reading the play one is perplexed whether man creates social institutions or social institutions create man's identity. Here it is interesting to mark, Basavanna, the leader of the reformist movement, is a Brahmin by birth and Bijjala the king of that period, is a barber by birth, they are not opposed to each other but to Sovideva and Brahmins. Karnad is able to highlight the intersection between a Brahmins movement against brahminism and a barber's role in it as a king. Therefore, he has chosen to present them as two characters of the same self.

Though Karnad deals with the subject of identity crisis in most of his plays, there remains no reservation to the fact that he has a strong sense of ethnicity as Rani tries to discover hers, Tughlaq attempts to establish his, and Basavanna immortalizes his principles. Karnad's feet are deeply rooted in his own country and his eyes survey the world.

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Portrayal of Personal History in *Before She Met Me* by Julian Barnes

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Abstract:

Julian Barnes is a quirk, versatile contemporary English novelist, having written twelve novels, four detective novels, two translations, two memoirs, three collections of short stories, three collections of essays and innumerable critical reviews in various distinguished journals and magazines. 'His three novels *Arthur and George*, *England, England* and *The Sense of an Ending* were shortlisted for the prestigious Man Booker Prize and he won it in 2011 for his novel *The Sense of an Ending*.' He is, basically, an experimental author. His each book is different from other. The novel is concerned with the individual history. But what happens if we blur the line between fiction and reality and mix them with each other, is shown by the example of Graham Hendrick who, as a professor of History, is expected to know the boundaries between fact and fiction, real life and history. Barnes has beautifully handled the theme of infidelity and love with deep psychological research and his views on historiography.

Key Words: Individual history, Historiography, Psychological research, etc.

Julian Barnes is a quirk, versatile contemporary English novelist, having written twelve novels, four detective novels, two translations, two memoirs, three collections of short stories, three collections of essays and innumerable critical reviews in various distinguished journals and magazines. 'His three novels *Arthur and George*, *England, England* and *The Sense of an Ending* were shortlisted for the prestigious Man Booker Prize and he won it in 2011 for his novel *The Sense of an Ending*.' He is, basically, an experimental author. His each book is different from other and he believes that:

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“ In order to write, you have to convince yourself that it’s a new departure for you and not only a new departure for you but for the entire history of the novel ” (1992:68)

The study of Barnes’ oeuvre reveals that he has become more experimental and innovative while dealing with the structure, form and theme of his novels. Apart from his historiographic metafiction, especially *Flaubert’s Parrot* and *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*, where he has used extensively various metafictional devices, his mainstream novels handle traditional themes in totally different way.

Before She Met Me (1982) is the second mainstream novel by Julian Barnes, the first being *Metroland*. Though Barnes has not used the three part formula here like *Metroland*, the novel is divided into eleven chapters. The narrative technique is also not straightforward.

It is a story of a young professor of History at London University, Graham Hendrick, leading ordinary life with his nagging wife, Barbara and a daughter, Alice. He is thirty-eight, fifteen years married and has been for ten years in the same job. Throughout the fifteen years’ of his marriage, he had never been unfaithful to Barbara. At thirty-eight, he has protected his property, read a great lot and spends time in gardening. Sometimes, he feels a bit like being retired already.

The novel opens with a party where Graham is introduced to Ann Mears, a former actress and existing business woman, by Jack Lupton. When Graham met Ann, he felt once more capable of folly and idealism. Ann introduced him again to spontaneity, directness and also pleasure. After their affair had lasted for six months, Graham told Barbara about it and at once, left the house. He gave her his car, the entire contents of the house, and accepted to pay mortgages, an allowance for Alice. The decree nisi came and Graham was granted a weekly access to Alice. After that, he and Ann got married.

After three years of divorce, Barbara once asked Graham to take Alice to one flop comedy film. Graham and Alice did not like the film but there was a scene in which Ann was in obscene clothes. When he asked Alice why she wanted to watch the film, she told him that mummy wanted to see her Ann in,

“her most convincing screen roles” (Before She Met Me: 1982: 33) Graham understood Barbara’s intention and explained Alice, the difference between real life and reel life.

Graham told Ann about the film they had watched and asked her about the role she played. Ann told frankly about the film, its lower budget, casting and also her one sexual encounter with one actor. The incident changed Graham’s life. As he was deeply in love with Ann, he became obsessed with her past. Soon, he forgot the difference between reality and imagination. He tried to find out Ann’s past, which had not relevance to their present.

He watched all the movies in which Ann has acted and also the ones in which her co-actors have worked. He discussed his mental dilemma with Jack Lupton, their common friend. Jack tried to help him by discussing various psychological theories and suggesting solutions. But when Graham found that Jack was the ex-lover of Ann for some time, he lost control over his mind. At the end of the novel, he murdered Jack and committed suicide. The psychological development of Graham from an academician having family life to a murderer takes hold of reader’s mind.

Before She Met Me is not a novel of action, but of ideas. The main action of the novel consists of divorce of Graham with Barbara, his marriage with Ann and afterwards, his married life with Ann till Jack’s murder and his suicide. Instead of action, there is much reflection about the nature of love and jealousy. There is one whole chapter where Graham wonders why jealousy exists, why he has become victim of retrospective jealousy and why his love for Ann cannot control the existing jealousy in his mind.

Along with the individual psychology of Graham, Barnes has worked out the ways of illustrating an idea about humanity. This novel has two epigraphs: the shorter one from Moliere admits that it is better to be husband than dead, while the second paragraph, taken from the journal of psychology, states:

“Man finds himself in the predicament that nature has endowed him with three brains which, despite great differences in structure, must function together and communicate with one another. The oldest of these brains is basically reptilian. The

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second has been inherited from the lower mammals, and the third is the late mammalian development which has made man particularly man” (McLean:62: 108)

The quotation records that man is endowed with three brains, the lower one reptilian, the second inherited from the lower mammals and the highest one late mammalian. Throughout the novel, Graham reflects on the mechanisms of the human brain. Jack Lupton knows the same theory. He tells Graham about it and explains it in simple words:

“Most people don’t kill other people. Most people have got the sawn-offs well under their thumbs, I’d say. It may not be easy, but they do. I mean, they control them enough, don’t they and that’s what it’s all about, that’s what we are talking about. And without embarking on the neurology of it, I’d say that either the second eleven know which side their breads buttered or perhaps the prefects really know how to handle them.” (Before She Met Me:80)

Graham wonders if the theory means that a person is not responsible for his behavior and it happens because of the structure of brain. Jack’s explanation of the theory pacifies him a little.

The title of the last chapter “The Horse and the Crocodile” is taken from the epigraph. Barnes has explained in an interview why he chose the quotation as an epigraph.

“It absolutely fitted the novel... which is about a civilized man and finds that the horse and the crocodile have not gone away.” (Katkari: Web)

Whatever progress man makes, the animal instinct will always be there. It has not waned. As Merritt Moseley suggests, the first epigraph raises the question in reader’s mind whether Graham will be able to keep his emotions under control or not. Eventually, in the novel, the horse and the crocodile take control and Graham is convinced that this was his predetermined fate.

Barnes' main achievement in the book lies in the way he juxtaposes jealousy and its interpretation and offers the reader means to set him or herself free from it. Graham, an intellectual, modern person, proves finally unable to keep his emotions under control, murdering Jack Lupton, and commits suicide.

The novel never attempts to answer the questions why Graham cannot control his emotions, why Jack has numerous illegitimate affairs or why Ann sometimes provides exaggerated information about her past life to Graham. The reason behind the behavior of all main characters is untraceable. It is deep rooted in their psychology. Along with the compelling study of Graham's abnormal psychology, the narrative focus is distributed in such a way that the minds of Barbara, Jack and Ann Mears are revealed to readers. Barnes himself calls the book,

“a rather nasty book about unpleasant Sexual feelings, jealousies and obsessions. It was meant to have had a rather Sour and hard-driving edge to it. I think, it's my funniest book, though the humor is rather bleak and in bad taste usually.”
(Smith: 1989: 74)

But to write such a funny book is very difficult task.

Why Graham fails in his quest for the 'truth'? Despite being a historian and an academic, he makes confusion between art and life, fiction and reality, dream (phantasms) and reality as well as his wife's real past and the images of his wife as per his imagination. Graham ends up like any historian with uncovering the truth but he inevitably becomes aware of the irretrievability of the past. The conclusions he arrives at are not absolutely true. As they are based on subjective analysis, there are flaws. He is responsible for the tragedy he makes of his, Ann's and Jack Lupton's life.

According to the traditional concept of realism, the story has a historical value of the absolute and irrefutable truth. While in the post modern period, to which the novel belongs, the story becomes one of the many possible stories losing historic prerogative of absolute truth. The novel deals, as the title indicates, with the theme of sexual jealousy which Graham feels for his second wife, Ann's past lovers. Graham is unreasonable because he can neither feel justified in his jealousy nor stop feeling it. As the occasions

for jealousy are all over the past, there is nothing anybody can do about them. Barnes has expressed his views on jealousy in a newspaper column of 'The Observer' saying:

"Retro-jealousy, unlike its more familiar siblings, habitually broadens out into wider obsession. That previous affair, that earlier lover turn out to be mere nominees for wider areas of foolish rage against the immutability of the past, and a metaphysical whinge that things can actually happen despite your absence." (The Observer: 1982: 22)

As Graham is an intellectual, he realizes psychological changes in his mind. Often, he ponders over them. He remembers his student, who always got disturbed by evil's victory over goodness. He wanted to do justice. Graham considered him immature because he knew that we cannot do justice with the thing past. May be it is the life of nations or of individuals; we can only study them as told by historians or that particular individual. Like retro-justice, Graham is a victim of retro-jealousy.

The novel is concerned with the individual history. But what happens if we blur the line between fiction and reality and mix them with each other, is shown by the example of Graham Hendrick who, as a professor of History, is expected to know the boundaries between fact and fiction, real life and history.

Barnes has beautifully handled the theme of infidelity and love with deep psychological research and his views on historiography.

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‘Re-orientalism’ as manifest in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*

Vanya Jaiswal*

Abstract:

In this paper, I show that Jhumpa Lahiri, an Indian diasporic writer, tends to reinforce the many stereotypes that the West has constructed of the East through her depiction of the Indian immigrants’ quest for an assimilated identity and their perpetual struggle to hold onto their Indian roots. I believe that this paper sheds some light on how the West alone is not responsible for Orientalism and that the East too partakes in this mystification sometimes though unconsciously.

Indian diaspora writers have often written on the theme of the immigrant experience, nostalgia for the past and cultural identity and its ambiguity in the foreign land. With the surfacing of an increasing number of narratives recounting the experiences of migrants and their moral dilemma as they endeavour to occupy the ‘liminal space’ between their native past and the foreign present, there is a rising phenomenon of ‘re-orientalism’ or the reinforcement of the Orient’s identity as exotic and mysterious by the East itself. Such an example presents itself in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* wherein the writer, in her attempt to portray an authentic Indian family, perpetuates many stereotypes related to the Orient as perceived and constructed by the Occident west. It is, however, not a conscious act but an outcome of her curious positionality as a writer inhabiting two different and conflicting worlds simultaneously.

Keywords: Orient, Orientalism, immigrant, identity, culture, west, etc.

“No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale.”

—Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*

The Indian Diaspora is estimated to be over 25 million, registering a presence across more than 200 countries with a high degree of concentration in countries like the United States of America, Malaysia, the Middle East and

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South Africa. As the Lok Sabha “Reference Note” mentions, “the formation of the Indian Diaspora makes up an engaging saga of trials, tribulations and the eventual triumph of determination and hard work” (3). The migration of Indians to different foreign countries has been a long-standing process, spread over decades, with the process gaining momentum after the Indian Independence. The document records Manmohan Singh’s, the erstwhile Prime Minister of India, views regarding the Indian diaspora as follows:

Post-independence, overseas Indians have served as a bridge of friendship and cooperation between India and their adopted homes abroad. Regardless of whether they are successful professionals, traders and entrepreneurs, or second generation Indians, comfortably reconciling their two identities, or workers toiling hard to build a future for their families, they are at all times a most effective window for the world to India’s heritage and its progress. (2)

Manmohan Singh conveniently regards the process of integration and assimilation of the Indian immigrants in foreign culture and ethics as complete and fluid, attempting to smoothly camouflage the predicament of notions of identity and belongingness that Indian immigrants are constantly plagued by in foreign nations. It is here that the role of Indian diasporic authors becomes indispensable as spokespersons of lakhs of Indians whose concerns and plight find a voice in their writings, which are dominated by themes of nostalgia, inter-generational conflicts and the quest for an authentic, assimilated identity that represents both their past and their present in a coherent fashion.

Jhumpa Lahiri, the Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Namesake* is a second-generation immigrant living in the US. Born to Bengali parents in London, Lahiri was raised in Rhode Island. I have chosen her first novel *The Namesake* for my perusal in order to examine how Lahiri tends to ‘re-orientalise’ the Orient, that is, reinforce the Western constructions of the Orient, in her endeavour to explore the motif of identity and belongingness through the characters in her novel who move to Boston with the aspiration of leading a more affluent and comfortable life. The choice of diasporic authors to dwell on these familiar themes seems to come from the idea that for them

“it’s [their] present that is foreign, and that the past is home, albeit a lost home in a lost city in the mists of lost time” (Rushdie 9).

The most pervasive theme in the novel is that of the protagonist’s search for who he is, depicted through his inability to choose between his ‘daknam’ and ‘bhalonam,’ constantly vacillating between his identity as ‘Gogol’ and ‘Nikhil,’ the dilemma frustrating him till the very end of the novel. As Stuart Hall writes in his *Introduction: Who Needs Identity?*, identities “emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity — an ‘identity’ in its traditional meaning(that is, an all-inclusive sameness, seamless, without internal differentiation)” (17). Thus, the concept of identity never persists in an isolated space but within other discourses that determine its operation and existence. Lahiri, in her novel, portrays the first generation immigrants in USA who struggle to adjust between two starkly opposite worlds and two opposing cultures, trying to occupy a ‘liminal space,’ never fully Indian or American. This burden to accommodate and eventually reconcile the two worlds is later transposed on their children, who are although American by virtue of their birth in the American soil, are never able to make sense of who they are or where they rightfully belong to. Their turmoil is exacerbated as their parents insist on holding on to ‘Indian values’ and staying connected to their roots which is done through various actions such as by forcibly making them learn the Bengali language or going back to Calcutta once every few years, a most-dreaded trip for the children who are accustomed to the American way of life.

The novel opens in the kitchen with Ashima, the mother of the protagonist, cooking ‘Rice Krispies’ with ‘Planters peanuts’ (Lahiri 1), a dish that she craves during her pregnancy. Lahiri meticulously describes the ingredients that go into the making of the dish and how Ashima Ganguli nostalgically misses the Calcutta sidewalks and the vendors that sold these krispies by the dozens back home. It comes as no surprise that Lahiri exoticizes the whole scene by framing Ashima as a typical Indian woman, relishing her time in the kitchen even when she’s about to go into labour. The image of a devoted Indian wife is portrayed as we are told that Ashima refuses to utter her husband’s name for “[l]ike a kiss or a caress in a Hindi movie, a husband’s name is something intimate and therefore unspoken, cleverly

patched over” (Lahiri 2). The very beginning of the novel, in its apparent conviction of depicting an authentic Indian society and its people, begins to pave way for an exotic India, as perceived by the Western audience.

Jane Friedman, president and CEO of HarperCollins remarked in an interview in the *Financial Express* (Oct 29, 2006): “It is extremely important for Indian writers to spread across the world. Fine tales are popular everywhere, but that said, there is a certain curiosity, an exotic charm that intrigues the West. We are still fascinated by Indian stories and their touch of the orient, even when it is writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, who is fairly assimilated. And we are looking for more such authors!” Friedman’s statement starts to make sense when we see it in the light of *Orientalism* by Edward Said where he writes that there is a “profound difference between the will to understand for purposes of co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons, and the will to dominate for the purposes of control and external dominion” (xiv). The West’s fascination with the supposedly ‘exotic Orient’ stems from the fact that it gives them an opportunity to establish their superiority over the East by claiming to be rational and practical. For the Occident, as Said suggests, the Orient was never one thing; it is in fact “their vacillations, their empty suggestiveness, their capacity for entertaining and confusing the mind, that are interesting.” (Said 2003: 58)

According to Lisa Lau in her paper, “Re-Orientalism: The Perpetration and Development of Orientalism by Orientals”:

Re-Orientalism is perhaps, in part, an extension of the totalisation that had always been present in the literature, imposing the culture, values, attitudes, etc, of a select minority representative of the diverse majority. (Lau 2009: 573)

Lau argues in another one of her papers that it is the diasporic women writers “who are the creators and keepers of global literary image of South Asian culture” (Lau 2005: 238). Thus what Lahiri, or for that matter, other Indian writers choose to portray about their native land is taken as representative of the feelings of the entire South Asian community and their culture. The writers’ authority over the subject remains largely uncontested as they dominate the writing scene and their representations become archetypes for the nation or the culture or the experiences that they opt to write about. We need to keep in mind that this does not imply that these authors are

completely alien to the so called Orient or their experiences and write about the native culture through knowledge gained from the West's false notions or impressions. As a matter of fact, Lahiri derives both her ancestry and partially her identity from the Orient. To this extent, her representation does not seem completely flawed or unfounded. The problem arises when we see that in her fiction there seems to be an unabating necessity for the characters to be recognisably South Asian or more specifically, Indian.

Ashima is portrayed as a woman distraught at the helplessness of her situation, perpetually trying to make adjustments in her lifestyle to adopt to ways of the land that is foreign and outside to her, both culturally and emotionally. Like every other immigrant who battles internal insecurities, especially ones revolving around their identity, Ashima too faces the internal tussle between her essential Bengali self and the external, adopted American self. Thus conflicted, her life can be seen from the purview of how she is less than comfortable in this disjointed process of renegotiating the various identities that emerge from a person's varied existence.

The one stereotype and perhaps the most unforgivable one that Lahiri reinforces through her narrative is that of women subjects operating within and around the social and cultural milieu of their male counterparts, for instance, Ashima's life first revolves around Ashoke and later around Gogol. As Tamara Bhalla cleverly points out, "the novel's female characters are foils to the male protagonist's development, contributing to rigid notions of what constitutes authentic South Asian female subjectivity in the West" (Bhalla 110).

Although Gogol assumes the role of the protagonist in the novel, we cannot deny that Ashima remains an integral part of the narrative, never absent from it, though sometimes pushed to the background for the master narrative to take shape. She performs the roles that are pre-ordained for her, initially that of an obedient daughter, then that of a dutiful wife and later that of a doting and obsessive mother. As Simone de Beauvoir rightly alleged, "the situation of a woman is that she, a free and autonomous being like all creatures, nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other" (173).

Moushumi's character stands in sharp contrast to that of Ashima's role of a submissive, compliant, loyal wife. As a second generation Bengali

immigrant, Moushumi is an American by all means. She lives a sexually liberated life, indulging in affairs even when she is married to Gogol although the marriage eventually falls apart due to her infidelity. Initially a social reject of sorts, she embraces her sexuality after she moves to Paris where “with no hesitation, she had allowed men to seduce her in cafes, in parks, while she gazed at paintings in museums. She gave herself openly, completely, not caring about the consequences” (Lahiri 215). This characterisation of Moushumi which is meant to strengthen her character sketch as an American merely reinforces the image of the Oriental woman which suggests “not only fecundity, but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire and deep generative energies” (Said 2003: 188).

Gogol or Nikhil, as he likes to call himself, who is the protagonist of the story, attempts to situate himself as an American but fails to completely assimilate their norms and values with his own Bengali ones that he has unconsciously and unwillingly internalised. As Bhagabat Nayak aptly puts forth, “Gogol like many second generation immigrants in America has tried to escape from his cultural bonds but it is so much embedded in his flesh, blood and psyche that he just cannot undo it” (*Immigrant Sensibility* 145). This assertion of the self, that lays entwined with multifarious identities results in confusion and a misplaced sense of self. Stuart Hall’s reflection on cultural identity is relevant here:

Cultural identity... is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere ‘recovery’ of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past. (1990: 225)

As we move further into the narrative we find that Gogol finds himself unable to break ties with his Bengali past, which defines his existence and

forms a backdrop for all his actions. This portrayal tends to an almost skewed representation, as the Orient is seen emulating the Occident, persisting in his efforts to equal his superior counterpart but constantly failing at it. The foreigner experience described by Lahiri is not any less exoticised and is given a romantic touch as she writes,

Though no longer pregnant, she continues, at times, to mix Rice Krispies and peanuts and onions in a bowl. For being a foreigner Ashima is beginning to realize, is a sort of lifelong pregnancy -- a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts. It is an ongoing responsibility, a parenthesis in what had once been an ordinary life, only to discover that previous life has vanished, replaced by something more complicated and demanding. Like pregnancy, being a foreigner, Ashima believes, is something that elicits the same curiosity of from strangers, the same combination of pity and respect (Lahiri 49).

It is obvious from this description that the assimilation of immigrant communities in the majority fabric of the American world remains incomplete. In fact, the process of assimilation is not something that the communities willingly choose as they see it as an abandonment, almost a betrayal of their own cultural identity. While assimilation fails, they make do with adjustments, occupying the 'in-between' spaces. It is these in-between spaces which "provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood — singular and communal — that initiate new signs of identity and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (Bhabha 1).

As Lau argues, it is not her contention that the diasporic writers intentionally re-orientalise but rather it is their positionality that renders re-orientalism inevitable in this particular genre. It is this their curious positionality where they simultaneously play the role of the insider and the outsider that results in re-orientalism. The world that Lahiri portrays in her fiction is almost always "set in motion against the cultural tension, anxiety and resultant dialogues that take place when two very different sections of the world — First and Third — in general and Indians and Americans in particular intersect due to a large-scale transnational migration..." (Bahmanpour 44).

Her own cultural hybridity results in the expression of a similar duality in her characters, which sometimes, as in the case of *The Namesake*, resulting in an inadvertent re-orientalism.

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