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# ***Critical Space***<sup>®</sup>

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in English Language and Literature



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## EDITORIAL

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We feel very happy to present the February-2018 issue of *Critical Space*. It is a pleasure to note that since the first issue of October-2012, the team of *Critical Space* has received a praise from the readers and writers and we materialize it when we get showered with number of research papers on the announcement of new issue. Every time editing a new issue of *Critical Space* make us acquainted with the varieties of issues discussed frequently in the contemporary academics. The February 2018 issue of *Critical Space* has covered the variety of research topics like – Postcolonial studies, Diaspora Literature, Eco-critical Reading, Gender Studies, Racial consciousness, Popular Culture, Multiculturalism, Theatre studies, Magic Realism, Translation Studies, Historical and Psychological novels.

Dr. Baby Pushpa Sinha has explored the Post-Colonial Complexities in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*. The researcher has contextualized the novel in its proper socio-political phenomena. Dr. Namita Singh explores Afghan Diaspora and contributed a distinct kind of immigrant experience by exploring the quest of identity and the problems of cultural assimilation. Dr Sangita Patil analyses Arundhati Roy's *Walking with the Comrades* from eco-critical perspective and throws light on the ecological reasons of Naxalite rebel. The article is a good example of multidisciplinary research. Ariful Islam revisits the theories of gender and evaluate them in the context of mythological references which adds certain amazing dimensions to the gender thoughts. Dr Dattatraya Khaladkar deals with the metropolitan sensibility depicted in Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*. The researcher has commented on socio-cultural ethos that create slum and its culture. Mohd Shafi Bhat in his article writes about Sufi-Rishi Tradition in Kashmir that explores how Kashmiri identity is a unique mixture of two distinct social, cultural and religious identities. Ashishkumar Patar deals with the fiction of R. K. Narayan and divulges the representation of Indian middle class. Sandeep. T. G analyses Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* to explore the subjugation and marginalization in Nigerian life. Sushil A. Deshmukh deals with the

theme of dislocation depicted in Bharati Mukherjee's fiction. He has considered the diasporic social situation and analysed the psyche of immigrant character. Dr. P. N. Gore explores the themes like ethnicity, hybridity and multiculturalism in Kavita Daswani's *For Matrimonial Purposes*. In my article I have attempted to deal with the psychological themes like Trauma and Dissociation in Mary Higgins Clark's *All Around the Town*. Indrayani S. Jadhav and Dr. Satish R. Ghatge have explored the historical truth depicted in Julian Barnes' *Flaubert's Parrot*. Dr. Shubhangi S. Lendave's article discusses the dreams and hallucinations used in Emma Tennant's *Hotel de Dream*. The theoretical frame prepared by the researcher in the initial part of the paper is well utilized in part of analysis. And in the last paper Jayashri M. Lohar puts forth the process of self-discovery in F.G. Paci's *The Italians*.

Thus, we hope that you will find the issue interesting to read and contemplate as it covers the variety of research topics.

- Dr H. B. Patil

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**Post-Colonial Complexities: A Critique of Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease***

Dr. Baby Pushpa Sinha\*

**Abstract:**

Chinua Achebe is an eminent Nigerian novelist writing in English who was born in a village named Ogidi in Eastern Nigeria to the Christian parents. Achebe's ancestral town of Ogidi is what is now known as the state of Anambra. He as a professional writer produced a bunch of novels like *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964) etc. He is also a poet, critic and an essayist. In his style of writing, he draws heavily from the Igbo oral tradition and combines straight forward narration with representations of folk stories, proverbs and oratory in his attempt to commit himself to the task of stirring up African consciousness to build a new Africa. Achebe as an African novelist intends to teach the whole world about the African past and lead his own African people to recover their dignity from the wounded soul as inflicted by colonial experience. This proves that Africa as witnessed in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is an imaginary one, not the "real" Africa. It is simply a European construct. This paper attempts to give a critique of Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* from the post- colonial perspective through its hero Obi Okonkwo, a tragic hero of the post- colonial modern African state.

**Keywords:** *Post-Colonial, complex, folk stories, proverbs, oratory, African consciousness, colonial experience, imaginary, European construct, etc.*

Bill Ashcroft et al. in their work *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* Substantiate:

Post – colonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds, migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, place and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of these come into being. None of these is "essentially" post-colonial, but together they form the complex fabric of the field (Ashcroft 2).

Post-colonialism, therefore, deals with issues like language, land, identity, nationalism, contestation, hybridization etc. But, African literature as a post-colonial literature is slightly different from those of other post-colonial literatures in the sense that it offers the most passionate expression of the colonial confrontation and Mala

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Pandurang in her work *Chinua Achebe: An Anthology of Recent Criticism* regarding African literature maintains:

This writing was generated by the traumatic collective experience of colonization and strongly reflects the resistance to the colonial and neo-colonial invasion of African cultural space as its primary thematic preoccupation (1-2).

Thus, the impact of the colonial encounter in the African writing is felt both emotionally and intellectually exploring the socio-cultural and political dimensions of the African situations. So, in order to restore their lost dignity, the African writers like Achebe, Ngugi, Soyinka and many others claim a return to the traditional African aesthetics and to African form and themes to recover an authentic cultural essence. African literature, as a literary enterprise, is mainly concerned with the restoration of the dignity of the Africans and also it repudiates the Western construction of Africa that it did not have its history, culture and civilization of its own. Achebe also in *The Novelist as Teacher* remarks:

Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse- to help my society regain belief in itself and away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. And it is essentially a question of education, in the best sense of that word. Here, I think, my aims and the deepest aspirations of my society meet. For no thinking African escape the pain of the wound in our soul. I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their part- with all its imperfections- was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them (44-45).

Thus, the first and foremost concern of an African novelist as a “teacher” is to teach about the African past to the whole world and lead his own African people to recover their dignity from the injury or wound in their soul as inflicted by colonial experience. This proves that Africa as witnessed in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of darkness* is an imaginary one, not the ‘real’ Africa. It is merely a European construct.

S.A. Khayyoom in his work *Chinua Achebe: A Study of His Novels* feels that for Achebe literature itself is a politics and through literature he aims at the “rediscovery of Africa's past” (Khayyoom 37), thereby stressing the role of a writer in African society. He aims at recreating the past in the present in order to regain the African identity that has been “lost” during the colonial period. He also demands for recognition of the Africanness in literature. He does not believe in ‘pure art’ but for him literature is an “applied art” and here he emphasizes the writer's responsibility

towards his own society (Achebe 1988 37). He challenges scrutinizers, revitalizes and interrogates the European standard of writing which are the Chief features of African Literatures in particular and the post-colonial literature in general. However, he writes in English instead of Igbo as he is of the opinion that he could make the English language 'carry the weight of the African experience' more than in his native tongue, Igbo.

Unlike the modern European writers, the Africans do not believe in the concept of art for art's sake. Instead African literature arouses 'social awareness' and 'cultural consciousness' in the African masses as well as political and cultural upheaval. It inculcated the spirit of nationalism in the native Africans to overthrow the colonial power. African literature has, thus, become a tool for political self-definition. C.D. Narasimhaih and Emenyonu Ernest in their work *African Literature Comes of Age* opine: "Literature as a form of art, in Africa is both functional and entertaining. It offers a manifestation of both intrinsic aesthetics and extrinsic didacticism" (Narasimhaih, C.D. and Ernest, Emenyonu, P. vi). They do not believe in mere romanticizing as in the western style but in portraying the real-life situation in literature. They further add:

The traditional artist in Africa was the mouth-piece of his community, articulating his people's hope and aspirations, success and failure, as well as their visions of the future (P. vi).

So, in Africa the artist must be a teacher who teaches, reflects as well as shapes the communal visions and values of his people in literary works.

Achebe lived at the 'crossroads of culture', and in between the two cultures- Christianity and the Ibo customs and traditions. He remained fascinated by the values of the traditional Ibo culture right from his childhood. He was fond of Ibo stories narrated by his mother, elder sister and the elderly men of the village. His interest continued to influence the rest of his life. And so, in literary career as a result of this, he became a superb story teller, a gifted poet, an insightful literary critic, a cultural nationalist and a historical recorder. Until he read some appalling novels like Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) and Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* (1939) during his graduation days at Ibadan, he never felt that he was going to try his hand in novel writing. He then decided to write and, in his *Hopes, and Impediments: Selected Essays*, he is of the opinion that because "the story we had to tell could not be told for us by anyone else no matter how gifted or well intentioned" (38). This means that the authentic representation of Africa and its people is only possible when treated from the point of view of an insider, not of an outsider.

Achebe's works are situated historically in a pre-and post- colonial period. His themes include the social and political impact of European colonization on African people, the clashes of the two cultures, the rise of new elite, the errors and the corruption prevalent in the neo-colonial materialistic society and the ultimate dooms of the new elite. In fact, he depicts a real picture of the pains, pleasure, confusions and dilemmas of his native people in a post-colonial social and political backdrop of the times in his novels. The manifestation of the traumatic impact of colonialism even after the colonial regime is highlighted in Obi's predicament in a society where his spirituality is shadowed by the growing influence of materialistic world.

Chinua Achebe's second novel, *No Longer at Ease* (1960), is the postscript of his first novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It is a continuation of Okonkwo's lineage, for the central character, Obi Okonkwo, is the grandson of Ogbuefi Okonkwo. Obi is the hero with a tragic doom. This novel is set in Nigeria of 1958-1959 and it thematises the history of a post-colonial African society. The errors, confusions and the eventual fall of the protagonist, Obi go parallel with the downfall of the African society in the face of post-colonial materialistic world. In the post-colonial era too, the devastating impact of colonialism haunted and its impact was felt not only politically, socially, economically but also psychologically. As a consequence of colonialism, there is disintegration, devastating devaluation as well as alienation of the individual person from the community to which he/she belongs. All these are highlighted through Obi's predicament in a society where there is both western influenced urbanization and native traditions.

The title of this novel is derived from the closing lines of T.S. Eliot's poem, "The journey of the Magi":

We returned to our places, these Kingdoms  
But no longer at Ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods.  
I should be glad with another death.

The poem narrates the journey undertaken by the three Magi from the warmth and sensory delights of their homelands and pass through a wintry landscape. During the journey, they experience the loneliness of spirit and disruption of their whole life. At the end, they return with a perplexing vision and become strangers in a world that can never be the same again. (C.L Innes 1978, 167). This title, thus, underscores the sense of alienation, situation and a feeling of powerlessness in which the new educated elite are caught up in a world that has changed. Eventually, they are between the two worlds. They have been cut off from the old dispensation and at the same time, they are not able to get full benefits of the changed world. Thus, the title

aptly indicates psychic dislocation experienced by the protagonist and the general confusion that follows in the post-colonial era in Africa.

The setting of the novel is Lagos, a typical city of modern urban Nigerian society, just prior to Nigerian political independence. By 1960s most of the African countries had attained independence. The Africans were their own masters during that time. The masses looked at the elite to reshape a history and to restore the lost dignity of their nation. The younger generation of the elite wanted to prepare themselves in order to assume leadership after gaining independence. In the character of Obi in *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe presents the new emerging educated elite who had to play a vital role in the upward mobility and the restoration of the lost dignity of his nation, as political change is dependent upon the firm establishment of the university-trained African elite.

However, the post-colonial African elites have double heritage and a hybrid culture which resulted in a sense of disillusionment, frustration, despair, complexity and a predicament which were shared by the post-colonial societies. The West still continues to be the land of their unrealized dreams. Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*, depicts the defeat of exploitation by an African elite, Obi Okonkwo, on whom the people depend for the realization of their dreams. The educated elite (Obi) once again repeats the falsities of the colonial rulers in the neo-colonial period and submerges his being into it. M. Wren Robert in his work *Achebe's World: The Historical and Cultural Context of The Novels of Chinua Achebe* believes: "He (Obi) leads a schizophrenic life. He, in fact suffers from the identity deception. He symbolizes eroded morality that brought the nation to a crisis in the 1960s" (50).

In the novel, Achebe extends the history of the Okonkwo's family through the character of the tragic hero of *Things Fall Apart*. Obi has been brought up as a Christian and has imbedded the Western education which creates an irreconcilable conflict between the tradition of his forefathers and his assimilation of the Western world. Obi is sent to England by the Umuofia Progressive union (UPU) "to read law so that when he returned he would handle all their land cases against their neighbours" (*No Longer at Ease* 8). The UPU is an association of people from Umuofia but work in Lagos and is committed to the development of the country and is giving scholarship to the excellent students. Obi is the first candidate to receive the scholarship under the Umuofia Scholarship scheme and the amount is to be repaid both in cash and in services when he finishes his studies. Selecting and sending Obi to England for study causes a big stir in Umuofian. They consider this as their fulfilment of the prophecy in the following lines:

*The people which sat in darkness*

*Saw a great light.  
And to them which sat in the region  
and shadow of death  
To them did spring up (No Longer at Ease 9).*

To the Umuofians, Obi is 'light' who will lead a way in darkness, "to bring light to the heart of darkness" (*No Longer at Ease*, P.121) and enlightens it by giving birth to a new land. But the paradox is that this light under the influence of Western education which symbolizes "colonial power" will bring a sense of shame to the land. This particular "light" will lead to darkness, mere anarchy in Umuofia unfulfilling the prophecy. On reaching England, Obi studies English instead of Law. This is the first instance of Obi's assertion of 'self-will' (*No Longer at Ease* P.8). The union gets angry at Obi's decision but in the end, they are pacified with the hope that "although he would not be a lawyer, he would get a 'European post' in the civil service" (*No Longer at Ease* P.8).

Om P. Juneja in his *Post-Colonial Novel: Narratives of Colonial Consciousness* points out that Obi Okonkwo is the "heir of two culture, two polarities" (42). One culture is the traditional Igbo culture and the other is the Western European culture. David Cook in his *African Literature: A Critical View* feels that Obi, who "has been specially trained to be an outsider" (20), is split or divided between his own thinking which stems from living in Igbo community and the new ideas developed from his instant exposure to the Western world. A man like Obi is tormented between these two cultures-natives and foreign and cannot assimilate himself in these two. The native culture is represented by his Umuofian clan, his family, and his mother in particular. And the imperial European culture is symbolically represented in the person of Mr. Green, his boss; in his fiancée, Clara Okeke and in the land as well as in the materialistic world of Lagos.

Obi is the divided self between his mother and Clara, his fiancée and he has the option to choose between the traditional and modern values in life. Here we can quote Mala Pandurang who in her work *Chinua Achebe: An Anthology of Recent Criticism* observes: "Obi's desire for Clara is a transgression of Igbo codes of conduct and the series of disjunctions that he encounters in the course of the novel" (46). He is unable to create a balance between twin forces of his mother and his fiancée. The only person with whom Obi seems to have a deep relationship is his mother, a 'devout mother' whose religion is the native Igbo religion. But this proves superficial when he decides to marry an Osu violating the culture heritage of his mother and his clan. Another incident of his superficiality in his relation with his mother is his refusal to attend his mother's funeral giving the reason that "It was more useful to send all the money he could for the funeral instead of wasting it on



petrol to get home” (No *Longer at Ease* 184). He, however, does not send the money either. He becomes a total alien to his own mother. He could not decide whether he was taking a right step in not setting out for Umuofia to attend his mother’s funeral. The humanity and rationality in him has gone invalid and this is vividly exemplified in him in his mother’s death. Obi’s refusal to attend his mother’s funeral may be compared with his father Isaac’s refusal to attend Okonkwo’s funeral. Here we can quote Innes C.L. and Lindfors Bernth who in their work *Critical Perspectives on Chinua Achebe* maintain: “However, Issac’s refusal sprang from deep and painful conviction and feeling but Obi’s refusal comes from lack of conviction, numbness of feeling...” (61).

A few days after his mother’s death, her picture vanishes from his mind. His relationship with Clara is mostly physical in nature. His involvement is not strong and deep enough to make him fight against the irrational caste system that he ridicules. Clara is the daughter of Josiah Okeke, a great man and a Christian but an Osu. Osu is a taboo in the Umuofian society and to marry an Osu would amount to bringing disgrace to the family and to the whole clan:

Osu is like leprosy in the minds of our people... to bring the mark of shame and leprosy into your family. If you do, your children and your children’s children unto the third and fourth generations will curse your memory... You will bring sorrow on your head and on the heads of your children. Who will marry your daughters? Whose daughters will your sons marry? We are Christians, but we cannot marry our own daughters (No *Longer at Ease* 152).

So, Obi cannot marry an Osu, an outcast of the society in the same way as one cannot marry one’s own daughters. We find that Obi’s stand in relation to Clara’s identity is an explicit impact of colonialism. He is in an ambiguous situation. He questions the age-old Osu as taboo and threatens the very core of traditionalism of his Igbo society. However, he lacks the fixed moral stand with which he supports the modern value system, represented by his stand for Clara. But he fails and his community wins. In his failure, Achebe depicts pseudo-modernisation of the neo-colonial elite. The clansmen wish to see Obi as a modern man. And at the same time, they also want him to honour the traditional customs and beliefs. Obi having adopted Western values, believes that he as an individual has the right to choose his own wife. He decides to marry Clara in spite of an opposition from his mother and his clansmen. He is quite disturbed when he comes to know that Clara is pregnant and so he arranges for an abortion without taking into considerations her consent, feelings and emotions. Clara feels really humiliated at the familial and societal rejection and breaks off the engagement. She decides to suffer alone and does not even feel the

need to bid goodbye to Obi and leaves him silently after the abortion. Obi is the real post-colonial disillusioned man deprived of both action and reaction.

Through Obi, Achebe problematizes the complexities of post-colonial African society. Obi's fall is symbolised by widespread moral confusion of the colonial society in Nigeria. His fall also symbolises the failure of the nation. Achebe is conveying the message about the natives as well as the non-natives that the complexities and the predicaments of their societies are the impact of colonialism in the post-colonial period. The post-colonial Africa is indeed the product of colonialism.

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**Quest for identity and Belonging: Afghan Diasporas**

Dr. Namita Singh\*

**Abstract:**

Diasporic sensibility expressed through literary responses, has been progressively drawing attention of the readers and the critics over the last few decades. Diasporas are people with a common origin who reside outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland that may be real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control. The role of Diaspora towards nation-building and state consolidation in the homelands possesses an important value. Their impact is being felt as part of the process of migration and the problem of refugees. They are regarded as a force in identity formation because they reside outside their kin-state but claim a legitimate stake in it while defying the conventional meaning of the state. Afghan Diasporas have been in limelight since past several decades. Afghanistan is a country associated with a long and continuous warfare. It is a well-known fact that migration is a key coping strategy for the people of Afghanistan because many of them have had some experiences of displacement in their lifetime. The paper aims to explore complexities related to the Afghan migration and the challenges associated with it. It will make an attempt to bring forth the socio-political reasons behind the migration of Afghans and their life after migration. Through an in-depth analysis of the Afghan Diasporic literature the paper also attempts to throw a light upon the problems associated with their journey and settlement. How do the Afghan Diasporas reconcile their own sense of identity with the stereotyped and homogenized images of Afghanistan hold by the host communities? How do they negotiate the traditional construct of identity while giving their experiences of alienation and assimilation within their host cultures and communities? These are the questions to be attempted to deal with in the paper.

**Key Words:** *Diaspora, Identity, Afghan Diaspora, migration, displacement, etc.*

Diaspora is regarded not as a singular phenomenon but as historically varied and heterogeneous in its aspects. The past century has witnessed the large-scale

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displacement and dispersal of populations across the world as a result of major political upheavals, among them the two European wars, decolonization and the Cold war. Following on these, globalization, spurred by free trade and increased capital flows, and development in the new technologies of communication, information, and travel, has accelerated the movement of people, commodities, ideas, and cultures across the world. These developments not only brought the Diasporic communities and their land closer but has also facilitated in bridging the gap between the members of their dispersed community around the globe. The linkage or network of Diasporas with their ancestral land is determined by the geographical and cultural proximity or distance. It also depends on the relationship maintained with the ancestral land and the level of comfort in the host society. The bonding with mother tongue and the economic status of the immigrants determine the existent ties.

As a consequence of the flourishing of the Diasporic community, writers of the Diaspora have come into focus. The writings of the Diaspora are influenced by the culture and language of both host and home, and they in turn come up with new ways of looking at their diasporic identity: "Diasporas must keep a collective memory of their past and keep their links with the motherland alive so that they can qualify for a Diasporic identity."\*

Diasporas have created a dynamic literature in which they are writing about home, exile, belonging, identity, self, community using the motifs like alienation, nostalgia, memory and journey. Their works reflect the efforts and struggles involved in locating themselves in the new culture, surroundings and milieu. Diasporas despite being scattered geographically are held together by factors like common ethnic identity and a collective relation with the ancestral homeland.

Diasporas of the third world countries are growing rapidly. Due to social, political and other reasons people from the third world countries left their homeland and shifted to the other places which were safe for them. Recent population survey suggests that it has crossed millions and they have dispersed around the globe. Afghan Diasporas are one such kind. Owing to the Intervention of the First world countries and the presence of the major Terrorist groups which are perpetrating terror in Afghanistan, it is considered to be the most dangerous place on earth and one of the most isolated countries in the world. The thirty years of war in Afghanistan produced large numbers of refugees. Many people escaped from the country due to social, political and economic oppression which made their life uninhabitable. They choose a host country where they could live without suppression and in a free and democratic environment. They have settled in many different parts of the world from

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\* Sahoo, Kumar, Ajay. Maharaj, Brij j. *Sociology of Diaspora: Areader*, Rawat Publications, 2007.pp 6  
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where some of them participate in transnational activities with an impact on the conflict in their country of origin.

Mainly the Afghan Diaspora began in the 1970s with the advent of drought and famine. In these initial decades most Afghans leaving the country went to Pakistan or Iran. Later immigrants went to Western Europe and the United States. The largest populations in Europe are in Germany and the Netherlands with an estimated 2, 00,000 in all of Europe and another 50,000 in the Russian Federation\*. The Afghan Diaspora resulted from the 1979 invasion by the former Soviet Union; both official and unofficial records indicate that the war displaced over 6 million people, resulting in the creation of the largest refugee population worldwide today. Afghans began immigrating to the United States in the 1980s, moving through Pakistan and Germany. There are around 300,000 Afghans in North America with the highest concentration living in the San Francisco East Bay. Sadat<sup>Ψ</sup> writes that the city of Fremont is known as ‘Little Kabul.’ Afghan communities have also formed in Virginia, North Carolina, New Jersey and Orange County, California. In 1980 there were about 500 Afghan families in the United States. By the year 2000, there were nearly 38,000 families.

Most of the Afghans escaped to America with an aspiration to live in a democratic heaven. Although these Afghans left Afghanistan yet they trace back their socio-religio-cultural roots to their childhood memories. In order to convince their sense of belonging and duty towards their homeland these Diasporas started writing about the situations prevailed there and made an attempt through which people around the globe could know about the condition of Afghanistan. Their concern towards the Nation building of Afghanistan is visible in their works. Two of these Afghan Diasporas considered here are Khaled Hosseine and Tamim Ansary, who are concerned about the present conditions of their country along with the writing about their past. These Diasporas have chosen the genre of memoir in order to present the perspective of their homeland.

Interviews with the above-mentioned Diasporas reveal that they began to write about Afghanistan for the sake of creativity and also to facilitate awareness among the fellow countrymen. They intended to inform the world about the political and social scenario of Afghanistan. Their literary writings give a vivid description of the conditions that prevailed in Afghanistan and how this country gradually moved

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\* This information is given by Mir Hekmatullah Sadat in “The Afghan Experience,” and Eden Naby, “The Afghan Diaspora.”2006.

Ψ Khaled Houssini interviewed by Mir Hekmatullah Sadat in his 2006 dissertation on Afghan diasporic literary works.

away from peace towards violence and destruction. “Diasporas are sometimes the source of ideological, financial, and political support for national movements that aim at the renewal of the homeland.”\*

These writers have been challenging the stereotype image of Afghans as terrorists through their writings by making the world aware of the real face of war torn Afghanistan and its people. They have re-examined the Diasporic movement in terms of nationhood, geographical locale, cultural moorings, issues of home, roots and exile consciousness along with the concept of identity and divided loyalties as well as understanding and embracing new modes of citizenships while living in a multicultural society.

Tamim Ansary’s novel *West of Kabul, East of New York* is in the form of a memoir that depicts a journey towards self-realization. The title of the novel itself suggests the Identity crisis and the question of belonging. In his novel the writer draws on his Afghan background, Muslim roots, and Western and Afghan sources to explain history from the inside out, and to illuminate the long, internal struggle that the outside world has never fully understood.

Myriad memories are employed in the novel that interlock and intertwine over a period of time. The selective memories of the writer are the axis of his knowledge of self and of his identity. They hold clues to the answers related to the question of identity and sense of belongingness. Tamim Ansary’s experiences span the Islamic and the Western way of life in the novel. Beginning with a look at historical unfolding of Islam in Afghanistan, he explores the reformist currents of the last two centuries.

The writer undertakes the journey in the novel across his childhood Afghanistan through memories. This journey is followed by a physical journey to the Islamic countries to understand Islam and finally a spiritual journey that led him towards the self-awakening. Tamim Ansary’s journey through the experiences of interventions of foreign and domestic agents in Afghanistan, traces the socio-cultural and the political scenario from past to present in a conversant manner providing information of cultural specifics.

From the act of remembering to experiencing and finally arriving at self-awareness, Tamim Ansary has used the memoir’s inclusive quality to interrogate the commonalities and the differences between the ambiguous present and the recollected past. He explores how the self emerges from them. Wide emotional range is explored.

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\* Sociology of Diaspora pp.24

The memoir by Tamim Ansary is more about the extractions from sections of his life that may account for his life as a whole.

Homi Bhabha\* states that race, gender, generation institutional location, geopolitical locale and sexual orientation are components of the building blocks of identity in the postmodern world and these may be maintained simultaneously, successively or separately with varying degrees of vigour, passion and enthusiasm. Tamim Ansary has used these components in order to constitute his Afghan-American identity.

Tamim Ansary has explored the Afghan society and culture in search of his self. The memoir is divided into three parts in which Tamim Ansary has presented several incidents and phases of his journey through life. His life in America, his childhood spent in Afghanistan and the journey undertaken to the Islamic countries are included. Through the novel that explores the past and present scenarios of Afghanistan, the writer aims at an alternative perception of the country to counter its stereotypic association with terrorism. When Tamim Ansary was an adolescent, his father accepted a job in America, moving the family, thus taking them away from their Afghan roots. While the reminiscences of his Afghan childhood in the novel are replete with description of peaceful aristocratic life spent with extended family, it also highlights the devastation of the country due to war. His novel is a diasporic account of the situations of his homeland based on his memories.

The aggressive reaction of the west against Afghanistan in the radio talk show on sep.11, attacks made Tamim Ansary conscious of his Afghan identity that was under assault. The writer realizes that even after spending thirty-five years in America, he is unable to detach himself from his Afghani 'roots'. His associations with his motherland gave him a sense of attachment and made him think about the situations prevailing there. He says: "... but the ghosts were still inside me, and as I listened to that apoplectically enraged talk on the radio, those ghosts stirred to life." (4)

The ghost of belonging and sense of attachment that were dead in the writer during the course of his living in America, stirred to life when he listened a talk show against his motherland Afghanistan that he had left thirty-two years back.

Tamim Ansary sent an anguished e-mail to few of his closest friends, explaining how the situation looked from the perspective of an Afghan-American. In his e-mail he puts the case of the people of Afghanistan who are suffering from internal strife and violence perpetrated by Taliban as well as external interventions. He draws a clear demarcation between the sufferers and the perpetrators of violence

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\* Bhabha, K. Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994



in Afghanistan. He throws light on the role of American media that is prejudiced and presumed that the people of Afghanistan were as terrorists and criminals. Belonging to Afghan lineage, he wants the whole world to be aware of the actual scenario of Afghanistan: "May be I can help Americans see that Afghans are just human beings like anyone else. That's about all I can do." (10)

His e-mail elicited a flood of response from the Muslim world: the question of legitimacy of interventions of the first world countries into Afghanistan was raised. While sending the mail, Tamim Ansary had in his mind a fear of being interrogated by some terrorist group endangering him.

The level of understanding in Ansary for his lost homeland makes him a sympathetic historian and political observer with the ability to re-inhabit history through human narrative. While dealing with the themes like community bonding, historical process, migration, nation construction, colonization, hybridity and multiculturalism that get highlighted through characters and incidents, he reflects his ability to re-inhabit history through human narrative.

Hall\* (1993) distances the cultures of hybridity from the internationalist narrative and the older interpretations of pluralism where boundaries do not intersect and the postmodernist nomadic voyaging or the rather simplistic overviews of global homogenization. The hybrids that Hall refers to are closely linked with one of the characteristics of diaspora as posed by Safran<sup>ψ</sup>, and referred to at the beginning of the chapter. The hybrid communities maintain strong links and identifications with the traditions of the homeland. However, Hall differs with Safran in that the hybrid communities will not return to the past or if they do then these places will have transformed beyond recognition on the grounds of modernization. In that sense, there is no going home again. There is diversion and no return. This is applicable on the life of Ansary as a diaspora. Though he shows his concern towards his homeland Afghanistan yet he does not think of going back.

The novel of Tamim Ansary invokes the issue of sustenance of the sense of community among the people with a history of displacement. Ansary traces the construction of Afghan identity to family and community ties: "...we told and retold our family stories, having them into folklore, absorbing them into soil from which grew our greater self, the tree of which we were just the buds, leaves, the branches."

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\* Hall, Stuart. *Cultural Identity and Diaspora. The Literature and the Indian Diaspora; Essays in Criticism*. Ed. A.L. Macleod. Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2000.

<sup>ψ</sup> Safran, William, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and return", *Diasporas*, vol. 1, n° 1, 1991.



He constructs the past from the location of the present. Memory and remembrance have been used as narrative technique. For diasporic writers ancestral past and homeland live on in their imagination, frozen in time. Salman Rushdie refers to this process of reconstruction of the past through remembrance in his essay 'The Imaginary Homelands.'<sup>π</sup>

The memories of Tamim Ansary are selective recollections of ideal time spent in Afghanistan that are rooted in family bonding and security of childhood. The temporal and spatial distance from the native land makes the present perspective questionable. The writer is presenting a chimera space observed from geographical and historical distance. Tamim Ansary, while idealizing his childhood is also conscious of the unease of being a hybrid. Son of an American mother and Afghan father, hybridity was a legacy he got from his parents. Because of his hybrid birth he was always treated as an outsider, both in Afghan community and in American community as well. Stories from a bi-cultural childhood illumine the difference between the worldview of Afghans from those of Americans. The diasporic dilemma related to the problematic of belonging gets enhanced due to the cultural and biological hybridity of the writer.

Growing up Bicultural is like straddling a crack in the earth. If the cultures are far apart-like those of Afghanistan and America-one feels an urge to get entirely over to one side or the other. (278)

Ansary discusses what it was like to grow up in Afghanistan, with one foot already in America. Ansary's experiences of being a product of two worlds makes him feel not quite at home in either. He has always been haunted by the question of identity and his hybridity further enhanced these questions. His state of being 'neither here nor there' is reminiscent of Uma Parmeshwaran's concept of 'Trishanku'\* in relation to diasporic experience of Indians in Canada. His hybrid birth made him experience the racial prejudice that impacted his life. He refers to his family as 'Americans with an asterisk' (67). *West of Kabul, East of New York* captures the confrontation between Islam and the West. A man's efforts to reconcile the anomalies of two cultures have been depicted in order to find some point of convergence through imagination.

The question of identity haunted the writer since his childhood. Through the psychological journey to his childhood Afghanistan, Tamin Ansary attempts to

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<sup>π</sup> Rushdie, Salman. *Imagery Homelands: Essays and Criticism*.1981-1991.New Delhi: Penguin,1991.

\* Parmeshwaran, Uma. *Trishanku and Other Writings*.vol.1of South Asian Canadian Literature series; Prestige,1998.

interrogate the questions that came to the mind of a child trying to reconcile his bicultural identity and the dilemma of where his home is.

Despite his father's being denied the citizenship of America and the passport to travel, Tamim Ansary along with his mother and his siblings left Afghanistan for America. Later when his father got a job of a College Prof. in America which gave him a chance to be with his wife and children, he refused the offer because he did not want to lose his larger family in Afghanistan:

... he would loss his larger family, his brothers, the class - that greater self to which an Afghan belongs by birth right.... In the end, he chose the larger family, without them, I think, he felt he wouldn't exists (96).

The refusal by his father reflects the realization of an adult for whom community and family form important components in the construction of identity. Being an adult Afghan there is no conflict about his loyalty. He is deeply attached to his extended family and traces his identity to the clan and land. Father's response to the decision to move to America is in opposition to stark to that of child Ansary. It reflects a cultural difference of approach between eastern community bonding and western individualism. "And later in America, when people asked if my parent were separated, I always said no, except for the fact that she was in America and he is Kabul." (95).

This is again a child who is unaware of the emotional and physical and cultural separation of his parents. He says "our departure from Afghanistan was actually a defection - an escape." (97) This is an adult awareness that he was being disloyal to his roots during childhood. He further depicts that while landing to Tehran and his journey to America along with his mother and siblings he finds himself free from the identity crises. He says that he was "relieved of the discomforts of a divided self, free to roam the world as just one person: Tamin Ansary, American guy (97)" This is an adult consciousness of being free from the bi-cultural divided self by leaving one culture forever. As an adult Tamim Ansary realizes that his conflict of divided self was solved while going to America as he finds himself out of the dilemma of divided loyalty.

Tamim Ansary raises the question of identity that remains unresolved during the course of his journey through the novel. He seems to be confused regarding his identity as an Afghan and also as an American. His diasporic dilemma regarding his identity can be seen when he asks himself, "Was Afghanistan really my country?" (9) ... I am an American. How could I be an adequate spokesman for Afghanistan or for Muslims?" (10) Tamim Ansari had left Afghanistan and had been living in America

for thirty-two years. He questions his legitimacy to speak for the Afghans. His divided loyalties prevent him from being the legitimate spokesperson for Afghanistan.

Although he considers himself an American, yet he expresses his concern about the lost homeland. Ansary ponders over the dissonance between the world he was living in and the world he left behind which is reflective of his diasporic sensibility. At times he thinks like an Afghan and at others like an American. The dual identities within him are in conflict with each other. He asks himself “Why won’t my soul let go? It’s not really comfortable to be bi-cultural...among Afghans I’ve always felt allowances being made for my American side, as if it’s a sort of disability. My American self makes me a little less Afghan.” (285) Finally, he comes to the conclusion “I am a kaleidoscope of parts now” (285). His identity emerges as a mosaic and the question of Identity crisis remains unresolved. He ends his journey with a kind of resolution of mosaic diasporic identity that ends with a positive note.

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**(Mal)development: Ecocritical Reading of Arundhati Roy's *Walking with the Comrades***

Dr Patil Sangita Sharanappa\*

**Abstract:**

At present the problems of environment has occupied a prominent place in the global humanities debate which insist us to have an ecological conscience. To address the contemporary environmental crisis many literary genres and studies have been introduced in literary academe; for example, Green Literature, Green Studies, Environmental Humanities, and so on. It is very important to study these literary discourses and narratives in order to understand the contemporary environmental crisis. Placed in this context, the present paper makes a modest attempt to do an ecocritical reading of Arundhati Roy's *Walking with the Comrades* (2011) which helps us to understand Green Literature deeply.

**Key words:** environment, ecocriticism, crisis, exploitation, tribal nature, etc.

*Aldo Leopold said, "I need a short name for what is lacking. I call it the ecological conscience. Ecology is the science of communities, and the ecological conscience is therefore the ethics of community life" (Knight and Riedel 2002).*

Arundhati Roy, one of the well-known Indian writers, has written two novels and many essays. Roy won the Booker Prize for her first novel *The God of Small Things* (1997). Her four volumes of non-fiction writings, *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001), *An Ordinary Person's Guide of Empire* (2005), *Listening to Grasshoppers* (2009), and *Broken Republic* (2011), project her anger against globalization, nuclear weapon, war, dam construction, etc. Her major highlights of her essays are the problems of marginalized people and nature in the name of development and economic growth.

The present paper is an attempt to do ecocritical reading of Arundhati Roy's non-fiction *Walking with the Comrades* (2011). Her major focus in this work is to represent how the government economic policy of development impacts on the tribal people and forest. The core objective of Roy is to spotlight the problem of insurrection of Maoist to government project of development by exploiting natural resources which are the means of these indigenous people's lives. As Roy says, "The Maoists and the paramilitary are old adversaries and have fought older avatars of each other several times before: Telangana in the 50s, West Bengal, Bihar, Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh in the late 60s and 70s, and then again in Andhra

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Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra from 80s all the way through to the present” (Roy 4). However, the fundamental objective of this paper is not to address the political issues and the conflict between government and Maoist but to show how the government’s giant and promising projects of development impact on nature and tribal people.

As Choudhary says that *Walking with the Comrades* “is a riveting account of the face-off in the forest of central India between the Indian state and the Maoists or Naxalites, a shadowy, revolutionary gurerrilla force with tens of thousands of cadres. It is battle over power, land, ideology—a battle, as Roy sees it, ‘for the souls of India’” (Choudhary). The forests of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in central India are mineral-rich which are the sources of economic growth. The government major focus is on development. In this gamut, it is very apt to rethink Garrard approach to our responsibility and attitude to our co-followers (nature inclusive of all living beings), “...responsible humans have an implicit duty to let things disclose themselves in their own inimitable way, rather than forcing them into meanings and identities that suit their own instrumental values” (Garrard 31).

Let us mediate over Roy’s contemptuous argument that Operation Green Hunt is nothing but household name for destruction—of the forests and livelihood of the tribal people—induced development. Roy recounts, in this book, her journey to Dantewada in order to interview Maoists and her personal experiential judgmental perspectives of the military and Maoists activities. Though the book is microcosmic (Dantewada) representation of macrocosm (India), it is especially focusing on Dantewada, Chhattisgarh, epicentre of war between Maoists and government. Maoists are against the government’s developmental project in that area. One can see everything upside down in Dantewada. The police wear plain clothes and the rebels wear uniforms, the jail superintendent is in jail and the prisoners are free whereas women who have been raped are in police custody and the rapists give speeches.

The exploitation of tribal people began in the year 1950 after the adoption of Indian democracy policy by parliament that is the state has taken the custodian of tribal homeland. This policy denied tribal people traditional rights to forest products which have taken away right to livelihood and dignity. This policy is not only snatched away the livelihood of the people but also exploited the forest which is the means of their survival. As Roy observes, “Each time it needed to displace a large population—for dams, irrigation projects, mines—it talked of ‘tribals into the mainstream’ or of giving them ‘the fruits of modern development’. Of the tens of millions of internally displaced people (more than thirty million by large dams alone), refugees of India’s progress’, the great majority are tribal people. When the government begins to talk of tribal welfare, it’s time to worry” (Roy 8). In this context, even it is very vital to probe into P Chidambaram’s perspective that tribal

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people should not live in 'museum culture' (Roy 9). However, this ideology of India's home minister asserts us to contemplate on the question: Is it supporting meaningful relationship between 'individual and land'? (Leopold)

Last five years onwards, the basic reason of hundreds of MoU's between the government of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal and corporate houses has been to enhance the economic growth of the nation by supporting the projects of steel plants, sponge-iron factories, power plants, aluminium refineries, dams and mines. For these developmental attitudes, the tribal people are moved from their native land and culture. Here, it is very apropos to observe the perspective of Buell, "This in turn suggests that the history of human modification of environment should not be taken as implying a comprehensive, irreversible transformation of "nature" into artifact" (Buell 5).

This book is picturization of the commodification of nature. It puts forth that man and nature both have inherent right to live on this earth. Roy is posing many questions in order to check the validity of marginalized people's rights, "...who are the Maoists? Are they just violent nihilists foisting an outdated ideology on tribal people, goading them into a hopeless insurrection? What lessons have they learned from their past experience? Is armed struggle intrinsically undemocratic? Is the Sandwich Theory—of 'ordinary' tribals being caught in the crossfire between the state and the Maoists—an accurate one? Are 'Maoists' are 'tribals' two entirely discrete categories as is being made out? Do their interests converge? Have they learned anything from each other? Have they changed each other?" (Roy 10). Further, Roy espouses that Indian police officers have given training in order to defeat the Maoist who have been supporting the poor and helpless tribal people, "There's talk in the press about the new hardware that has been bought from Israel: laser range finders, thermal imaging equipment and unmanned drones so popular with the US army. Perfect weapons to use against the poor" (Roy 10). Roy has tried to depict the paradox of the development, for example, in Orissa on the outskirts of Raipur there is a cancer hospital and on the other hand it is mining bauxite too. These bauxite corporate companies like to show that they are shouldering the social responsibility under the title of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). Roy expounds, these private companies joined their hands with government to exploit forests and tribal people which she asserts as a daylight robbery, "According to the recent Lokayukta Report for Karnataka, for every tonne of iron ore mined by a private company the government gets a royalty of Rs 27 and the mining company makes Rs 5000. In the bauxite and aluminium sector, the figures are even worse...the tune of billions of rupees. Enough to buy elections, governments, judges, newspapers, TV channels, NGO's and aid agencies. What's the occasional cancer hospital here or there?" (Roy



12) Even, she suspects those cancer hospitals might be established by the government of Chhattisgarh also.

Vandana Shiva, a prominent Indian ecofeminist thinker and activist, equates development with maldevelopment, "Development has meant the ecological and cultural rupture of bonds with nature, and within society, it has meant the transformation of organic communities into groups of uprooted and alienated individuals searching for abstract identities" (Mies & Shiva 99). At par Roy also goes with the same line of thought, "I remember my visit to the opencast iron-ore mines in Keonjhar, Orissa. There was forest there once. And children like these. Now the land is like a raw, red wound. Red dust fills your nostrils and lungs. The water is red, the air is red. All day and all-night trucks rumble through their villages, bumper to bumper, thousands and thousands of trucks, taking ore to Paradip port from where it will go to China. There it will turn into cars and smoke and sudden cities that spring up overnight. Into a 'growth rate' that leaves economists breathless. Into weapons to make war" (27). The extraction of mines and selling of tendu leaves may be prospects and strategies growth of economy which is used to construct the smart cities and silicon cities on the cost of livelihood the tribal people and forest. When the tribal people cultivate some part of forest area, it is considered as the encroachment and they are prevented from the process of cultivation, "They brought elephants to overturn fields and scattered babool seeds to destroy the soil as they passed by" (43). Now, Roy poses two questions, it is high time to comprehend and contemplate that the cultivation of land by tribal people, is this cultivation of land in true sense eco-friendly as well as development attitude which is the need of the hour in the contemporary global warming world? The second question is, how do the markers of development, the project of the government with the private companies, such as the construction of mega cities and commercial endeavours like mining, steel plant, deforestation, destroy the forests? Here, let us brood over the project of steel plants, "In April the Bhartiya Janata Party government in Chhattisgarh signed two MoUs to set up integrated steel plants. One for Rs 70 billion with Essar Steel in Bailadila, and the other for Rs 100 billion with Tata Steel in Lohandiguda" (50). These modern projects are imposing on land because the land is considered as instrumental, rather than recognizing its true value, "An exploration of the dialogic voices in a landscape leads naturally to an analysis of the values a writer has recognized as inherent in a landscape, rather than imposed upon it" (Cheryll and Fromm. 386). Most of these developmental activities are merely destructive in nature which lead to many problems, such as draughts, floods, water scarcity, fake food and many more. If we explore these projects in length and breadth, we may obviously have a question: Is it in real sense development? Moreover, Roy has not only highlighted a few commercial development projects but also highlighted the impact of dam constriction

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on the lives of tribal people and forest, “The Bodhghat Dam will submerge the entire area that we have been walking in for days. All that forest, that history, those stores. More than a hundred villages. Is that the plan then? To drown people like rats, so that integrated steel plants in Lohandiguda and the bauxite mine and aluminium refinery in the Keshkal Ghats can have the river?” (Roy 124).

Thus, development means not to be indifferent to all other living beings but maintain a sustainable relationship with natural world and the community of that particular area. To quote Vandana Shiva, who one of her interviews, gives a sarcastic note to our developmental attitude, “To let the water system and food system and planetary climate system get destroyed that is the stupidity, which rules us today. So, our challenge really is against stupidity. Finish the water, you find a substitute. Finish the food, you find a substitute. But, are there substitutes for the real things that make life work. No. The food that they find a substitute is fake food that is doing a huge amount of damage on our health. And with water they can’t create it, but they can steal it. So, the powers go to poorer communities to divert more water. I don’t think the planet will die. I think the earth is too powerful. She’ll live through hotter and cooler times. She lived with dinosaurs and without dinosaurs. She’ll live with human being and without human being. We are dispensable. She finds the way. We need to protect our home.” Therefore, the forgoing ecocritical analysis of Roy’s *Walking with Comrades* urges us to stop and rethink the term ‘development’: Is it in the real sense a development or Is it a maldevelopment?

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**Wo/man(~hood/~liness) in Baul Tradition: Wo/men ≠ What We Mean?**

Ariful Islam\*

**Abstract:**

Man(~hood/~liness) defines woman(~hood/~liness) and vice versa. When 'we' are having 'fixities' with regard to the treatment of women, there is another group of people who think that wo/men are not actually what 'we' mean by 'wo/men'. My paper is about these people's, i.e., Bauls' mystic wo/man(~hood/~liness), who believe that none but the Absolute One, i.e., God is the only Man whereas every other single individual on earth is a 'woman'; more elaborately to say, whatever is 'seen' belongs to woman(~hood/~liness). But, because they also believe that the Almighty abides in a woman's menstrual blood and a man's semen plays not less vital role in getting the answers of their mystic questions (for example: who I am; why I am who and what I am; and when, where and how I am etc), it is not less than a puzzle too. A 'Krishna', like a 'Radha' who can play with her de/constructive role, plays with the way of the world only when he transforms his 'unconscious Radhaness' into 'conscious Krishnanness'. My paper, with a brief note on how 'we' define and treat wo/men, is in fact a comparative study which will deal with a question apropos the essence of mystic wo/man(~hood/~liness) from the perspectives of these people who think that woman is the cause of the universe and the Man from somewhere – inside, outside, within, above or beyond – is 'enjoying' the everlasting play.

**Key Words:** *Baul tradition*, woman(~hood/~liness), humiliation of women, etc.

Simone de Beauvoir in her *The Second Sex* has thrown light on some fundamental questions about the existence of women, the definition of women, the nature of women, the characteristic features of women, the role of women, and the situation and the drama of women. The question, i.e., "[W]hat is a woman" (Beauvoir 13) has been answered with reference to society, culture, politics, economics, religion and philosophy. It has been said that women are "exhorted to be women, remain women, become women." (ibid. 13) Women's appearance to men as a sexual being "in virtue of their anatomy and physiology" (ibid. 18) has given birth to a horrible conclusion: "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other." (16)

When 'we' are having these 'fixities' apropos the treatment of women, there is another group of people who think that women are not actually what 'we' mean by

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‘women’. My paper is about these mystic people’s, i.e., Bauls’ mystic wo/man(~hood/~liness).

Bauls have their own set of beliefs, values, practices, rituals and disciplines; as well as, most of the things they believe and practice are in oral form. The focus of my paper is on their treatment of women, i.e., the essence of mystic woman, womanhood and womanliness from Bauls’ perspectives in comparison with the treatment of women from our perspective. In this paper, I have used ‘we’ and ‘our’ to refer to those who do not share what Bauls believe and practice, and, ‘they’ and ‘their’ to refer to Bauls.

The border between man(~hood/~liness) and woman(~hood/~liness) has covered almost every space, place and time almost equally. It will not be wrong to claim that the definitions apropos men and women is almost same, no matter what the context was, is, and, maybe, will be. Women in Asia, women in Africa, women in America and women in other corners of the entire world — all are in almost same situation and condition. Even, in the histories of the ‘herstories’, it is said that a woman is “all but absent from history” (Woolf 49); that is to say, women do not have any past, any history or any religion of their own. (Beauvoir 19) Simone de Beauvoir says that history shows us that men have always kept all concrete powers in their hand (171).

Ancient myths proclaim that “the mother is no parent to her child” (Selden 121) whereas the Aristotelian notion that “the female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities” (ibid. 121) adds fuel to the male domination. That “woman is an ‘imperfect man’” (ibid. 121) and that “form is masculine and matter feminine” (ibid. 121) were (?) the common ways to judge women.

Even, one of the very common issues in ‘our’ literatures, cultures, religions and media of all times and spaces is the re/presentation of the helplessness and humiliation of women. Remarks on literature about wo/man(~hood/~liness) also question the function of literatures as a way of both reflection and re/presentation of “the lives of men and women and the study of their ways.” (Woolf 54) Rabindranath Tagore’s Hoimonti in “Hoimonti”, Toni Morrison’s Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*, Ngugi’ wa Thiong’o’s Wanja in *Petals of Blood*, Shakespeare’s Ophelia in *Hamlet*, Bertolt Brecht’s Shen Te in *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, Virginia Woolf’s Judith in “Shakespeare’s Sister”, Robert Browning’s Duchess in “My Last Duchess”, Ama Ata Aidoo’s Anowa in *Anowa*, Sophocles’ Jocasta in *King Oedipus* and Rumi’s aggressive woman in “A Man and A Woman Arguing” — all are ‘same’. The master-slave relationship with a queer notion of in/equality between the two sexes has given

birth to a question, as Simone de Beauvoir has said in her *The Second Sex* apropos women, whether they are born, created, or constructed. (20)

In spite of the fact that women are in/appropriately re/presented in not only men's world but also in women's, many women from different corners of the world have brought a significant transformation through their active and critical participation in literary, cultural, political, economic, religious, philosophical and other sectors. Despite the 'facts', it is true that the world Virginia Woolf left behind has altered to a remarkable degree albeit the reality of the actuality is that all of us have not said 'no' to the traditional "notion of penis" (Barry 125) yet; rather a noteworthy number of people among us still drink the same "old wine in a new bottle." ("wiktionary") However, 'we' cannot and in fact should not overgeneralise the treatment as well as re/presentation of women, womanhood and womanliness as this or that. Now 'we' have started celebrating gender equality, no matter how 'real' or 'fake' it is. Hopefully, someday, its pseudo-face/~phase will dissipate, and it will achieve the "moral solidarities." (ibid. 124)

Bauls define wo/man(~hood/~liness) basically in terms of their qualities, activities and role, not on the basis of biological identity, and attribute polarized qualities to men and women. Whatever is 'seen', according to Bauls' set of beliefs, values, practices, rituals and principles, belongs to women whereas whatever is 'unseen' belongs to the Man. None but the Almighty is the Man; the rest of all of us are 'women'. Everybody is woman but the No-/Body, i.e., God is the Man. Life on earth is a journey from 'being' to the Being. The Almighty is the 'real' Man whereas the 'male-bodied' people on earth are the 'not-real' men. They attribute the essence of manliness to the Almighty who is called "*purush poroshmoni*" (Wakil 203) and "*purush Porowar Digar*" (ibid. 300). They sing, "You are the First of all, self-existent Man, Master / You are ever Shiva Nath, You do always good." (Dutta 50) Bauls' opinion is that everybody except God and *guru* or the spiritual guide is female; and, accordingly, *bhaktas* or spiritual learners are female. They refer to such mystic metaphors as Radha-Krishna, Gopi-Shyam, Laili-Mojnu to refer to *bhakta* or the Beloved and *guru* or the Lover. They also use *Masheq* (which is equal to Mohammad, Radha, Gopi, *bhakta*) and *Asheq* (which is equal to Ahammad, Krishna, Shyam, *guru*). Here in this paper, I like to share a table which will tell us what Bauls think about man and woman.

Man	Woman
0	1
Unseen	Seen
Essence	Existence

[27]

Eternal	Temporal
Conscious	Unconscious
Positive	Negative
True	False
Day	Night
<i>Guru</i>	<i>Bhakta</i>
Lover	Beloved
Majnu	Laili
Krishna	Radha
Ahammad	Mohammad
Creator	Creation

The physical and spiritual gap between *guru* and *bhakta* creates a sense of loss for which *bhakta* sings, “I am not getting whom I am searching. / I am searching for Him all my life.” (khuji jaare ami paina tare”) Finally, the sad *bhakta* says, “The sadness of separation from my Friend’s love / is unbearable to me (...) O dear, I had great expectation / that I will get my Friend’s love!” (Chisty 71)

According to Bauls, on earth, women are of two forms: (i) ‘female’ female, i.e., those who are both biologically and ‘originally’ female; and, (ii) ‘male’ female, i.e., those who are biologically male but ‘originally’ female. Besides, ‘female’ identity is temporal, which remains as long as a person does not know the self because inside every one is the Man and every one is the copy of the One. When an individual knows who she/he is, she/he becomes “the lord of the lords, ‘Vishnu’ the Supreme Being.” (Islam 13) However, Mohoshin comes up with a radical and mystic conclusion: “Every single man and woman is half-man and half-woman.” (Shah)

Primarily, Bauls define women from two perspectives: worldly and spiritual. From worldly perspective, women are of four kinds, i.e., *hostini*, *poddini*, *shongkhini* and *chintaamoni*, and they are the cause of creation and a tool of entertainment. But, from the spiritual perspective, women are of two kinds: ‘good’ woman with the role of *sevadasi* or spiritual better half and ‘bad’ woman with the role of *romoni* or beloved wife. The union between the lover and the beloved depends on the nature of the relationship, i.e, whether it occurs in *prem-shaagor* or the sea of love or in *kaam-shaagor* or the sea of lust. A woman is the seed of destruction as much as a tool of *shaadhana*, i.e., a set of esoteric practices and rituals. Women, as Bauls believe, have two roles to play. First role belongs to the notion of motherhood: all women are ‘mother-like’; and, the second one is based on the notion of body: all women are ‘female-bodied’ individuals. And, they state that the woman who plays the role of both a *maa* or mother and a *shaadhana-shongini* or *sevadasi* or spiritual better half

also stands for ‘the seed of destruction’ in the guise of a beloved. It is no less pertinent to mention that we can use two terms, i.e., ‘literature religion’ and ‘culture religion, to refer to their literature and culture because of their strict connection with religion in, of course, *Bauliana*, i.e., ‘Baulesque’ way.

The treatment of women in Bauls’ way of the world is unlike that in ours. Alongside the “positive female values” (Selden 128), they attribute negative values too. Believing in the ‘fact’ that women do not have *shaadhana*, rather they are the *shaadhana*, Bauls worship them. When “the cultural politics of liberation” (ibid. 129) is disturbing women in ‘our’ world, ‘men’ owe to ‘women’ for their liberation from the cycle of death and birth in ‘their’ world. Women help them to experience the mystic reunion with the Highest. About women, Jalal Uddin Khan says that “men carry nine qualities / Women are blessed with forty-eight qualities.” (100) He also says, “Who is better half in your life, is also in the path of religion / I do not know the Man of House. Who will save me? / In the market of women, in the shore of women, / none but women are the shopkeepers.” (Khan 100) Almost similarly, Mohoshin Haq Shah says, “women marry women.” (Shah) In the mystic world, the ‘woman’ is considered to be greater than ‘man’ because the *sahaj manus* appears in her body. A man’s success in *shaadhana* depends on her help. I cannot but quote Rumi who says that “[a] man and a woman together / [a]lways have a spiritual result.” (57) Bauls believe that woman is the cause of the universe, the primordial energy and that man becomes powerful by *narishakti* or the power of women. (Sharif 34) The *Holy Gita* declares that “the universe is out of physical attachment and physical relationship between man and woman.” (qtd. in Sharif 20) Mohoshin says, “The history of the creation of Adam is found in details in the Holy Quran but the creation of Woman is not found. It is secret.” (Shah)

Bauls’ *shaadhana-vojona* or mysterious practices and rituals are mostly male-oriented. They have two types of *shaadhana-vojona*: *bamaborjito* and *bamachar*. It is said that “the company of and the sexual relationship with women are parts of this [*bamachari*] type of *shaadhana*” (Wakil 49) In the way of the world of the Bauls, women stand for the whys and wherefores behind the secrets of creation. The mystic people use a term called *ratishastra* to refer to the branch of knowledge which deals with the essence of sexuality in relation to the essence and existence of the Highest, i.e., God. A good number of their mystic songs talks about *ratikriya* or sexual intercourse, where they say that when a father loses the battle against his wife in the sexual intercourse, the child in the guise of semen crosses *kaam-shagor* or the Sea of Lust by the virtue of energy. And, that’s how a child from her/his father’s body comes to this physical world via mother’s body where “the mother with her magnetic power / takes the semen inside her / to create a *jeeb-deho* [human form], / where



menstrual flux and semen get together.” (Chisty 22) Baul songs frequently include *Lilaar Desh* or the World of Pleasure to refer to body and sexuality and *Krishna Lilaa* and *Kaam Lilaa* to mean Love and Lust respectively.

These mystic people talk about the significance of sexual organs. They use *vujongona* to refer to vagina which they consider as the *Baramkhana* or the Adobe of the Most High. Their conviction is that God appears in menstrual blood according to their mystic calendar in a particular form what, I think, can be called the Liquid God. Sometimes, they use snake and *nafs* to refer to penis and frog to mean vagina which eats up the snake, i.e., penis during sexual intercourse, and takes gems, i.e., semen away. Women play her de/constructive role in the way of the world in many faces as well as in many phases. Sharif says, “In the act of knowing one’s Self, Bauls have attributed a position with a ‘multi-facedness’ or *bohurupita* to woman: (...) A male-bodied person holds ‘*beez*’ or sperm, and woman has ‘*khetro*’ or field.” (15) They say that a “woman takes care of her baby after giving birth and [she herself] in the guise of *romoni* kills in the play of sexual intercourse.” (Dutta 13)

One group of the Bauls blames women for their negative role whereas another group never wants to do so; rather, they say male-bodied people are responsible for what they do and/or face. For example, Jalal says, “[A woman is] the snake in the guise of a girl who eats up everything in the world / Men die due to ignorance, but women are not responsible for this.” (Khan 97)

Bauls, in the very beginning stage of their *shaadhana*, avoid the company of women as much as possible because they are afraid of their ignorance but, at a certain stage of their spiritual journey when they achieve divine intelligence, they meet women to reach their goal. Finally, they start worshipping women when they discover the mystic truth. Those Bauls who are without family and social life take *shaadhan-shongini* or *sevadasi* or spiritual better-half. The *shaadhana* of women holds a critical point for Bauls who do not advise to avoid women always; rather they say that ‘lovers’ get gems and jewels when they go to women whereas those who have ‘lust’ in their mind instead of love die like insects die by jumping into the fire. Monmohon says, “There is a mine in the Hill of Love, a Touchstone is lighting there / On the way is dangerous *vujongini* which takes lives by its breathing.” (27) Our infatuation with women and sexuality questions our worship and prayers when we remain obsessed with physical desire about which Rumi says that “If you’re still in the middle of lust and greed/ And other wanting, you’re like children/ Playing at sexual intercourse.” (4) and that “there’s no flower and no milk/ [i]nside her body.” (51) That’s why, many of the mystic people dissuade to go to the *Lilaar Desh*. Lalan says, “Do not have sex with the Other’s woman / You will not reach the shore. / How many times you will have sex with a woman, / you will come to this world that many



times.” (“Sotty Bol Supothe Chol”) Razzab has said, “O Mind, if you want to swim / Learn the *shaadhana* of Ganga / to swim in the Sea of Lust.” (42)

These mystic people say that women are to be worshipped, neither to play with nor to be played by. One of the very popular stories among the mystic people is that bees collect honey from a flower whereas a spider collects poison from the same flower. Lalon says, “A baby sucks milk from the breast from which / a leech gets blood when it sucks.” (Wakil 137)

However, Bauls want to see the very ‘mother-like’ face in their meditation. Monmohon says, “Monmohon is your baby / Do not throw him to the eternity of time.” (9) Jalal in one of his songs says, “You are the cause of everything / You do everything. / Who can understand this?” (96) Lalon declares, “Finally, the truth is revealed in the fine justice that / You will know about your Father if you worship your Mother.” (Wakil 300)

For the mystic people, body ‘I’ is Radha and soul ‘I’ is Krishna. Radha is the mirror image of Krishna. Through the *shaadhana* of *fana* or self-annihilation, they not only realize their ‘Radhaness’ but also experience the ‘Krishnanness’ in their self; and finally, they reunite with the Man by metamorphosing their ‘womanliness’ into ‘manliness’ through gaining the Absolute Qualities. That’s how annihilation causes incarnation. ‘Male’ Radha cannot achieve the Krishnanness, i.e., the Absolute Qualities if (s)he remains sexually obsessed with ‘female’ Radha. Any love which is physical cannot cause spiritual fulfillment. Bauls say that sex is ineffective without love which is the bridge between sex and spiritual annihilation. Not to let love become lust, the male one imagines himself as a woman not to be motivated by sexual desire for physical pleasure. Lalon says, “Till you assume the essence of manliness in you, / can you be called/ a lover? (Wakil 228) Similarly, the “sahajiyas also believe that at a certain age of spiritual culture the man should transform himself into a woman and remember that he cannot realize the nature of woman in him.” (Sharif 28) Lalon calls them *atol* who control their sexual desire as well as ejaculation. He says, “[staying] with hundreds of thousands of *Gopis* / in the act of intercourse with Krishnaesque love / is not the job of a *tol* [i.e., one who cannot control his ejaculation.” (Wakil 499)

The remarkable thing about the mystic people is that they assume womanliness in themselves for two reasons: they believe that every individual except God and *guru* is woman and that they will gain *siddhi* or the supreme success if they assume womanliness in themselves.

To summarise, this is how the mystic people treat women. They attribute the role of a woman, a wife, a mother, a spiritual better-half to the same woman who can play the role of a merciful one as well as of a malevolent one.

Thus, in the light of the comparative study of this paper on the treatment of women in ‘our’ world and ‘their’ world, it is possible to draw a conclusion, at least, on the differences between ‘our’ perspective and ‘their’ perspective towards wo/man(~hood/~liness). Simone de Beauvoir and the like-minded people say that woman(~hood/~liness) is in danger (13) whereas Bauls say that ‘male’ female is always in danger and that none but ‘female’ female can save them. Bauls believe that a Radha can play with her de/constructive role and a Krishna can also play with the way of the world only if he can transform his unconscious ‘Radhaness’ into conscious ‘Krishnaness’. They think that woman is the ‘cause’ of the universe, and the Man from somewhere – inside, outside, within, above or beyond – is ‘enjoying’ the everlasting play. Women play a vital role in the mystic play of God. The conclusion of my paper is that Krishna, i.e., *guru* is always telling his Radha, i.e., *bhakta*, “‘Attonong biddhi” – know your Self” (qtd. in Sharif 51). And, after the mystic metamorphosis, Radha in the guise of a *bhakta* sings,

I went to the Unknown World to see who I am.  
Going to the Unknown World, I see that He is always playing with me  
(...)  
I ask myself, “How are you, my Lord?”  
 (“Ochin deshe dekhte gelam ami ke.”)

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**Life in a Slum: Metropolitan Sensibility in Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi***

Dr. Dattatraya Khaladkar\*

**Abstract:**

After the industrial revolution in India, it is observed that the urban centres were over flooded by the mass migration from the rural areas of the nation. It gets a tremendous speed in 1972, as most of the part of India faces a grave natural calamity of drought. The socio-economic assimilation was very difficult for them. As industrial centres, these cities offer them jobs on minimum wages which deprived them from a dignified life. They cannot afford shelter for their families and education for children. It gave birth to a deprived, marginalized society of criminals living in the slums and reacting only to the carnal desires by rejecting the divine motifs. The present paper analyses Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi* in order to explore how the author presents an ugly picture of the urban landscape. The paper considers how a necessity of living in the urban centre costs characters with the unbearable emotional trauma, chastity, and most of the time life.

**Key words:** *Urban Sensibility, Industrialization, slum atmosphere, Poverty, Marathi, Mahim, Mumbai, etc.*

In Indian context urbanization has two distinct representations one is glittering skylines of dream cities and second is dark allies of rotten existence of people. The argument can be materialized in the context of Hindi films that metaphorize Nariman point as a most romantic landscape with cool sea breeze and pouring monsoon showers and at the same time the films also picturize the frustrating problems of slum in which the people were fighting for the basic needs like food and shelter. In Indian literature written in English or any other Indigenous language, show these two opposite picturization in common. It becomes more obvious when Arvind Adiga in his novel *The White Tiger* rightly describes India as –

I am talking of a place in India, at least a third of the country, a fertile place, full of rice fields and wheat fields and ponds in the middle of those fields choked with lotuses and water lilies, and water buffaloes wading through the ponds and chewing on the lotuses and lilies. Those who live in this place call it the Darkness. Please understand Your Excellency that India is two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings light to my country.

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Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well off. But the river brings darkness to India—the black river. (10)

In Vikas Swarup's *Q and A* (2005) represents a life of a poor, orphan boy living in Mumbai Slum, takes part into a contest of Question and Answer and eventually becomes a *Millionaire*. The urban landscape is presented through a poor waiter's point of view who lives in an urban Westland near penury. As he belongs to slum, never goes to school and works as a waiter, the doubt of cheating is claimed by the host of the competition. Swarup narrates this situation as follows –

They wouldn't even bother to find out the reason for my arrest. Come to think of it, when the two constables barged into my hut, even I didn't. When your whole existence is 'illegal', when you live on the brink of penury in an urban wasteland where you jostle for every inch of space and have to queue even for a shit, arrest has certain inevitability about it. You are conditioned to believe that one day there will be a warrant with your name on it, that eventually a jeep with a flashing red light will come for you. (2)

The narrators of the both novels reflect the dark side of metropolitan cities that survives by sucking the blood of these poor workers and keep them at the margins. As the characters of these novels were migrated, they were rejected to get the basic amenities to live life. These two examples are significant as Arvind Adiga's *The White Tiger* won a Man Booker Prize for Literature in 2008 and the film adaptation of Vikas Swarup's *Q and A*, 'Slum Dog Millionaire' bagged Oscar Prize in 2009.

As a leading state of India, in Post-Independence period Maharashtra witnessed Mumbai as one of the rapidly growing Industrial hubs. The industrial revolution at the urban centres and, devastating droughts in rural areas promote the mass migration. This mass migration has created slums at the outskirts of Mumbai that have provided cheap workers to the mills. The establishment of factories and the growth of town created many problems. This is the time of expansion and of grimy slums and hopeless society, and exploitation of human and mineral resources. Instead of the progress and peace in the life, advanced technology and new discoveries brought social unrest and chaos in the society. In such circumstances and under these conditions, the writers were reflecting the lives of the slums.

In Marathi Literary Tradition post 1970s novels start exploring the urban landscapes which emerge as an inevitable part of the urban centres. The problems of slum become so prominent in this period that it appears as one of the significant thematic concerns. The novelists like Bhau Padhye, Subhash Bhende, Arun Sadhu, Prabhakar Pendarkar, Kiran Nagarkar, Manohar Oak, Divakar Kamble, S. N. Pendse,

Jaywant Dalwi, L. N. Kerkar, Madhu Mangesh Karnik et.al, write about the effects of urbanization on some socio-economic strata that could not afford the dignified life. These novels carry, in common, some peculiar characteristic features that altogether creates a literary corpus that recognized as metropolitan novel or contextualized as नागरी संवेदनाची कादंबरी. In this type of novel, the authors picturize the life of slum in which the people were struggling to survive in the brutal world around. The present paper is an attempt to study this ugly and brutal world of slum people in terms of metropolitan sensibility with the reference of Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi*.

Madhu Mangesh Karnik's *Mahimchi Khadi* is considered as an 'Urban Sensational Novel' in Marathi literature, because it depicts the problems of urban slum. The novel was published in 1969. In 1970, the novel won 'State Literary Award'. Through this novel it was almost the first attempt in Marathi literature to depict the naked realism of slum. It describes the lives of Mahim (Mumbai) slum people. Karnik uses this novel to raise Mumbai's consciousness of the desolate conditions, present in the city's slum area. V. D. Kulkarni in his speech in the Seminar, held by Navauvak Sabha on the subject '*Parisanvad: Karnik's Mahimchi Khadi*', comments on *Mahimchi Khadi* that Karnik has narrated realistic picture of Mahim, objectively:

कर्णिकांचे निवेदन अधिक रोखठोक व वास्तवपूर्ण आहे त्याला एखादा मुल्यात्मक दृष्टीकोन आहे असे वाटत नाही. माहीमच्या खाडीचे वास्तव चित्र कर्णिकांनी तटस्थपण व कोणताही विधिनिषेध न बाळगता दाखवण्याचा प्रमाणिक प्रयत्न केलेला आहे. (52)

The novel explores people's life of Mahim Slum, the miserable condition and the struggle to meet their end. It is the story of poor girl Jaya, a beautiful young daughter of Ganga and Kisan. Her father is a handicapped man and mother is only earning source of home. As a young, Jaya fascinates to the fashionable world of Mumbai. She always dreams to live fashionable life in a cinematic way, however she could not. As slum is full of loafers, drunkards, cheaters, thieves and illegal traders Jaya could not fulfil her dream of social upliftment. Due to poverty and longing for cinematic lifestyle Jaya leads herself towards a perpetual tragedy. She is in love with Shamu, a loafer of Mahim slum. To escape from the poor slum life, she elopes with him, he also gives her promise to fulfil her all desires. After few days of their marriage, Shamu forces her to sleep with Chander, his friend. Thus, Chander sleeps with Jaya as her first customer. When Chander dies in an accident, Shamu forces her to become a prostitute and himself becomes her pimp. In Shamu's absence Bhika, Jaya's brother plays the role of agent and continues their business at Kamthipura, a red-light area of Mumbai. Bhika's daily visit to prostitute at Kamthipura spoils his life as he suffers with Syphilis. At the end of the novel, Mantu, Bhika's friend,

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suggests the remedy, that he should rape a virgin girl, to cure his disease. Unfortunately, Bhika applies this remedy with his own little sister Ratan but fails. His mother in the fits of agony throws the photo of Saibaba on the road, and a truck smashes the photo. Symbolically, it suggests their longing for better life is been shattered into pieces.

The novel, probably, has not achieved popularity among general readers because it treats poverty in all its ugliness without providing any kind of moral relief for the reader. Karnik unwaveringly focuses on the determinism of social and economic forces on the lives of individuals. The environment, in which a person grows up, strongly affects his/her ability to get success in life. It can control what a person does for a career, or what a person has to accomplish to survive. An environment will affect a person who will encounter in his lifetime. Finally, an environment always manipulates a personality according to his surroundings. The environment of slum in *Mahimchi Khadi* molds the respective characters, causing them to make crucial decisions. Jaya and Bhika's environment consisted of a poor neighbourhood with no little chance of getting out. Jaya's relationship with Shamu is essentially what begins and pushes her along this path to indecency. Shamu carries an air of superiority, and Jaya looks up to his higher social status. Jaya, who would do anything to get out of poverty, does everything that Shamu tells her to do. Karnik tries to show the ugliness of poverty, and the brutality of intergenerational abuse. At the very beginning of the novel, a boy Abbas, from Mahim slum, goes to buy bread, but he afraid to cross the highway. Therefore, he requests another boy to buy bread but after getting money from him the boy runs away. This incident reveals the one of the themes of novel, which is 'Poverty'. In the novel economic force plays a very vital role to determine the characters behaviour. It forces them to follow the jungle rules and utilizes every small opportunity to extend their survival.

It is poverty that rejects Jaya to live her dream of a glittering life that is very famous on Cinema screens. As a result, she accepts Shamu's proposal of eloping and discovering a new life. But when she elopes with Shamu, she comes to know that she has committed a big mistake as eventually, Shamu turns to be a penniless person. After few days of their marriage, he forced Jaya to sleep with his friend Chander. It is revealed that he is totally dependent on Chander, so he allows him to sleep with Jaya in turns of the money. Shamu says Jaya, "आता तुला आणल्यापासून तर चार दमड्या नाय कमावल्या आपुन! चंदर हाय म्हणून चाललाय खरच्या. आता तो पण येणार हाय ज्हायला हितंच आजपासून ..." (Karnik 40). He takes twenty rupees from Chander and allows him to enjoy Jaya for a night. In this way Shamu forced Jaya to be a prostitute. After the accidental death of Chander, Jaya starts her prostitution business at Khar railway station. In short, poverty or the economic forces has made Jaya a prostitute. Quite



simply, Jaya discovers that she has capital in the form of sex. To live fashionable life and earning source for their life, Jaya becomes a prostitute. Thus, situation made her a prostitute rather than her fate because her fate is already determined by surrounding atmosphere of slum. She herself makes clear while speaking with her mother that she eloped, because of overwhelming poverty and social atmosphere of the Khadi. She says:

कसला पश्चिताप? काय वाईट केलं मी हितं नवतं धड घासभर अन्न नजरेला पडत तुझ्याबरोबर कॉलनीत कामाला गेलं तर सिंध्यांची पोरं मागं लागायचीं दोन रुपये फेकून पदराला झोंबायचीं घरांत बसलें तर उपास पडायचे बाबा तसा तुं अशी शेजारपाजारचीं तीं तशीं रिकामी बसून डोकं कामातून गेलं नि सोसेना झालं तेवा मी घराभायेर पडलें मला सुख पयजें होत.... (120).

Thus, the situation makes Jaya a prostitute. Though, her mother tries to bring her home back, she refuses and lives her whole life being a prostitute. Her prime desire in life is to escape her mud-puddle prison, and she is drawn to Shamu because his strength and elegance offer a means of overcoming the brutality and ugliness of her home and slum. Her mistaken conception of Shamu results from her enclosed world, a world which has given her romantic illusions just as it has supplied others with moral poses. Her mistake warrants compassion, however, rather than damnation and destruction. Her weakness is compounded out of the facts that her amoral environment has failed to arm her with moral strength.

The economics force also makes indifferent within characters; Bhika to be a pimp for his sister; Kisan, Jaya's father steals the money of VaiolINVALA for his drinking; and the finally Shamu's gang gets ready to destroy the huts of their own people for the money. Thus, the economic forces, which are beyond the control of Mahim people determines their whole action. Here, Karnik makes the reader dwell in the impossibility or extreme unlikelihood of individual solutions for the general and severe social problems caused by poverty.

Karnik shows how the environment of slum shapes human lives regardless. Jaya, Bhika, and Roshan are the representative characters of the novel. They are the victims of their environment. Each character of the novel blames to environment and atmosphere of the Khadi, for their destruction. For instance, when Jaya elopes with Shamu, Ganga, Jaya's mother, asks her husband, Kisan, to bring Jaya back for the sake of family's honour. Kisan responds that, this khadi is haunted by bad reputation; no person is moral in this khadi who is respectable. In the slum moral person unknowingly becomes spoiled, because of the atmosphere of the Khadi. Ganga also believes in the environment of the Khadi and declares that there is no guaranty of woman's virginity and spirituality in hell-like atmosphere of the Khadi. She says to

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her daughter, Ratan: “पण तुला तरी बोलून काय उपयोग ह्या वस्तीत राह्याचं जोवर तगदीरांत हाय तोंवर कुणाच्या इज्जतीचा भरोसा नाय बाई” (66). Here, Ganga indirectly blames to Khadi's atmosphere and predicts the fate of her daughter that she would become a prostitute like her sister.

Sarju is a native of the Khadi, therefore he is very well acquainted with atmosphere of the place and its impact upon the human lives. He informs Ganga all the activities in the slum during last fifteen days and assures that none can escape from the bad environment of the Khadi. He says, pointing at her little daughter Ratan: “इथल्या पाण्याचा नि मातीचा गुणच हाय तसा...ही तुझी पोर याच वस्तीत वाढली तर थोरलीच्या पावलावर पाऊल टाकणार यांत चुक होणार नाय...ध्यान ठेव-” (66).

Again, Sarju suggests, through his angry remarks on Madrahi's statement, “हम बडा इमानदार है” (115), the environmental determinism. A person who lives in Khadi slum will be certainly become spoiled and immoral because, he says: “--अरे बात सोडो इमानदारीकी ! ही सली खाडीच आख्खी बेइमान हाय. इथला हरेक अदमी बेइमान हाय जसं अन्न, पाणी तसं मणसाचं रगत तेव्हां इमानदारीची बात तूं बोलू नकोस--” (115) Thus, these exclamations suggest that the environment is a very crucial thing that determines the human destiny. It is revealed that in such entrapping atmosphere of slum, characters do not have free will. As per Sarju's declaration that is, Khadi's environment and culture is responsible for the destruction of people's morality, Jaya is also a product of that environment. Though she may be innocent at her early life, she becomes sinful and victim of Khadi's atmosphere where every one curses to others; fights on trivial matters; gambling, drinking and prostitution is a part of life; and where overwhelming poverty makes man to animal.

Bandiwadekar Chandrakant says, Jaya is representative of women leading their miserable lives in Mahim slum. He writes, “झोपडपट्टीतल्या तरुण स्त्रियांची सुख-दुःख, आशा-आकांक्षा आणि त्यांची अंतिम दारुण परिणती प्रभावीपणे जयाच्या रूपाने साकार केली आहे.” (177) For Jaya, growing up in Mahim slum meant living without decent food, shelter, clothing and medical attention. It not only malnourished her body but also kept her starved for good will, sympathy, understanding and love that would nourish her soul. Jaya's introduction to society started in the poor houses and gutters, with the neighbouring drug addicts, alcoholics and abusers to guide her.

Bhika, like his sister, Jaya, is a product of Mahim slum. He is one of the members of Shamu's vicious circle. This gang always seats on water pipes, where all the women of Khadi comes for the water. All the members of this gang are loafer, drunkard and woman chaser. Spoiling the innocent girls is their favourite game. They were always engaged in sexual relations either with slum girl or prostitute of Kamtipura. Bhika is one of them. He also is a regular visitor of Kamtipura's

prostitutes; it gave him syphilis a disease. He engaged with Dadu's cousin, Roshan, who came from rural area to live with her uncle in Mahim slum for few days. She is a beautiful teen-age girl. Bhika, with help of his sister, Jaya, develops the relationship with her. Though, both are teen-agers, they have sex. This is result of the atmosphere in which they live and observes others' behaviour. As if, Jaya is their idol person, their every action is as per Jaya's decision.

Roshan, a cousin of Dadu and Sakina is another character, who is spoiled by Mahim's environment. Karnik has described her development from innocent to sinful girl. Through her character he tries to show the environmental effect on human being. Roshan, a beautiful, innocent and totally unaware of slum atmosphere becomes adulterous girl after only a month of her arrival at Mahim slum. When she arrived at Khadi as Karnik describes her, she was innocent, but when she comes in contact with Jaya she becomes spoiled and abused girl. She frequently goes with Jaya to see movies and spends most of her time with Jaya's companionship. She follows all the habits and living style of Jaya—heavy face makeup, curly hair style and fashionable clothes. While bringing the water from water-pipe, where Shamu's Gang always used to seat, her satin-skirt rolled down and she becomes naked. Shamu's gang takes advantage of this incident and they dance around her with shouting immodestly. Roshan, being a country girl and initially innocent, she cannot bear her naked incident before the Shamu's gang. She supposes herself being abused and worthless for living. She runs with cry and tries to commit suicide in the Khadi. This very incident reveals that how she was spiritual and innocent girl initially. However, it is irony and impact of the environment that, the innocent girl eventually turns into a slum girl who can be seduced easily. She becomes spoiled and abused, when she is captured by Sarjudada, in the act of sex with Bhika. This time she does not consider herself as worthless for living or as an abused girl, though now she is actually abused. It is obvious that her whole action and behaviour is controlled by the environment of the slum. Sarju makes clear the environmental effect. He says, Dadu, Roshan's uncle: “साली वस्तीत आली तेवा काय नखरा करायची! मारे खाडीत जीव देत होती इज्जत गेली म्हणून...आतां कुठं गेली ती इज्जत? काय नाय तें दादू! ही खाडीच बदचाल हाय...हितं माणसाची दानत सिधी न्हात नाय बाबा...” (100-1). It is true in the cases of Jaya, Bhika and Roshan as they were spoiled by the environment.

Kisan, Jaya's father, is also morally corrupted, drunkard and riskless father. Many times, he has enjoyed with prostitute and has got a disease, Syphilis. He steals Vaiolinvala's coins while he singing by closing his eyes. He starts gambling business, not to support his family but for his drinking. As a father, he neither scolds Jaya for her sinful behaviour nor, the boys who harassed Jaya instead he taunts and laughs at her. He never minds Jaya's elopement with Shamu.

Another characteristic of metropolitan fiction is that the characters were controlled by their socio-economic conditions. In this context P. M. Paranjpe writes, “ही माणसे मूलतः विकृत आहेत, दुष्ट आहेत असे नाही ती अधःपतित आहेत, आणि असाह्य आहेत ! असाह्य असल्यामुळे ती अधःपतित आहेत” (66). It means that no man is initially bad but in the course of the time circumstances and other factors make man either bad or good. For instance: Kashiram’s wife, Yesu, though, her life is not spoiled as other characters; she is victimized by the poverty and her fate which depends on the circumstances. Her fate is determined by the unknown forces. Her child dies by fever after the few hours of birth. Later on, she becomes ill by the fever which caused her husband to scold and mistreat her. Instead of showing sympathy, Kashiram decides to keep Maina, Yesu’s sister, as a Mistress. After few months, struggling with fever, she dies. On the other hand, Kashiram behaves eccentrically, because of circumstances. Some critical as well as crucial situations made him a bad person. As a man he cannot bear his sexual starvation. Yesu becomes pregnant and after the pregnancy she suffers by fever, obviously to fulfill his sexual desire he turns towards Maina. Again though, he attracted to Maina, not because he loves her but to avoid the venereal disease from the Prostitute. He could have gone to prostitutes, if there is guaranty of safe sex. Thus, it suggests that circumstances made him an adulterous husband. It controls his every action and forced him to behave accordingly. He says:

...मर्द हाय मी...आज चार म्हैने झाले. बाप्याला बाई पायजे तवां गावली नाय म्हंजे त्याचं मस्तक भडकतं--घरी माणुस उपाशी राहयला की त्याची नजर दारच्या शिळ्यापाक्यावर जाते...आपुन आदतीचे भले आहों, दादूमियाँ...रांडेकडे जायची आपली हिंमत होत नाय...( 63- 64).

This clearly suggests that circumstances are responsible for Kashiram’s eccentric behaviour. His drinking habit is also a result of overwhelming poverty and tension of Lala Pathan’s debt. After Yesu’s death he lives with Maina without caring his old mother and a son. But at the end when Maina discards him and elopes with Mochi, he recognizes that it is power that will help him to survive. Ultimately, frustrated Kashiram turns to be a local Don, a Dada as he loses everything and there is no means of living, which might make him a descent person. He comes to know that without struggle there is no human life and for the struggle there must be strength, so he becomes a Gunda. In short, his action and thinking is governed by his social condition that is provided by the slum around him.

All the characters of the novel come from the very lower class. They even cannot fulfil their basic needs –food and shelter. Overwhelming poverty and lack of the moral values these people became cruel, injustice crimson and sinful. Drinking wine and abusing women is the daily routine of these people. They never think ideal life but they try to acquire glamorous life style. Kisan, Kashiram, Saraju, Bhika, and

Shamu represent the slum man's life style. Jaya, Ganga, Yesu and Sakina are the victimized women of the Mahim slum. All these characters are not higher-class people but are simple and downtrodden and helpless poor creatures of the slum. Karnik has described them as they are –not less or more.

The novel *Mahimchi Khadi* has Mahim slum setting. The story starts at Mahim slum and also ends in the same place. This slum area is situated at the bank of Mahim Khadi of Arabic ocean in the Mumbai city, near to Santacruz Airport. Migrated people, in the search of employment, throughout the India are living in this slum. So, in the slum there are various kinds of people, bad or good, cruel, and criminals. Lack of the electricity, pure drinking water, and other basic facilities, Mahim slum has become a hell. Thus, it is the ugly slum setting of *Mahimchi Khadi* which makes novel more effective and more realistic.

The authors of metropolitan sensibility collect 'documentation' with care and depicts milieu in scrupulous details. The novel *Mahimchi Khadi* is a sort of the documentation of Mahim slum. Karnik has described all the evil matter of the slum through this novel. At the mid-century, Mumbai City was the most prosperous Indian city. The waves of rural immigrants were coming to Mumbai City, the consolidation of Mumbai suburbs into slums. However, this growth also created a lack of proper housing in the city and residents turned to slum living as an alternative. In this context, Bhosale S. M. rightly says, "अनियोजित औद्योगिक विकासवादीची रक्तपिती समस्या हे झोपडपट्टीचे आक्रांदन: तीत उदरभरण आणि प्रजोत्पादन या सर्वस्पर्शी भुकांनी इथे देहाचे कोळसे होतात सारे मानवी जीवनच भयान क्षुद्र बनते." (Bhosale 61-62). These slum houses were settled in dirty and neglected areas of the city, like Mahim Khadi, where they made hell-like atmosphere. Karnik describes Jaya's relationship with Shamu and her prostitution business, in the very straightforward manner. Without any hesitant he presents a whore, her language, her behaviour and her treatment to customer. Roshan's naked incident, Bhika and Roshan's sexual intercourse and disease of syphilis to Bhika and his father, all these incidents are described by Karnik without any moral consideration. He emphasizes on the social ills not to spread the moral consideration but to make aware of this man-maid hurt on the social body.

Instead of depicting the glamorous life of the Mumbai, Karnik focuses the poor life of the slum people. He leads more stress on economical condition, which makes man inhuman, of the Mahim slum people. His narrative does not go out of the Mahim slum, as a camera, his narrative presents the only slum scene of Mahim. Karnik depicts the day-to-day activities of these slum people. In the novel as it is a documentary film, he discusses all the burning issues, related to Mahim people. For instance: a problem of migrant people, residential problem and due to it increasing slum area. He also discussed the problem of slum people that are, lack of pure water,

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terror of gunda, poverty and its impact on the young generation, prostitution, and the primary education for slum children.

Another significant aspect of the metropolitan fiction is the use of vernacular language or the dialect of the particular society. The term vernacular derives from the Latin root meaning native. Its modern meaning generally refers to the native language of a place or the common speech of ordinary people. The word vernacular is closely related to “slang” and “dialect”, both of which may be best thought of as sub varieties. Slang is often associated with street talk and dialect usually refers more to geographical peculiarities of speech. Though not an absolute, the vernacular is usually associated with the lower or working classes. Karnik has used day-today language of Mahim slum in the novel. Neither He heisted to use vulgar or slang words in his novel, nor does he think about the inevitable criticism for its use. He, rather, tries to expose reality, by making readers to go directly in the minds of Characters and make them aware of the slum atmosphere. By using the slum dialect Karnik endeavors to depict the slum life as it is. For instant, he used slum words ‘रांड’, ‘बाजिंदी’, ‘शेन खायला’, ‘शिंदळकी’, and ‘भेनचोद’ throughout the novel, which are the common words in the Mahim Khadi. Each character uses these words mechanically. The use of the abusive word ‘रांड’, for any woman, connotes the moral and social status of the woman. The word, ‘रांड’ generally used to such a woman, who is mistress or a keep of someone. But in *Mahimchi Khadi* Karnik has used this word to show the abusive, bleak and grimy atmosphere. He also gives the details of prostitution business and their special use of language. When Bhika goes at Kamtipura with Jaya, he has captured and armed by one of the prostitutes. The prostitute says to Bhika: “चलो ना...देखो कैसी टइट हूँ...” (89) He hesitates to go with her so, the whore says him, “साला गांडू! डरताय तो हमकू बुलाया कायकू? हमको टच कायकू किया? निकालो पयसा-” (89). Thus, by using such slum dialect, Karnik reflects the reality through the appropriate medium.

Thus, by analyzing this novel it seems that, the subject matter, characterization, setting, use of the slum dialect, and even style of the *Mahimchi Khadi* exemplified the novel as the unique representation of metropolitan sensibility. The moral ideals and ugly facts for human life are brought together by Karnik in order to present contrast between them. The novel thus, is thought provoking and disturbing the readers’ perception of human life. Man’s quest for the ideal, moral and comfortable life and his involvement in the ugly, criminal and immoral activities are highlighted in the novel. This understanding and predicament of the human life constitutes the metropolitan sensibility.

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**Sufi-Rishi Tradition in Kashmir**

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**Abstract:**

Kashmir is known for its distinctive cultural identity rooted in its geography, very rich syncretic tradition and composite cultural heritage. Kashmiri identity is both a combination of its territorial identity and shared cultural identity of the people. The unique identity of Kashmir is generally referred as Kashmiriyat. Kashmiriyat symbolizes a tradition of interculturalism and interconnectedness of cultural sub- streams. It stands for its accommodative thrust. Tolerance and acceptance have been defining features of Kashmiriyat. Such an identity has evolved over a period of time. It is a product of interactions between cultures & faiths. The intermingling of faiths & the process of cultural interactions at various points of time gave birth to a composite cultural identity of Kashmiri people. The arrival of Islam and its distinctive experience in the Kashmir valley is marked by difference as the faith did not create boundary and sense of otherness but brought the people of different faiths together. This gets expressed through a very rich Sufi tradition and its indigenous Rishi tradition. These have provided meaning and substance to a distinctive Kashmiri identity. Kashmiriyat has been the most important identity marker of the Kashmiri people in the larger part of their cultural and collective life and it has acted as a uniting factor around a common theme of composite culture & composite allegiance.

**Key Words:** *Sufi- Rishi Tradition, Syncretic Culture, Kashmir, Kashmiri Identity, Syncretic Tradition and Cultural Identity etc.*

The roots of Syncretic tradition in Kashmir can be traced back mainly to the Sufi- Rishi tradition, though there are some traces of inter- religious interactions and influences even in the early history of Kashmir. Hinduism and Buddhism- the two major religions of the early history of Kashmir had significant influence on the life of the people. The arrival of Islam in Kashmir, however, added a new dimension to the life of the people. It is important to note that Islam did not destroy the old religions of the land, Hinduism and Buddhism. It interacted, influenced, amalgated and became the part of the old culture, civilization and belief in such a manner that it did not appear as alien but part and parcel of the life of people Of valley. It provided a new identity which was neither exclusive nor reducible to merely to one only. (Suroor 1995)

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The arrival and spread of Islam in Kashmir made many significant marks. It provided an alternative to the rigidity of Brahminical Hinduism and its enslaving boundaries. It not only influenced their faith system but also had influence on their life in many different ways. The Hindus began to adopt Muslim manners and dress. The caste system which had been earlier weakened by Buddhism became more relaxed under the influence of Islam. Even the Brahmins did not remain unaffected. In order to retain their government jobs, they began to study Persian and composed hymns and prayers in this language. The Islamic influence on the Hindu society can also be found in the teachings of Lalleshwari popularly known as Lal Ded or Lala Arifa. She preached that love and sincerity were the core of religion and emphasized the essentials of all religions. She advocated mutual love and respect between high and low and between Hindus and Muslims. (Mohammad 6).

Muslims also did not remain completely uninfluenced by Hinduism. The Hindus who embraced Islam did not make complete break with the past. They clung to their old beliefs and practices. While celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Zuha, they also continued participating in the Hindu festivals of Ganga, Chaikra, Chaitra, Vith Truwah and Scripanchmi. They also continued to visit places of Hindu worship. Their faith in some of their old superstitions remained unshaken. The converts were also not prepared to give up their old caste prejudices completely; particularly regarding marriage. (Khan 194-195). The continuing practices added the dimensions of interculturalism which also became defining feature of Kashmiri identity.

Islam did not come to Kashmir as a revolt against or as a destroyer of established tradition but as a preserver, consolidator and perpetuator of the tradition. The unique experience of Islam in Kashmir is informed by the fact that Islam in Kashmir is deeply rooted in its own tradition. The Kashmiri tradition is, in turn, permeated with the basic tenets of Islamic tradition. This dialectical interaction between Islam and Kashmiri cultural specificity has enabled Kashmiri Muslims to reconcile cosmopolitan Islamic affiliations with territorial patriotism. As a matter of fact, Islam did not cause abysmal destruction to ancient Kashmiri culture but guided the course of its development in such a manner that it eventually emerged out of the narrow waters of Brahmanism into the broad sea of Islamic humanism. (197-198)

The experience of Islam in the valley of Kashmir should not to be judged through the lens of political regimes of the time their patronage and promotion of Islam in the region. Though the patronage of the state plays important role in expansion of religion or language as certain identities could be privileged over the other in the treatment by the state. However, it cannot be very enduring unless it commands respect and reverence by the people at large. At the heart of the

acceptance and expansion of Islam in Kashmir could be attributed to the unique experience of Sufi and Rishi tradition in the region.

Sufi tradition is an important manifestation of Kashmiri identity. Sufi's spread the message of Islam in Kashmir, which later on shaped the identity of people, using the native idioms. Syed Ali Hamdani played an active role in spreading the message of Islam in Kashmir and is popularly known as the marker of Kashmiri identity. He was not traditional religious preacher who confined himself to the pulpit. He was a great scholar, a great reformer and a revolutionary. He had his hand on the pulse of the situation as it obtained in Kashmir during that period. He was a great missionary and it was because of his zeal that people in hordes embraced Islam and almost entire society got changed. His teachings go a long way in promoting humanism and creating a just society. (Varma 124)

Deeply imbued with the Sufism of the age and country from which they emigrated, the Syeds and their followers stimulated the tendency to mysticism for which Buddhism and Vedantism had already paved the way. These Syed's naturally influenced the more pronounced mystics of Kashmir, who as the well-known Rishi's or Baba's or Hermits, considerably furthered the spread of Islam by their extreme piety and utter self- abnegation. Saints and Rishi's like Sheikh Noor-ud- Din, Baba Paim- ud- Din, Baba Bam- ud- Din, sheikh Hamza Makhdoomi, Syed Ahmad Kirmani and Baba Zain- ud- Din, by their example and precept, smoothed the path of Islam in its slow, steady and systematic conversion of the whole Kashmir valley. Noor- ud- Din Noorani is regarded as the national saint of Kashmir.<sup>6</sup> He is popularly known as Sheih- ul- Alam, Alamdar-i- Kashmir. His pervasive mystical poetry was one of the finest and systematic expositions of the tauhidic weltanschauung at the level of regional manifestation. One of the remarkable contribution of Noor- ud- Din Noorani's role as a Sufi reformer is that in spite of being an apostle of Hindu- Muslim unity, he did not fail to visualize the rise of Islam being swamped by the ancient religion of Kashmiri's and took special care to urge them to mould their personal life in accordance with the Shariah. In fact, Noor-ud- Din's poetry served as a spiritual guide to the personal ethics of the shariah of Kashmir. Its rejection of renunciation in the characteristic style of a Sufi reformer was aimed at imparting dynamism to his order which was closest to the tradition going back to the Sober Junaid-i- Baghdadi and the later exponent of the Wahdat- ul- Shuhud, Ala Al- Dawal Simnani. (Khan 28-29)

In fact, Islam metamorphosed Kashmiri society and gave Kashmir an identity of its own. This identity is projected as Kashmiriyat. It emerged as syncretism of Sufism and Shaivism. The Muslim Sufis and divines like Shah Mir, Syed Abdul Rehman, Sharaf- ud- Din also known as Bulbul Shah spread in the valley of Kashmir

the message of peace as preached by Islam. Sheikh Noor- ud- Din Noorani founded the order of Rishis which strengthened the roots of tolerance and secularism. The conversion of thousands of Kashmiri's through arguments, persuasion and by impeccable rectitude fostered the forces of secularism and tolerance, bringing about in the process a syncretisation of cultures and religions. The Rishi movement was not confined to change of faith of people only but it turned to be all embracing movement bringing within its fold every aspect of life. It also bred local missionaries. The indigenous Rishi movement drew its name from a local word Reshi used for pious. Sheikh- ul- Alam Sheikh Noor- ud- Din Wali who had accepted Islam at the hands of Syed Hussain Simnani and adopted the name of Sheikh Salar was the founder of the Rishi movement. During the 15th and 18th centuries, Islam became the religion of great majority of rural Kashmir through Rishi's. The message of love and tolerance came to be recognized as another major icon of Kashmiri identity. (Bamzai 488-489).

Rishi tradition is an important manifestation of Kashmiri identity. The Rishi's spread the message of Islam in Kashmir by using native idioms. Sheikh Noor- ud- Din Noorani popularly known as Nund Rishi is the first important saint of the Rishi order followed by other Rishi's like Baba Bab- ud- Din, Sheikh Zain- ud- Din Rishi, Baba Lateef-ud- Din Rishi, Baba Nasar- ud- Din Rishi, Baba Qaim- ud- Din and Baba Payam- ud- Din Rishi. Hundreds of saints received training under Nund Rishi and were known teaching as Rishis. The teachings of Noor- ud- Din Noorani rendered in poetry are known as Shrukh. It was through these quadrants that he very successfully explained the teachings of Islam to illiterate folks. In a subtle way, he communicated the teachings of Quran and Sunnah through his poetry. In the spirit of Islam and true to Kashmir personality humanism is the predominant current in Rishi tradition. As an ardent Rishi, Nund Reshi stressed that a true Rishi must actively intervene in the world, taking the side of the poor and the oppressed and crusading for social justice, based on the recognition of the equality of all human beings in the eyes of one God. Under Nund Reshi and his deputies (Khulafa), Rishism emerged as a powerful social movement, bitterly criticizing the oppression of the Brahmans and of the ulama attached to the royal court. Nund Rishi's poetic compositions, replete and motifs based on the everyday life of the toiling people, his denunciation of meaningless ritualism and his scathing attack of social elites attracted larger number of Kashmiri's mainly from among the lower castes, into the Muslim fold. However, for these converts Islam did not appear as a radically new or alien religion and this facilitated the conversion process. The genius of the missionary approach of the Muslim Rishis laid in their successful effort to inculcate their message in a form that ordinary Kashmiri's could understand. (Akhter 60)<sup>9</sup>

Rishism made unprecedented gains in its founder's quest for union of faiths in Kashmir. The Rishis enjoyed a distinguished position in the traditional Kashmiri society. The individual conversions and certain cases of group conversions accelerated the process of Islamic acculturation of the commoners. The popular belief of the commoners in the Rishis spiritual powers or efficacy in holiness should not be misconstrued as an important factor in their gradual conversion to Islam. Conversion to Islam, by the Rishis, meant a fresh understanding of Islamic teachings in a different cultural milieu. The sentiments of respect and admiration for Islam and faith in its ultimate destiny are reflected in a number of eulogistic verses. Islamic acculturation of the commoners meant a transition from a traditionally defined caste-ridden society to the society based on the value of inclusiveness. Having undergone a process of acculturation, the converts saw their identity in terms of the new religious community in which they had become members. It led to the development of a Kashmiri Muslim society in the medieval period in which social identity was defined in Islamic terms as opposed to caste. Thus, the most significant social change that took place during this period was the gradual development of Islam as the focus of social identity among the people. It was through a variety of didactic songs of Sheikh Noor- ud- Din Noorani that the people gradually adopted themselves in the Islamic society. (Wani, *Unpublished Paper*)

The relative change in the status of the converts in the social identification is further testified by the performance of the folk- dancers on the eve of the anniversaries of the Rishis. Their performance had a symbolic significance for asserting the role of Rishis in drawing the peasants and farmers to their fold. This in turn affected the course of Islamic religious development in Kashmir. The impact of the Rishi movement was that through the performance given by Bhands, Dambalis, Islam was brought to the masses in a meaningful way. Though at that time, the only education for the illiterate folk was that which was transmitted orally, there arose groups of acrobats and singers who assumed the role of teachers. That is why the festive occasions at the shrines of the Rishi Saints are days of rejoicing and thanks giving. The convert population looked upon them as their role models as well as their tombs and of their communal identity. Significantly the people, out of reverence for their saints, looked to these custodians as surrogate priests. (Rao 1)

The Rishi movement in Kashmir is regarded as a typical example of the prodigious survival of past practices and their bearing on the Muslims. The social purpose of Rishi movement was to promote the harmony between the people, irrespective of creed, colour and religion, though the stress in what was common in philosophy and common to the achievement of inner space as well as to challenge the priests whose professional aim was the preservation of the power of their class

through the promotion of conflict. Even as these great idealists changed their world for the better, they had the wisdom to reject only elements of the past, not to destroy it completely. It was a perfect harmony which set the imagination of the people aflame. The message of harmony, as spread by the Rishis from time to time, created a reservoir of humanism which became the ideological fountainhead of the modern Kashmiri mind, gave a unique quality to the Kashmiri identity. In Kashmir austere Islamic rituals were freely converted by the Rishis into rich and colourful practices derived from the local devotional customs and practices. The Rishis influenced the life style of Kashmiri Muslims. The synthesis of Arabic and Persian cultures produced a new order of Rishis or Rishi culture which is described by Abu IFazl in Ain- i- Akbar as, “the most respected people of Kashmir are the Rishi who, although they do not suffer by traditions and were doubtless true believers of God and were tolerant to other faiths.” (Bamzai 498) The Rishis also made a significant impact on art and literature.

Kashmiri Islam is renewed for its broadmindedness, its deep commitment to tolerance of all streams of thought. It is known to be firmly anchored in the Indian soil. Kashmiriyat is the elective and syncretic nature of the spiritual belief of Kashmiri Muslims. It is the impact of Rishi version of Islam. The most important influence on the Kashmiri Muslims in terms of their Kashmiriyat is that of the Rishi order of Sufis. While the Sufi orders like Kabravi, Naqashbandhi and Qadri, arrived in Kashmir from Persian, Central Asia and North- India, the Rishi order evolved in the Kashmir valley itself in the beginning of the 15th century. The Kashmir valley was already permeated with the tradition of Hindu asceticism and Buddhist renunciation. The Rishis consistently preached complete harmony among different religions, peace and understanding among their followers. Aware of the tensions created between Hindus and Muslims during the reign of Sultan Sikandar, Sheikh Noor-ud-Din wrote, “we belong to the same parents, then why this difference? Let Hindus and Muslims together worship God alone. We came to this world like partners. We should have shared our joys and sorrows together”. (Sikand 2636).

The Rishi cult of Islam goes a long way in synthesizing different cultural ways of life. According to B. N. Prain, “LalDed and Nund Reshi have come down to us, over the centuries as apostle of true knowledge. They had a message to give and could not, perhaps, help as an inspired compulsion. They touch the deepest care of human sensibility. It is for nothing that we recite the Vakhs of Lal Ded and Shruks of the Sheikh with gusto and feeling, the meaning comes home, mixes with the blood and becomes part and parcel of our being. A cultural rejuvenation takes place” (Lawrence 135).



Religion in general and Islam in particular contributed in a decisive manner in the formation of Kashmiri identity. Islam gave Kashmir a new super culture that recognized no nationality or sub- nationality. It enriched Kashmiri language. It changed Kashmiri architecture by blending old with new influences that over a period emerged as distinctive Kashmiri architecture. It made Kashmiri hands to create master pieces out of wood and stone and weave dream out of threads of silk and wool by introducing crafts from Central Asia and Arabia. It gave Kashmiri literature both form and content. Majority of Kashmiri literature forms have their origin in Persian and Arabian languages. In fact, Islam metamorphosed Kashmiri society and gave Kashmir an identity of its own.

Islam in Kashmir was not imposed but accepted by choice, neither was it a revolt to destroy old culture, religion or traditions. As a matter of fact, in spite of conversion to Islam, Kashmir never forgot its old culture and traditions. On the contrary, it preserved, consolidated and perpetuated the traditions. Kashmiri Muslims after conversion did not abandon the way of life and mental outlook of their forefathers, cultivated through thousands of years of history. A Kashmiri Muslim shares in common with his Hindu compatriots many practices as well as social liberties and intellectual freedom. According to Lawrence, "I attribute much of the delightful tolerance which exists between followers of two religions to the fact that the Kashmiri Muslims never gave up their old religion of the country" (Hasan 238) Similarly, Islam influenced the attitude and perceptions of the Kashmiri Hindus. The Kashmiri Brahmins were different from the orthodox Hindus. They had no reservations in sharing water and food with their Muslim brethren.

Islam brought about great change in Kashmir but it itself underwent a transformation in the course of time. This was because, although the people of Kashmir changed their religion, they did not make a complete break with the past but carried with them many of their old beliefs and practices to the new faith. Thus, while they celebrated the Muslim festivals of Idul Fitr and Idul Azha, they did not cease to participate in the Hindu festivals of Caitra, Vithtarwh and Sripancama. They also continued to regard the Hindu places of worship as sacred. Similarly, they maintained the old superstitions that seeing of a comet, hearing of the barking of dogs, hooting of owls during the day and crossing of the path by a serpent all forbade disaster. Under the impact of Islam, the rigors of the caste system were reduced. The converts were reluctant to give up their customs, their caste rules regarding marriage and sometimes even their private functions. (Hasan 239-240)

Thus, the value of acceptance and tolerance in collective life is best termed as cultural identity (Kashmiriyat) of Kashmir. It is amalgam of the religio- cultural distinctive identities of both the Muslim and Hindu communities in addition to other

minor communities. It is a kind of social consciousness and cultural values of Kashmiri people. It is the principle of harmony, a principle that is essence of the pluralistic culture of Kashmir. It is characterized by religious and cultural harmony, patriotism and pride in a territorially anchored cultural identity of the people of Kashmir.

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**Fiction of R. K. Narayan: Portrayal of Middle Class**

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**Abstract:**

The study focuses on R. K. Narayan's portrayal of the middle class. Narayan's heroes were ordinary men and he best presented the beauty of the simple things of life. Narayan's protagonists silently brought a change that had a far-reaching impact. He was the voice of the Indian middle class, a section of society that had so long been totally neglected. The expansion of western education saw the clash of values between the older and younger generation and the conflict that emerges is the cause of the social changes. The enduring quality of Narayan is the total lack of pretentiousness or the desire to be an activist writer. He never failed to write in simple but effective English reminiscent of his journalism days to entertain his readers. In spite of having no flamboyance or critical acclaim, he has been able to build a band of faithful and ardent. This is a singular achievement of R.K. Narayan and it is our pride that he is now one of the most widely read Indian writers.

**Key Words:** *R. K. Narayan, Fiction, Portrayal of middle class, Imaginary place, Microcosm of Indian society etc.*

R. K. Narayan (full name Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan) Indian novelist, short story writer, essayist, memoirist, travel writer, journalist, critic, and editor. Narayan is a genius in the portrayal of the ordinary middle-class milieu. Indian writing in English has a solid tradition behind it, beginning with the great Bengali reformer and philosopher, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, founder of the Brahmo Samaj Movement. Indo-Anglian literature continued to grow and flourish for attaining higher peaks of excellence through a significant number of eminent Indians like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, the three foremost Indian writers in English who contributed a lot to the growth of fiction in English. Narayan's fiction contains a unique blend of Indian mysticism and English form. His imaginary world, Malgudi, is one of everyday concerns and public linguistic set in southern India, which he successfully portrays through subtle prose and humour.

R.K. Narayan, generally acknowledged as one of the most outstanding of the Indian authors writing in English, is the most artistic of the Indian writers. With his sole aim being to give aesthetic satisfaction and not to use his art as a medium of propaganda or to serve some social purpose as is the case with Mulk Raj Anand. Emerging as a notable writer in the 1930s, R.K. Narayan has what Britta Olinder has called, "a singular power of joining his fresh and humorous view of the ordinary

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world with the deeper meaning and larger perspectives he finds in the mythical treasures of his own religion” (Olinder 22).

Such a great writer was born at the beginning of the 20th century, on October 10, 1906 at Chennapatnam near Mysore in Southern Indian and passed away on May 13, 2001. Since Narayan’s early age was spent in loneliness, he was a shy and sensitive boy. He studied at his father’s school and maintained a diligent dislike for studies. The qualifier to the graduate course in Arts proved his nemesis, Narayan failed. He resolved to write for his living and write in English. Reporting for defunct journals, freelancing here and there and similar ‘literary’ odd jobs catered more to the spirits than pockets. He kept on writing and submitting. Having spent one full year at home reading and writing, he began his literary career writing under the influence of events in his immediate soundings. By profession, he was a teacher of English language and literature, but after working as a teacher only for five days, he left his profession forever and dedicated himself to literary activities. He has to his credit publication of such works as 1. *Swami and Friends* (1930), 2. *The English Teacher* (1945) 3. *Mr. Sampath* (1949), 4. *The Financial Expert* (1952), 5. *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), 6. *The Lawley Road* (1956), 7. *The Guide* (1958), 8. *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, (1962), 9. *The Vendor of Sweets*, (1967), 10. *A Horse and Two Goats* (1970), 11. *The World of Nagaraj* (1990) and many short stories and essays.

Narayan picked Malgudi, an unreal town for all his novels and short stories. It is essentially Indian in spirit and made a living presence in his works. ‘Malgudi’ is a microcosm of the Indian society and he presented his vision of life through this imaginary place, Malgudi. He is, no doubt, a thorough Indian writing about Indian men, women, manners, culture, traditions, religious practices, superstitions and many other aspects of the Hindu society, although the medium he chose for his works in English and he has presented his vision of life through portrayal of this imaginary town Malgudi. As Nandan in his *The Life of R.K. Narayan* says “He weaved a world exiting nowhere but striking a chord of perfect reality with readers across the English reading peoples” (Narayan).

John Updike, a famous American novelist gives an excellent pen-portrait of the writer in his elegant and inclusive review of Narayan’s Autobiography. He says, “Madrda, when he was raised and Mysore, where he came to live, spontaneously forgered a fictional city” (Updike 27). Like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan too managed to remain a writer adopting writing as a career, a means to earn his livelihood. He has “no axes of any kind; he is that rare thing in India today a man of letters pure and simple” (Iyengar, 358). Though the credit of bringing a name and fame to Indo-Anglian fiction goes first to the trio of writers Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, the two others are committed writers while Narayan, on the

other hand continues to remain uncommitted till the end. While M.R. Anand is an ardent believer in the doctrine of social revolution and socialistic pattern of society, and Raja Rao is a committed novelist writing with a sense of direct involvement in the national struggle sweeping through the villages of Southern India, R.K. Narayan is said to be away from addressing himself directly, openly and centrally in his novels to any political, social or economic problem of the age. He seems to believe in the principle of Art for the sake of Art.

The male figures depicted men in dilemma are consumed by extreme self-consciousness. They begin to fuss a great deal over the appearance and bearing of females. They are plunged into self-doubt over the way they dress; walk and talk. Their confidence is completely shattered on these trivial facts and phenomenon of life. Ignoring the objective of human life, they struggle to impress and win over their lady-lovers. Raju confesses, "I was suddenly seized with fear, something with a feeling that I didn't look well enough for my sweetheart.... This made me run to the tailor to make a few dashing bush-shirts...and invest in.... Perfumes of all kinds" (The Guide 102).

The pivotal reason for Narayan's heroes developing an emotional attachment to these women is not based on their beauty or glamour, but because of the uniqueness of their personalities. These women are quite in contrast to the God fearing and husband worshipping traditional women. The ladies perform the household responsibilities like a breeze of fresh air in a windowless suffocating room. They are unconventional women with womanly thoughts and feelings. Their unconventionality does not imply the rejection of the institution of marriage and family. Their unconventionality lies in refusing to let their lives be ruined and dreams shattered by impure and unscarred marriage. Their modernity lies in their capacity to muster the courage to create a relationship even more painful than pleasant.

The basic theme of his novels is the place of man in this universe and his predicament. Narayan himself said once, "The mood of comedy, the sensitivity to atmosphere, the probing of psychological factors, the crisis in the individual soul and its resolution are the necessary ingredients in fiction" (Hariprassanna 12).

Narayan is of the opinion that life is illogical and man is always trying to translate his fantasies into reality. So, through the reversal of fortune, Narayan completes the story of man's rise and fall and thus presents a total view of human life. He may be described as a novelist of the middle class. His novels present members of the Indian middle class as engaged in a struggle to extricate themselves from the automation of the past. Most of Narayan's characters belong to middle class, especially to the lower middle classes of South India. Chandran belongs to middle

class family. Editor Srinivas also is bothered with the idea of earning his bread and butter. Mr. Sampath's whole life is centred round the problem of making money and Raju, the guide, is not always beyond monetary cares. These human beings are the usual sort of human beings, prudish, cunning and prosaic.

No doubt, Narayan is a novelist of common people and common situations. His plots are built of materials and incidents that are neither extraordinary nor heroic. The tone of his novels is quiet and subdued. He selects day-to-day incidents that happen to almost every one of us one time or another. His heroes are average human beings and they do not possess extraordinary capacities, but through some accidents attain greatness very soon to return to their original state. If one takes the life of a schoolboy like Swami, one finds nothing extraordinary or strange in his life. Similarly, Mr. Sampath, Chandran, Raju, Rosie, Savitri and others live, love and suffer in a maze of events which are the just commonplace. R.K. Narayan is said to have explored and highlighted the malfunction of the social system without prejudice:

Anyone familiar with the area of India known to Narayan and his readers as Malgudi will recognize it as a sort of Swiftian flying island, landing and folding itself into the landscape of the Chelsa Hotel, New York, as into Mysore and Madras. This modestly memorable memoir ranks with the best of Waugh and Wodehouse. (Narayan) Narayan's fiction portrays middle-class characters with the everyday reality of Indian life. Mr. Sampath, published in the United States as *The Printer of Malgudi* does chronicle a village printer's unsuccessful attempt to become a film producer. *Swami and Friends*, *Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher* are a trilogy of Malgudi-on-Sarayu. *The Dark Room* is a lament on the disharmony of domestic life dealing with the life of the hero namely Ramani, a successful branch manager of an Insurance Company, Whereas *The Financial Expert* is a delightful novel for the gentle irony used to bring out the rise and fall of Margayya, the financial wizard. In *Waiting for the Mahatma*, Narayan uses as background the Indian Freedom Movement from which he, like so many Indian writers of the time, had derived the basic nationalism that sense of place and time and some idea of who you are so necessary to the writing of realist fiction.

*The Guide* is Narayan's most popular and accomplished novel telling the tale of Raju, a former convict mistaken for a holy man upon his arrival in Malgudi. In *The Vendor of Sweets*, a merchant is portrayed as one who abandons his professions and his family concerns for a life of tranquillity and meditation. In *Mr. Sampath*, Sampath is projected as a great living character in the annals of Indo-Anglian fiction. He spoke in Hindi and could easily be mistaken for a North Indian with fur-cap and the scarf hung another with perfect equanimity. He cheats some, obliges others and is always optimistic. The story of *Mr. Sampath* has been written with delicacy and care, while

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The Painter of Signs is a story of a young painter of signboards, a bachelor who glorifies in his old-fashioned Independence. The Men-Eater of Malgudi is the story not of a tiger but of a cruel and ruthless taxidermist named Vasu, a heartless creature who has no regard for gratitude or obligations. The novel may be cited as remarkably successful from the point of view of characterization.

While Mulk Raj Anand is described as a novelist of the working class, R.K. Narayan may be described as a novelist of the middle class. The characters he chose for his novels are numbers of the middle class. He always creates convincing situations to suit his characters that normally live about and move in the limited regions of Malgudi. His memories of Malgudi never fail the readers to remind of Thomas Hardy's 'Wessex', William Faulkner's 'Yoknapatawpha' or Patrick White's 'Sarasparitla'. He is more concerned with the character analysis of men and women.

"Character is the soul of tragedy" said Aristotle long ago and this is applicable to the fiction of Narayan who achieves greatness in the field of characterization by recognizing his range and working with it. The middle-class society is a major social group in India and Narayan succeeds in bringing out a clear cross section of this society. As Leo Lowenthal points out, the artist reacts to the society in a particular manner:

Man is born, strives, loves, suffers and dies in any society, but it is the portrayal of how he reacts to these common human experiences that matters. Since they almost in variables have a social nexus. Precisely because literature presents the whole man in depth, the artist tends to justify or defy society rather than be its passive chronicler. (Lowenthal 3)

It may be said that Narayan's place among the novelists of India is supreme and he may be said to be one of the best novelists that India has produced. He is, no doubt, a novelist of common people and common situations.

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**Purple- the Colour of Liberated Sensibilities: An Analysis of the Textual Politics  
in *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Sandeep.T. G\*

**Abstract:**

With the cessation of colonisation, there emerged a plethora of literary productions from the erstwhile colonies that outshined the merit/worth of the Eurocentric paradigms. Among such emergent English literatures from the former colonies, African literature has an unequivocal status of commendable creative imprint. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a prominent Nigerian writer par excellence who has established a coveted place in literary world, more with the definite politics that she initiates than for her imaginative capability. Her debut novel *Purple Hibiscus* portrays the Nigerian life with impeccable clarity- an order of life where the position of woman is inevitably subjugated and silenced. The central character Kambili, a girl of subdued disposition, functions as a representative of Nigerian womanhood. African feminism is an attempt to include the sentiments of African women in its theoretical purview. Adichie follows the assumptions in *Purple Hibiscus*, as is put forward by various contributors to African feminism.

**Key words:** *Post-colonialism, feminism, African literature, African feminism, Womanism, Femalism, etc.*

One of the greatest impacts of the end of Colonial regime in many Asian and African countries has been the relentless outpour of literary productions that invariably rendered the socio-cultural sentiments of the immediate (post-colonial) milieu. There hardly was any dearth of writers in the post-colonial period who ventured freely out to contextualize the indigenous cultural paradigms and predicaments. Breaking themselves free from the Imperialist imagination/discursive methodology and using the Empire's language as a potent weapon, the emergent writers in the newly independent nation states initiated a brilliant delineation of nation's history, racial fables and social chronicles.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a Nigerian writer par excellence who also is an ardent follower of Chinua Achebe, another renowned Nigerian author. Through her fictional works like *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah* she is trying to portray the steadfast cultural components that pronouncedly exhibit themselves even amidst a possible multicultural hybridity in the contemporary cultural landscape of Nigeria. Her fictional universe portrays the inevitable scuffle

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between two juxtaposed worlds- one, wheeling on the conventional codes of pre-modern African archetypes and the other, an emphatically articulated colonial prototype foregrounded by the new apostles of Westernisation.

Regarding the condition of women in Africa, Mineke Schipper in her essay "Mother Africa on a Pedestal: The Male Heritage in African Literature and Criticism" pronounces:

...the replacement of traditional ideas by Western ones has not proved to be a guarantee for the amelioration of women's position. On the contrary, they may have only served to strengthen ideas which many African creation and origin myths already contained. (37)

Thus, quite contrary to the expectation, Colonialization as a systematic/vehement project resulted in strengthening the patriarchal sensibilities prevalent in the cultural schema than bringing in the radiant wisdom of emancipation and equality principles. While imparting Colonial knowledge, the Eurocentric assumptions on woman's position in society percolated to the ancient African perceptions giving birth to new orientation to sexism in various African countries. African women, instead of gaining liberation, clamoured, suffered and languished within the male-oriented systems of societal strata. The collective experience of African women is one of agony and anguish that Adichie portrays brilliantly as well as effectively in her fictional works. In *Half of a Yellow Sun* she brings in the horrors of Nigerian internal skirmish and eventually tells the touching tale of struggles that women face at the face of a calamitous environment. It picturises the anthropocentric universe that is shattered by man's greed for power and struggles for ultimate control. Thus, Adichie's narrative universe is the one which explores the subordinated and subsequently devastated landscapes of African woman.

Even in a socially and politically liberated African context the condition of women remains deplorable. In a completely dominant circumstance they find no room for thought and articulation. The postulations/ assumptions put forward by Western feminism or even Black feminism were inadequate to address the concerns and threats that African women faced. Thus, emerged the need for a comprehensive mode of feminism that could envelop the diverse issues of African womanhood in its uniqueness. African feminism is neither a reaction/dissent against the theoretical notions of western feminism nor is it a strategy to rebel against male preoccupations but to explore the focal point of intersection between blackness and womanhood. Hazel Carby in her seminal essay "White Women Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood" posits: "History has constructed our sexuality and our femininity as deviating from those qualities with which white women, as the prize of the Western world, have been endowed."(61). Thus, deviating from Western

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paradigms multiple prototypes of African feminisms try to locate the vast historical trajectory of collective African female experiences and to identify their heterogeneous manifestations. In her essay "We Should All Be Feminists" Adichie states:

Some people ask: "Why the word feminist? Why not just say you are a believer in human rights, or something like that?" Because that would be dishonest. Feminism is, of course, part of human rights in general—but to choose to use the vague expression human rights is to deny the specific and particular problem of gender. It would be a way of pretending that it was not women who have, for centuries, been excluded. It would be a way of denying that the problem of gender targets women. (23)

Adichie follows the narrative philosophy as propounded above in her debut novel *Purple Hibiscus* and effectively narrates the saga of a young, intelligent, fifteen-year-old girl named Kambili Achike and her gradual and eventful journey from innocence to experience. Living an inflexible life with her brutal father, a strict disciplinarian and devout catholic, she undergoes several episodes of trepidation and anguish. An active philanthropist and publisher of a newspaper (The Standard), her papa (Eugene Achike) projects a high profile public life. He also owns a factory and Kambili could enjoy the virtues of richness and material abundance. But along with the excess of wealth, the excess of religious intolerance from her father's part creates a stifling atmosphere at home. Yet Kambili is very much bonded with the familial relations and is in deep emotional contact with her mama (Beatrice Achike) and brother (Jaja). She stands witness to physical torments inflicted upon Mama even on the most trivial reasons and upon Jaja for not fulfilling his levels of expectations and she too suffers the horrid punishments as she becomes second in the class.

Papa is a towering, domineering and alarming presence in the family who yields absolute control over the family and its members. The severity of his vicious punishments extends even to the anguishing limit of Mama's miscarriage when Papa beats her ruthlessly. When Jaja refuses to go to church on Palm Sunday Papa is infuriated and throws his Catholic liturgical book, breaking the ceramic figurines on the shelves. Kambili is terrified and even more disturbed by the silence that ensues. She desperately misses the "love-sip" of Papa's tea as well. Mama is an acquiescent presence in the family who is so devoted to serve Papa by all means. She remains contented by the fact that unlike many other men Papa did not marry for a second time and adhered strictly to marital fidelity. Thus, Papa is a complex mixture of divergent attitudes- on the one hand he is an affectionate father and a devoted

husband but on the other he metamorphoses himself to a tenacious disciplinarian and arrogant dictator.

Kambili in this novel is a completely submissive girl who yields to the dictates of her father in particular and society in general. Her universe is one where there is no space for individual freedom and she surrenders her private self, character, decisions, aspirations everything to Papa and remains voiceless and emotionless. Despite being a bright student at school, her lack of communication with other girls in the class makes her an isolated being. Fear of her Papa guides her throughout her life and she is a failure in finding her own identity. Though a powerful, conspicuous presence in the plot, Kambili's submissive silence is felt more than her eloquence. She is a mere victim/product of the patriarchal prejudices prevalent in the socio-cultural terrains of Africa that eventually constrains the female self. The roots of such an oppressive politics as depicted by Adichie is not easy to figure out- whether it is a historical continuum or a later addition during the colonial phase- still, the implications of the paradigms of domination are so vehement that even after gaining political independence the cultural framework of African nation states remained inevitably patriarchal in sensibility. While problematizing the sexual politics predominant in African countries in general and Nigeria in particular one could easily perceive that Kambili turns out to be a true representative of male-centred social structures that strive to keep woman completely under control.

Kambili's mother (Beatrice Achike) is another character of unconditional acquiescence who wilfully surrenders herself to the brutish command of her husband. Her complete mental edifice is structured in a conventional manner where hardly remains any scope for progressive, liberal ideals of emancipation and equality. She relishes the feeling of being subservient and she proudly announces: "So you say. A woman with children and no husband, what is that? ... A husband crowns a woman's life, Ifeoma. It is what they want" (75). She is desirous of being ever-loyal and eternally faithful to her husband despite his vile exhibitions of mental humiliation and physical torture. When Eugene's aggression breaks her much-cared, much-adored figurines she hardly is agitated and has no reaction at all. She simply turns to complete the domestic chores of cleaning the area and is concerned more about her husband's tea getting cold. Later, we could perceive that she is keen on justifying the patriarchal positions held by Eugene when she states:

God is faithful. You know after you came and I had the miscarriages, the villagers started to whisper. The members of our "umunna" even sent people to your father to urge him to have children with someone else...But your father stayed with me, with us.... Papa deserved praise for not choosing to have more sons with another woman, of course,

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for not choosing to take a second wife. But then, Papa was different.  
(28)

According to Naomi Nkealah who considers diverse streams of African feminisms as something which strive to create a new, liberal, productive and self-reliant African woman within the heterogeneous cultures of Africa. Feminisms in Africa, ultimately, aim at modifying culture as it affects women in different societies. Thus, taking the multifarious nature of African experience into consideration, African Feminisms explore the possibilities of embracing the magnitude of their collective experiences. Assorted patterns of feminisms, that deviate from the conceptual equations of (western) feminism and construed after indigenous models emerged in African backdrop- such as Womanism, Stiwanism, Nego-feminism, Motherism, Femalism and Snail-sense feminism. Being indigenous blueprints, these variegated modes were attempts to demarcate African female at the centre of entire contentions and to explore in the cultural chronicles for material to initiate further elaboration.

For Adichie the label 'feminist' is not something derogatory but an umbrella where every woman should find shelter in. Adichie's pronouncements are completely against the preconceived notions on gender are not meaningful but (universally) arbitrary. In "We All Shall Be Feminists" she says:

But that is not what this conversation is about. Gender and class are different. Poor men still have the privileges of being men, even if they do not have the privileges of being wealthy. I learned a lot about systems of oppression and how they can be blind to one another by talking to black men. I was once talking about gender and a man said to me, "Why does it have to be you as a woman? Why not you as a human being?" This type of question is a way of silencing a person's specific experiences. (16)

The life of women as presented by Adichie in *Purple Hibiscus* is an exploration of African female experience- one filled with, apprehension, trauma and torture. The novel provides a close examination of various institutional structures that invariably disregard the female existence and bury their experiences forever into oblivion. Adichie's endeavour is to echo the female voice from the annals of African history that has been contrived to record the male versions alone and to reiterate the tell-tales of domination.

Kambili's aunty, Ifeoma, is presented as a representative figure of a revolting, liberated and pragmatic womanhood of a modern African milieu who strives to find equal place in society. She lives in Nsukka, a world that is entirely different for Kambili by all means. Though the family undergoes financially stringent conditions,

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Ifeoma nurtures her three children in a liberal atmosphere where they learn life's values. Her children are given the freedom to question authority. They enjoy self-esteem, individuality and intellectual emancipation- something unknown to Kambili and Jaja. Kambili's universe expands as grandpa joins with them. His life itself is the message for her to understand about human values of love and innate goodness. She enjoys the free air of liberal outlook. Ifeoma indirectly teaches her so many things. Ifeoma is presented as the only person capable of questioning her brother Eugene, of fighting against all odds, of facing the most adverse situations. In the novel, Ifeoma becomes a true, vehement symbol of emerging Africa who could fight for her unconditional independence. She is the embodiment of individual freedom, intellectual involvement and dynamism.

*Purple Hibiscus* is not only the tale of a subdued femininity but of the valiant, self-assertive struggle to stand one's ground. The end of Papa and the end of a regime hint at a sweeping socio-political change that is about to take place in Nigeria. The change becomes symbolic of the changes in African sensibilities as well. Adichie makes her message clear in *Purple Hibiscus*- it is not about asking for alternatives or arguing for negotiations but being born as a woman is to lead a life with dignity and freedom.

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**Ethnicity, Hybridity and Multiculturalism in Kavita Daswani's *For Matrimonial Purposes***

Dr. P. N. Gore\*

**Abstract:**

Kavita Daswani is a member of Diaspora community who spends her early childhood in Hong Kong and later on moves to Los Angeles. She began her career as a journalist for South China Morning Post and associated herself with the Los Angeles Times and the International Herald Tribune. Her multiple journeys exhibit her migrant and nomadic identity. Daswani's focal characters are her mouthpieces who articulate her autobiographical experiences in the international space. They are young females who, on the one hand, adore the western culture and on the other hand they prefer to remain faithful Indians by preserving Indian ethnicity. Daswani is a chick-lit writer who epitomizes the crisis of teenage female Indian protagonists who struggle with the issues related to love, work, maturity, beauty, identity, self and culture in international space. Her characters are modern who either struggle to pursue their career or strive for a perfect life partner in the host nation without losing their Indian ethnicity. Her fiction, therefore, articulates the problems of hybrid, hyphenated and often fractured identity of her focal female characters. The present article explores the flight and plight of young female protagonists of Daswani, who experience cultural confrontations, identity crises and at the same time they preserve their cultural and national identities. Daswani portrays the diasporic experiences of her characters who traverse from their homeland to a host nation and other nations as well. Her narratives explicate the mosaic of cultures, identities and locations that suits to the views of Jasbir Jain, who, in his resourceful article titled, "The Indian Diasporic Experience" rightly captures the individual and collective experiences of Diaspora tracing variant causes.

**Key Words:** *Ethnicity, hybridity, identity crisis, match-making, dislocation etc.*

Kavita Daswani's debut novel *For Matrimonial Purposes* (2004) is a popular text with the young readers as it epitomizes the struggle of a young, marriageable girl, Anju who along with her parents takes great efforts in getting a suitable match for her. The title of the novel throws light upon the theme of the novel that the narrative is about the efforts of getting married. Daswani through this text brings forth the difficulties, dilemma and variant crises that a girl and her parents undergo when they search for a suitable boy for marriage. Anju is staying in Bombay with her

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parents and her two younger brothers. She is a common middle –class girl who obediently follows the instructions of her mother and attends marriages of her relatives so that she may find a proper match for her. She also dreams about her groom when she attends the marriage ceremonies of her cousins and friends. For the time being, she works in her father’s business.

The novel opens with the confession of the narrator wherein she chronicles that her grandmother was married at the age of ten whereas her mother was married at the age of twenty. Further, she feels that she would be married at the age of at least thirty. But even at the age of thirty-three she is still unmarried. This is a great concern for Anju, the narrator as well as her parents, especially her mother, who is much worried about her spinster daughter who has skipped the age of marriage. Daswani through this issue brings forth Indian cultural nuances wherein marriage for a girl well within the time is a prime social and cultural concern. Her mother, therefore, makes Anju to observe fasts for numerous deities, gods and goddesses. Both the mother and the daughter visit number of temples, worship gods and perform all the religious rituals sincerely. These acts of Anju and her mother exhibit their multiple journeys, nomadism and the religious-cultural beliefs. Also, the writer throws light upon the cultural set up of Indian religious places wherein modernization and Westernisation has not yet influenced the people. The culture of Indian religious places is traced aptly by the writer. For the rural people, Anju is a foreigner as her attire exhibits her foreignness. They tease her. Hindi words used in the following piece also showcase the lingual hybridity. She explicates:

The stench of cow dung in the heat was overwhelming, sweaty people pressed against me. Scrawny men with *paan*-stained teeth heckled and catcalled as we stopped intermittently at a stall here and there to shop. My mother chastised me for wearing embroidered Capri pants and a slightly cropped white Martin Margiela T-shirt. “You should have put on a cotton *salwar kameez*, *beti*. Now they all know you are a foreigner. (Daswani 15)

Further, when Anju chronicles her past she narrates that her family has migrated from Pakistan to Bombay during Partition. It was during Partition many Sindhi families fled to India. Here, Daswani traces refugee Diaspora through the familial roots of the narrator.

Presently, Anju is staying in New York, studying at a university. In the initial days, she stays with her uncle and aunt. And as her course gets over she stays away from them, independently by working as a publicist in a company which organises fashion shows in many countries. Anju traverses to her homeland to attend the

marriage of her cousin. Such gatherings on the occasions of marriages are cultural get-togethers, generally intended to greet relatives and friends. Such occasions also exhibit the cultural tenets of the community. Anju is a member of Diaspora community which is temporal. She comes across people like her who represent temporally the membership of Indian Diaspora. This scenario of the NIRs who visit their homelands as foreigners catches the sarcastic view of the writer. She observes:

A navy Mercedes pulled up on the street just outside the building, depositing three well-dressed, polished-looking women—Indian, but obviously not living in Bombay—on the sidewalk. They made their way into Benzer, a chic store across the way. They scowled at the broken sidewalk, littered with cow dung and refuse. Bombay had evidently been their home once too, and now, like me, every time they came back, it became more and more a home they no longer recognized nor resonated with. (18)

This instance not only showcases the return of Diaspora, but at the same time it throws light upon the on-going process of the Diaspora who no longer belongs to their homeland. On the one hand, they explicate the state of their homelessness in their own homeland and similarly, they assimilate with the culture of the host nation and find a 'home' in the host nation. The present generation of the Diaspora assimilates easily with the culture of the host country, especially in terms of dress, fashions and language and food habits.

Anju in this novel has been a migrant subject who traverses the national borders of homeland and host nation. Her sojourn is a continuous activity that keeps her as a mobile subject. Her aerial journey also shows that she belongs to the second generation of migrants. She narrates her aerial journey that she has been doing for seven years is yet again the tenet of Diaspora community. She finds another 'home' in international space-New York. In the host land also, she feels it difficult to accommodate as she comes across odd people. Their oddities make the host nation an unaccustomed place for her. In other words, she feels homeless in the host nation due to the cultural restraints that she experiences abroad. She articulates:

I was poised to get on a plane the next day, to fly back to New York, my home for the past seven years, and to my job as a fashion publicist. Though I loved my job, and loved living in the city, it wasn't getting any easier for me there. So many men, but none of them quite what my parents had in mind for me. And because of some weird cultural osmosis that I had unwittingly succumbed to, I felt they weren't right for me either...But most of the men I had met were gay, or white, and usually both. (20)

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Further, Anju experiences the misfits in her character and entity as she has crossed the marriageable age. Being an NRI, she is not welcomed by the matrimonial-minded community in her homeland. As she is away from her homeland and culture, she finds herself misfit in her own cultural and ethnic cryptograph. Her spinsterhood gives her poignant sensibility regarding the matrimonial cultural tenets in India. Equally, she does not feel comfortable with the cultural tradition of Indian match-making as she is staying independently in New York. Her independent entity and staying alone in international space like a man pushes her into alienation. Anju experiences loneliness among the community of her own people. She narrates:

I wanted to slip back into the system. I had been away so long now that often it was like I'd been forgotten by the society I was born into. I realized that when an attractive, eligible man appeared on the scene, I wouldn't be the first choice because I was living alone in New York, far removed from the matrimonial-minded masses. (20)

Subsequently, Anju compares the conjugal relationship in India with that of the relationship in the United States. She observes the matrimonial relationship between her parents from the lens of Western perspective. This also throws light upon the cultural hegemony in the parochial society wherein women are subjugated. Daswani chronicles the parochial superiority in man-woman relationship which is the by-product of Indian culture. Anju observes:

After thirty-five years of marriage, my mother still never addressed her husband by his first name. She had told me when I was very young that wives should refer to their husbands only with a very grand "he." Anything else would be defamatory. "Your husband will be your lord, and you must treat him with dignity and respect," she had said. (22)

Further, the protagonist throws light upon the cultural milieu of India. She compares the culture of her homeland with American culture. Women in India find succumb to the cultural rigidities by accepting passively whatever comes to them. They are more fatalistic in their approach towards marriage. Indian culture engraves on the minds of the females that their stay in their parental home is temporal where they are born and brought up. As a result, an Indian girl feels her own home as an alien land. Her parents teach her that one day she has to leave her parental home and accommodate in the house of her husband. Conversely, in American culture marriage proves to an act that defines the identity of a female. An American woman discovers her own 'self' in marrying a man and also distances from him to find herself. Anju brings forth the socio-cultural constraints of both the nations. She states:



But I also knew that in the view of my society, a woman was never much of anything until the day she got married. She was always a guest in her parents' home, they were her temporary caretakers. When the right man came, regardless of where and how he lived, this young, single woman would wrap her life around his. It was not about what she wanted, it was about what *he* wanted for the both of them. Give that view, I remembered how my mother was baffled one time, watching an American TV movie in which a woman left her perfectly nice husband because she said she wanted to "find herself." (25)

The matrimonial-minded communities of Indian women have their own codes for the girls who are of marriageable age. The mothers and aunts direct their daughters as how to behave with the boy who comes to see them for the matrimonial purpose. These advices exhibit the cultural cipher of the elderly women of India. Anju points out the advice as, "1. Wait until the boy speaks first. 2. Smile. 3. Reveal as little as possible. (In the words of my mother's guru from years ago: "Don't show you have any opinions or intelligence. Boys don't like it. You can say what you want after you are married, but until then, be quiet.' It was straight out of *The Rules*. And it hadn't worked thus far.)" (30)

Anju migrates to New York with a prime intention to meet some suitable boys to get married. With the consent of her parents, she crosses the borders of her homeland for matrimonial purposes. Anju explicates the reason of her migration to her American friend, Sheryl. She says, "The only way I managed to get to this country was because my father thought it would be a good way for me to meet boys. So maybe that's what defines me. That was what it always about, what it's still about. Getting married." (Daswani: 2004: 53) For every girl, marriage is the most important socio-cultural ritual in India. She never wishes to go out of her parental home before her marriage.

When Anju remembers her past, she finds herself lonely and isolated during her school and college days as she lacked confidence. Further, her ordinary looks push her to the periphery. This strengthens loneliness in her. As a result, she does not get married easily. Her mother, therefore, asks her to join her father's shop, especially the one situated in the Oberoi Hotel where she expects that Anju may come across an NRI and get married to a well settled Diaspora person. This effort of Anju's mother launches Anju in the place that bridges people of the homeland and the foreign land. The hotel, in this case, proves to the third space as it accommodates the Diaspora community temporarily.

Anju is also worried about her marriage like her parents. This is evident in her efforts when she goes through *The Times of India*, the daily newspaper wherein she reads the advertisements of the marginalized people who desire to get married. She reads the advertisements of “Amputee, looking for spouse. No Requirements.” Or “Twice-divorced father of five, needing homely woman.” (69) This exhibits that Anju pushes herself to margins. She does not mix with people. Generally, she prefers to sit alone. At times, she cries alone in her bedroom as she does not get married. She states, “There were times when I would cry in my room at some remark that my mother might make about another girl. “So what if she’s fat/sad/stupid? At least she’s married.” (81)

The shop of her father proves to be a space for refuge and a temporal comfort for the protagonist. She escapes into this world-the third world- for at least day time. She finds solace in this space. But her stay in the shop does not show her involvement from the heart. In order to avoid the trauma of not getting married, she joins her father. She says, “Three years passed. And still, each day, from ten in the morning to six in the evening, I sank into the safety of my air-conditioned, black-velvet world.” (Daswani: 2004: 86) Further, she tries to convince her father that during the day she does nothing significant in his shop. She attempts to kill time just because all her friends have got married.

Subsequently, she convinces her parents that she should go to America for her higher studies and also to find a proper match for her. Anju migrates to America, especially, New Jersey. By staying at the residence of her uncle, Mr Lal and his wife, Vinita she enrolls herself for a course at New York University. This international space provides her the freedom of a life free from all the rigidities of culture and religion. Aunt Jyoti, the maternal aunt of Anju, registers her fear regarding the cultural differences of both the nations. She says:

Girls who go to Umrica become too free, too spoilt. Then they can’t adjust. Then no boys want them. You should have more control over her. At least here, you can watch her. But there? How are to know what she will be getting up to over there? (105)

In New Jersey, she is not received by the Lal family at the airport. Anju traverses alone and finds out the address of her uncle in the host nation. The cold welcome by her aunt, Vinita is so striking that Anju, who has escaped from India desires to return to her home. Here, she feels marginalised and strongly longs for her home in India. Anju mimes, “I suddenly felt forlorn...But now all wanted to do was to turn around and go home. (Daswani: 2004: 108) This nostalgia for the homeland is temporal as Anju assimilates with culture and environment in host nation gradually.

Gradually, Daswani introduces the culture of Indian Diaspora through the minority community of students who alter or shift their cultural packages as their stay in the host country increases. Anju comes in contact with another Indian student, Devika, who had been like Anju at the time of her initial phase in America. Here, the writer uses a parallelism in the cultural shift and assimilation of Anju and Devika. Anju, therefore, states the transformation in the character of Devika. She says:

No doubt, Devika had been like me once—devoted to her culture, overflowing with piety for her parents, committed to returning to India as virtuous as she was when had left. But now she was betraying all of that, and I almost felt tainted by association. She was giving the rest of us girls a bad name. (117)

In America, as Anju thinks that Indians come to 'broaden their horizons.' But contrary to this notion she finds that Indians form their minority community and social gatherings after a fixed interval of time. Such gatherings are held in order to nurture the culture of the homeland in the host country. Also, the Indian Diaspora wants a sense of security and the ethnic food and fashions to be preserved in the alien land. But Anju is not interested in such gatherings. Even in her Diaspora community she feels lonely as, she finds the very intension of the gathering is lost. Anju vocalises:

This was monthly gathering. I had been once before and had felt so out of place—young mothers with irritating husbands and cranky children, and teenage girls hiding from their parents what they had done the night before, the boys they had kissed and the beers they had guzzled down. I had such a crummy, lonely time, I'd vowed never to return. (119)

Further, as Anju gets accustomed with the people, culture, food and environment of America, she starts sharing her views with her friends. This also provides a platform for her propagate Indian culture and ethnicity, and at the same time an opportunity to scan the culture of the West. She tells her American friends that in India, the tradition of arranged marriages is ancient and strong which often lasts long.

Eventually, Anju gets attracted towards Jeff, an American young man with whom she studies in the University. She is aware of inter-racial marriage, the idea of which shudders her. Her relationship, therefore, with Jeff is casual. Though there is space and scope for freedom, she 'saves herself for her Indian prince and for the wedding night that she always dreamed of'. As a result, she takes a break up between them in a sportive manner. Further, Anju's sojourn in America continues as she leaves the home of her uncle, Lal. Her itinerary begins as she moves places which add to her nomadism. At times, she is aware of the distance she has traversed and also

the type of life she experiences in the international space. She articulates, “But I rode the subway, ate cheaply and lived the life of any other twenty-something just starting out in this strange, wild city, while thousands of miles away from my parents fretted and fussed and fumed.” (Daswani: 2004: 136) This also showcases the peripheral life that Anju leads in the host nation where she does not have anybody to share her sorrows or happiness. Utterly lonely she battles in the unaccustomed land.

Subsequently, Anju faces identity crisis as she is stranded between two identities that she possesses now-on the one hand she is a spinster who does not get a suitable boy to marry in India, and on the other hand she is a free child of America. She meets a psychiatrist who points out her confusion:

You’re from a third world country, trying to adjust to life in America. It’s a big change. Your family has a pretty fixed idea of the way you should be doing things, and you’re not doing them that way. So you’re feeling conflicted, confused and guilty. (140)

After a year Anju comes back to India but feels suffocated in her home as she has not yet got married. Her parents also disapprove her independent existence in America as an intellectual being. They wonder why she has so spent time without finding a suitable boy for herself. This pushes Anju in the margins again. She is pushed in her room brooding and crying whereas her mother struggles hard to find her a suitable boy. Eventually, she tries to unite Raju, a London return boy for Anju. Here, Raju also represents Diaspora subject, a migrant Indian who struggles for matrimonial purposes like Anju. Daswani explicates the diasporic identity of Raju who has been a mobile subject, “He’s thirty-two, thirty-three, now living in London. His mummy and daddy live in Delhi, but the boy is on his own over there, making money and all”. (Daswani: 2004: 168). Anju’s mother is eager to introduce Raju to her daughter and possibly arrange their marriage. Contrarily, Anju’s father alarms his wife about the dangers of marrying off his daughter to a person who lives alone. According to him, such young and lonely boys are attracted to many bad habits in the Western nations. He illustrates his experiences about the young representatives of the Diaspora:

These boys in the West, away from their parents, you don’t know what they’re doing over there. Drinks and drugs and gambling and all, so many bad influences. (168)

Similarly, Raju too represents the young generation of Diaspora, who is attracted by the Western culture. Here, Raju seems much assimilated with the culture of the West as he declines the culture and atmosphere of his homeland. His hate for the homeland, people, nature and culture is evident when vocalizes it with Anju. She states:

But I’m glad I’m not living here. Too bloody—forgive my language—oppressive. The heat, the crowds, the dirt, the cows on

every bleeding—sorry, again—street corner. You have to ask yourself how a country can progress when they’ve got bullocks peeing and pooing everywhere, right? I went to live in London ten years ago and haven’t been back since. (181)

Gradually, Anju feels alienated among the members of her own family and friends. Her friends in India are married and are with young children and spouses. Similarly, in her family also nobody has time to talk to her and share her feelings. As a result, she feels alienated. This notion of alienation is poignant with her only because she is unmarried yet. Marriage, therefore, provides a licence to mix up with society and celebrate any occasion. Anju remarks:

Here, I was an outsider. It would have been different if i had escaped. Like so many of my friends had, the respectable way—through marriage. If I had gone off with a husband to some far-flung corner of the world and then returned to visit my family and friends, there would be parties galore in my honor, curious questions, gifts and kudos and celebrations. But because nobody had ever done *this*—gone off alone, living single—I was the one defective piece in the jigsaw puzzle. Try as I might, I just didn’t fit in anywhere. (171-172)

Though Raju has come India to see and marry an Indian girl his long stay in London gives space for doubt that he may be having a girlfriend in his life. Mr Lal, the father of Anju, makes telephonic inquiry about the conduct of Raju in London and receives the news that Raju had been in relation with a white girlfriend, Lucy. This act indicates the fatherly duties of Mr Lal who makes telephonic inquiries about a boy who intends to marry his daughter and at the same time it brings forth the cultural hybridity in the relationship of Raju and Lucy.

Raju, in his act of finding a bride of his origin shows his inclination towards Indian women. According to him, Indian women are more submissive and virgin. This also indicates the reverse of Diaspora even when he has an opportunity and space to have inter-racial marriage. Anju points out the cultural traits of Raju’s personality:

I discovered that although Raju and Lucy were virtually living together, he was tantalized by the prospect of a proper Indian bride. But even once he found a dark-skinned virgin woman to marry, he had no intention of relinquishing his lily-white consort. (20)

As Anju is unable to get married, she feels herself an unsuitable person in her homeland. Somehow, she convinces her father that she should fly back to New York. It is in the host nation she gets an identity. In India, she feels lost and identity-less

person. In other words, she finds 'home' in the host nation. She tells her father, "I can't be here, Dad," I sobbed. "I feel so lonely. At least in New York I feel like somebody, not a burden to society like I am here." (209)

Further, Anju gets permission to go back to America only when the astrologer advises her parents that Anju have prospects to see a boy and marry him. The parents, therefore, allow her to go back to America. Here, the astrologer becomes a link to join Anju's lost connections with the West. As she goes to New York and settles with her workmate, Sheryl, an American girl who works with Anju as a publicist, she gets an opportunity to go to Paris for arranging a fashion show of her garment company. Here, Anju traverses further into another country exhibiting her migration and mobility. She articulates her participation in the fashion show in Paris:

Despite my relative sophistication in the matters, entering a large-scale fashion show in Paris was still a cultural shock. It was basically the equivalent of kidnapping a geriatric goat-keeper from Bihar and dropping him off at Disneyland. (234)

Further, Anju registers herself with some websites on the internet for matrimonial purposes. Secretly she gives all her details as well as lists down her expectations on these sites. For some days, she is busy in the cyber world-the world that connects her with many people across the globe. Gradually, she meets Rohan and finally decides to marry him. The novel ends with the matrimonial preparations of Anju and Rohan.

Throughout the narrative, there are references to fast which Anju observes for getting a good husband; sarees that she wears at fashion show and the Indian dresses she often wears indicate Indian ethnicity. Here, Daswani chutnifies both Indian and Western cultures intertwining a wonderful cultural mosaic. Even the liberty that Daswani takes in using Hindi words freely shows that the text brings forth lingual hybridity as well.

In the fiction of Kavita Daswani, the Indian female characters move from India to the United States of America and return to India again. The protagonists of Daswani are very young-teenage girls of marriageable age or newlywed who are placed in unaccustomed land. These women characters adopt the culture of the host country though the mainstream society does not accept them. Daswani's female focal protagonists are late teenagers who attempt to cut loose from the cultural hegemonies of Indian familial patriarchy and arranged marriages. In this attempt, they assimilate with the culture of the host nation. Her protagonists transgress the political and geographical borders of their homeland to pursue their higher education, career of their dreams, a better match and creating a space of their own through their



intellectual identities even after marriage. These flights from the homeland cater them vistas for better job opportunities and equally the scope to assimilate with the culture of the host nation. Though they face difficulties in assimilating with the culture of the host country, they train themselves and try to retain their existence in the host nation through their membership of Diaspora. In an attempt to rebel against the parochial cryptograph of Indian culture, Anju attempts to escape from the arranged marriage of India but finally ends in an arranged marriage with Rohan. Similarly, the glamorous world of fashions has always been an attraction for the teenager female protagonists of Daswani, which she has used optimally in her fiction. This world also provides a third world for the diasporic characters. Daswani's female characters begin their sojourn from a cosmopolitan background which already has the tint of multiple cultures and broader view of the world. Kavita Daswani minutely records the changes in the diasporic Indian communities. The prime concern that Daswani illustrates about is the social institutions such as marriage, the role of wife in Indian families and the increasing opportunities for women outside the familial confinements. Daswani's heroines prove to be the pioneers in breaking their traditional, cultural and familial bondage and enter international space, face cultural hybridity, identity crisis and retain their own impression as successful human beings in the end.

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**Thematic Considerations of Dislocation in Bharati Mukherjee's Fiction**

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**Abstract:**

Migration is a perpetual and global phenomenon. Its history goes back to the history of mankind. People move, either forcefully or voluntarily, from their homeland into a new and foreign environment. Globalization speeds up the process of migration. Half of the world's migrant are woman. The word dislocation is also used instead of migration in scholarly accounts. Bharati Mukherjee is writing about South Asian community, about their attempts to accommodate to and assimilate American culture or about their failure to do so. Her writings speak of the inevitable changes involved in such transition. Some of her female protagonists suffer from identity crisis while some reincarnate themselves in the new world. We also find an echo of personal experiences of dislocation in her novels.

**Key words:** *Migration, Dislocation, South Asian community, American culture, Identity crisis, etc.*

Migration is the phenomena that have been happening over the centuries, in various forms and of course with varying effects on the individual or the group. Quest, pilgrimage, journey of discovery or exploration, merchant adventure, grand tour, globetrotting, or simply travelling – all these are dislocating movement. Terms like exile, diaspora, dislocation, in-betweenness, and old/new ethnicities, double inscription, hybridity are used in various ways to describe people's movement. Often, these terms are applied to people(s) moving from the former colonies to the former centres or to other places, away from their homelands. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, Bill Ashcroft and et al. describe dislocation as a willing or unwilling movement from a known to an unknown location. They viewed dislocation as inevitable and mother of invention. Different narratives of dislocation, whether volunteer or forced, are articulated in the literary works of diasporic writers. The narrative of diaspora is above all a narrative of the 'self' for the very act of migration implies a 'bodily' lifting out of the familiar and relocation in the new and the unfamiliar. These writers exhibited in their works experiences of unsettlement and dislocation at political, existential or metaphorical level. The writers of Indian diaspora too, confronted with disconcerting problems of displacement, dislocation and disjunction. The contemporary diaspora of Indian authors consisted of men as well as women writers. They write from almost anywhere in the world; from all parts

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of Asia, from Africa, Australia, Canada, Europe, and USA. In recent times women writers of Indian diaspora have created a profound impact on the horizons of literary arena. Writers like Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Meena Alexander and Jhumpa Lahiri focus on the immigrant experience from a woman's perspective. As per the United Nations (UN) study 3 percent of the world's population today is an international migrant and more than half of all these international migrants are women. Women move from village to town, from one country to another for a variety of reasons. Sometimes they go on their own to earn more, sometimes they are forced to move because of war, famine, poverty or political persecution. Their move may be forceful or voluntarily, is not easy one. They expose themselves to new form of violence and exploitation.

As a writer rejecting her hyphenation, Bharati Mukherjee needs no introduction. Perhaps she is the only writer who features in anthologies of Asian American literature, Canadian multicultural literature, Indian woman writers in English, postcolonial literature, writers of the Indian Diaspora, and in mainstream American writing. She is aptly being called as "the foremost chronicler of the multicultural New America." Bharati Mukherjee's novels are about voluntary immigrants, economic refugees, war refugees and repatriates. She discusses the condition of Asian immigrants in North America, with attention to the changes taking place in South Asian women in a new world. Her narratives are filled with the diasporic dislocation resulted into broken identities, alienation, feelings of loss, nostalgia and cultural hybridity. Some of her characters float free; some feel sadly deracinated; and some need to and choose to, re-root themselves in an adoptive homeland; the repatriates belong equally comfortably in both their adoptive and their inherited homelands. The present paper is an exploration of Bharati Mukherjee's selected novels in the perspective of dislocation, migration, exile and movement of people from their homeland to the alien land. This dislocation occurs due to various reasons like war condition, job seeking, education, marriage etc. Mukherjee describes the displacement of people from their homeland or place to other land either by choice or out of compulsion. The pain of displacement of and from their motherland is undergone by most of her female protagonist. As a diasporic writer, Mukherjee, herself has moved from one geographical and cultural space to another, from India to the American continent (first Canada, then the U.S.A.), her writings speak of the inevitable changes involved in such transition. In her writing, she pens the experiences of those people who immigrated in foreign lands, tried to root and adapt themselves in the alien environment.

Migration is the recurrent motif in Bharati Mukherjee's fiction. Highlighting the characteristics of her writing, Fakrul Alam notes that Mukherjee's work focuses

on the “phenomena of migration, the status of new immigrants, and the feeling of alienation often experienced by expatriates” as well as on Indian immigrant women and their struggle. Alam further argues that Mukherjee’s literary journey from “expatriate” to “immigrant” reflects the changes in her own self- When comparing her autobiography to her literature we notice that there are parallels between her real-life stories and the fictional stories. Her own struggle with identity, first as an exile from India, then as an Indian expatriate in Canada, and finally as an immigrant in the United States has led to her current contentment of being as an immigrant in a country of immigrants. In her fictional works, one discovers portrait of herself and alternate selves. Her protagonists undergo the pain of displacement when they are placed in an environment of ambivalence. Mukherjee’s first novel *The Tiger’s Daughter* (1971) is a story of a Bengali young woman who returns to her native Calcutta after having lived and married in the United States. The protagonist Tara Banerjee Cartwright makes a trip home to India after seven years to soothe her ruffled feathers but becomes painfully aware that her memories of a genteel Brahmin lifestyle are usurped by her westernization. She views the India of her childhood through new and disappointed eyes and realizes she has become an exile. She feels a kind of displacement as soon as she arrives at Bombay. When her car drive past Bombay’s Marin Drive, she notices the street to be “run-down and crowded,” however, seven years back she had not only “admired” the place but also called it “fashionable” (p.18). The longing for “home” predominated her earlier days in New York but she cannot stop musing in Calcutta on “the foreignness of spirit” she is going through in the city of her birth (p.37). She discovers she is more an outsider than a native, having an objective concern with the complex and confusing web of politics, privilege and the hierarchies of power and class in India. The novel is divided into four parts: one, looking at Tara’s family and her emigration to the USA, two, her arrival in Bombay and then to Calcutta, three, her stay in Calcutta and four, trip to Darjeeling and the tragic end. Unfortunately, though a strong Indian presence is felt, Tara finally decides to close her Indian ties and leave the place called home.

Tara, still locked in a car across the street from the Catelli-Continental, wondered whether she would ever get out of Calcutta, and if she did not, whether David would ever know that she loved him fiercely (p. 210).

This novel is loosely based on the novelist’s own journey to USA. Though Mukherjee denies that the novel is autobiographical, the external similarities between protagonist Tara Banerjee Cartwright and Bharati Mukherjee Blaise show that she based much of the book on her own experiences. Unlike Mukherjee’s memories of tuning out the squalor of Calcutta while riding as a teenager to and from school in a caravan of bodyguards, Tara cannot ignore the violent mob pressing against her car as

the novel ends. The city and culture in dissolution are emblematic of the narrator's psyche upheaval, and the novel ultimately paints a portrait of a young woman painfully realizing that she is an expatriate who cannot go home again.

Dislocation becomes painful when loneliness sets in. In her tightly crafted novel, *Wife* (1975), Mukherjee continues her treatment of dislocation through the story of Dimple who suffers the trauma of loneliness in a foreign place. In this novel Mukherjee deals with the problems of assimilation and acculturation that the Indians face when they are put into alien land. The novel not only sheds light on physical dislocation of Dimple after her marriage but also explores the psychological anguish of the protagonist who is unable to cope with the unsettlement leading her to kill her husband in the end. The novel opens with Dimple's wishful thinking about marriage. Her husband, Amit, an ambitious young man, who is selected by her parents, fails to feed her fancy. Dimple cannot see any joy in her married home in Calcutta and longs to go to U.S. Once in the U.S. fresh troubles start for her. In New York, they live in a series of apartments. They attend parties where Dimple listens to gossip regarding the relative merits of India and America and about the horrors and violence of New York. Faced with an incomprehensible culture and intense loneliness, Dimple loses even the small degree of confidence and sense of self she had in Calcutta. She loses sanity when faced with a culture she doesn't comprehend and refuses to make room for her. Uprooted from her family and familiar world she begins to live in the virtual world of media. Dislocated from her homeland and unable to absorb in a new land, Dimple suffers from a terrible angst. The novel shows how cultural shock and dislocation cause the forming of new identities but with a heavy price. Dimple's nervous breakdown prompting her to kill her husband is affected by displacement. The expatriate like Dimple views America as a magic pot of wish fulfilment. Bharati Mukherjee often contends that the immigrants have fascinating stories to recount. Particularly those who have moved from the third world countries like India must encounter and absorb the 200-year-old history of America. Being uprooted from their home culture and trying to adapt to the new culture takes massive time and energy and during this struggle, the immigrant learns to adjust, to adopt and assimilate which by itself is an experience. Dimple loses her sense of balance and sense of reality when she could not adjust in the new land. Set in the 1970s, the novel depicts the wilful migration of highly educated Indians who flock to the USA for economic reasons, to work and raise money to ensure themselves a comfortable lifestyle after they return to India. However, the lure of comforts proved costly for the people like Dimple.

Although painful, the process of dislocation transmigrates the migrant. The condition of being at the borderlands offers opportunities for improving one's life. Indeed, mobility is essentially a search for better economic, working, and living

conditions; a search for food, love, and shelter; in other words, a search for happiness. If the heroin in *Wife* fails to cope with the transformation brought about by exposure to American land and culture the heroin in *Jasmine* reincarnates herself in multiple identities. Mukherjee has stated her belief that: "Instead of seeing my Indianness as a fragile identity to be preserved against obliteration I see it now as a set of fluid identities to be celebrated." She also knows the human cost of such transformation: "We murder who we were so we can rebirth ourselves in the images of dreams." It is in this sense of the existence of alternative realities, of life as a continual emigration from one self to another, which pervades *Jasmine*, in which the heroin Jyoti (Light), born in a mudhut in Hasnapur, becomes successively Jasmine (renamed by a progressive husband), a split-tongued Kali (murdering her American rapist), Jazzy (an 'undocumented' in Florida), Jyoti again (taking refuge in an enclave of Punjabi-speaking Jats in Flushing), Jase (as the 'day mummy' to the child of liberal Manhattan yuppies), and finally Jane (as the mistress of Bud Ripplemeyer, an Iowan banker). The novel is a story of dislocation and relocation as the title character continually sheds lives to move into other roles, moving further westward while constantly fleeing pieces of her past. In it, Mukherjee rejoices in the idea of assimilation and makes it clear that Jasmine needs to travel to America to make something significant of her life, because in the third world she faced only despair and loss.

Diaspora people suffer from the problem of identity. They are the people who do not feel comfortable with their non-hyphenated identities as indicated on their passport. They would want to explore the meaning of the hyphen, but perhaps not press the hyphen too far for fear that this would lead to massive communal schizophrenia. They are precariously lodged within an episteme of real or imagined displacements, self-imposed sense of exile; they are haunted by spectres, by ghosts arising from within that encourage irredentist or separatist movements. In *Desirable Daughters*, Tara Chatterjee, the protagonist was comfortable with her hyphenated identity. "We are Bengali Brahmins from Calcutta," Chatterjee proclaims, "and nothing can touch us. Even though she is now a "modern" woman, a divorcée, living in San Francisco with her son, Rabi, and her Hungarian carpenter boyfriend, Andy, she operates with a conviction that goes beyond these simple details of her life. But Tara's complacency with her life shattered with the arrival of her illegitimate nephew Chris Day. His disclosure to be her nephew ruffles her feathers. She is faced with the problem of identity. "I can't deliver bad news," she says. "I can't make ultimatums. I can only.... What? Soothe. Oldest daughters ruffle feathers, cut loose, have adventures, middle and youngest daughters make compromises, settle them down." She sets on to fathom the sea of secrets of her family. And of course, the family has an abundance of secrets: illegitimate children, divorce, homosexuality- no one is the

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person he or she claims to be, but everyone struggles to pretend. Bharati Mukherjee in her interview states that: "The tragedy for the family in the novel, is that continual and aggressive refusal to acknowledge that anything is wrong, that any transgression was committed and that there are material consequences to that transgression." Tara realises this cultural dislocation in the end. "This is my heritage in ways that I never understood, never cared about, and I have to make sense of it and put it down in writing."

To conclude, a close study of Bharati Mukherjee's novels reveals that immigrant experience of the Indian woman is fundamentally different from the Indian man's experience in a foreign place. She writes about the people who are tossed in and out from their homeland; who are torn in between and who are deforming their pasts and reforming their identities. Her protagonists undergo the pain of displacement when they are placed in an environment of ambivalence. Her own experiences of leaving India to Iowa for Writers Workshop; marrying to fellow student Clark Blaise; her migration to Canada with Clark and finally her decision to settle in US, first as an expatriate and then as an immigrant are all reflected in her fictional works. Like her the female protagonists in her novel evolve with the process of dislocation. And it is this idea of transformation, of life being a process of almost constant and radical evolution, has been one of the major themes of her work.

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**Trauma and Dissociation in Mary Higgins Clark's *All Around the Town***

Dr. H. B. Patil\*

**Abstract:**

The present paper explores the dissociation of Laurie in the novel *All Around the Town*. Splitting or dissociation takes place because of traumatic event. Being powerless to do anything or stop a traumatic event may lead people to disconnect from the situation to cope with feelings of helplessness, fear or pain. But frequent dissociation creates problems to the people at an individual and social level. The paper is in fact a fine blending of the knowledge of psychology and the literary genre Psychological Novel. This kind of novel reveals the psychological realities that foreground the social behaviour of the characters. The causes of mental disorders are generally complex and vary depending on the particular disorder and the individual. The present paper is an attempt to analyse the depiction of dissociation and its reasons provided in the novel. The analysis of the novel will help to draw certain features of the Psychological Novel, which can be generalized in the literary criticism.

**Key Words:** *Psychology, Split, Dissociation, Disorder, etc.*

Psychological Novel is a significant sub-genre of the Popular Literature. The postmodern literary scenario is marked with the depiction of the psychological disorders created out of the contemporary life. Tremendous changes in the ideologies, adverse effects of materialism, decline of humanism in the wake of capitalism, emotional insecurity in automatization of machine age and the most importantly distorting human values create many social, cultural and psychological problems. In the age of communication technology, the virtual connectivity has connected every individual with the world but still the modern man is facing the problems of alienation. If one reviews the reports on the psychological health of the world, one can note the increase in the psychological disorders. World Health Organisation (WHO) published *Mental Health: New Understanding New Hope* at Geneva in 2001 which reveals the shocking fact that "Mental disorder affects one in four people". The report analyses the reasons that create the mental and psychological disorders in the society. It also emphasises the importance of the mental health, in the following words. "For all individuals mental, physical and social health are vital strands of life that are closely interwoven and deeply interdependent. As understanding of this relationship grows, it becomes ever more apparent that mental health is crucial to the overall wellbeing of individuals, societies and countries. (3) Therefore, these facts become a

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central topic of discussion amongst the Psychologists, Sociologists, Economists, film producers and creative writers.

Psychology is an academic and applied discipline which does the scientific study of mental functions and behaviours. Psychological disorder is a mental or behavioural pattern which causes an impaired ability to function in ordinary life. It is defined as, “a clinically significant behavioural or psychological syndrome or psychological pattern that occurs in an individual.” Psychologists attempt to understand the role of mental functions in individual and social behaviour. The Austrian physician Sigmund Freud developed psychoanalysis which comprised a method of investigating the mind and interpreting experience; a systematized set of theories about human behaviour. Behaviourism became the dominant school of thought during the 1950s. It emphasized the ways in which people might be predisposed or conditioned by their environment to behave in certain ways. The causes of psychological disorders are generally complex and vary depending on the particular disorder and the individual. There are number of theories seeking to explain the causes of psychological disorders. The research of the initial stage emphasizes on biological and genetic factors. Then it was discovered that psychological disorders are caused by problematic relationships between children and their parents.

Dissociative Identity Disorder is a psychological disorder which makes the affected person to violate the laws. This order was formerly called multiple personality disorder and is often colloquially referred to as split personality disorder. It is a mental disorder characterized by at least two distinct and relatively enduring identities or dissociated personality states that alternately control a person's behaviour and is accompanied by memory impairment for important information not explained by ordinary forgetfulness. Severe trauma during early childhood is responsible for dissociative identity disorder. In this regard, Thomas F. Oltmanns and Robert E. Emery in their book *Abnormal Psychology* say that:

Dissociative and somatoform disorders involve unconscious processes by definition. Memories become inaccessible in dissociative disorder; Psychological distress is converted into physical symptoms in Somatoform disorders. These transformations occur without intention and often without awareness, an indication that the mind possesses different levels of consciousness. (274)

Laurie Kenyon, twenty-one years old student, is accused for murder of English Professor. Due to her psychological and physical abnormal behaviour, she is suspected. In fact, she is affected by dissociative identity disorder due to physical,

mental and sexual torture. Esther Giller, well-known psychologist, provides the reason of dissociative identity disorder. He says:

The vast majority of individuals who develop dissociative identity disorder have documented histories of repetitive, overwhelming and often life-threatening trauma at a sensitive developmental stage of childhood, and they may possess an inherited biological predisposition for dissociation. ...the most frequent precursor to dissociative identity disorder is extreme physical, emotional and sexual abuse in childhood, but survivors of other kinds of trauma in childhood (such as natural disasters, invasive medical procedures, war and torture) have also reacted by developing DID. (176)

Laurie, the central character, was kidnapped at the age of four years and tortured by the couple, Bic and Opal who were victim of antisocial personality disorder. She is abused physically and mentally by the couple. There are no direct references of sexually abuse in the novel, but the person affected by antisocial personality disorders generally exploit sexually. She becomes physically and mentally weak. Due to her plight and fear of legal action, she is released after two years. But the inhuman treatment, which she received in two years, makes her psychological disturbed forever. The way of torture narrated by the author Higgins Clark is like this:

He slapped her (Laurie) so hard she fell backwards, and then as she scrambled to her feet, held lifted his arm and swung it in an arc, cutting that chicken's head off in one blow...

Then Bic had held up the head of the dead creature and pointed the knife at Laurie's throat, chopping the air with it, his eyes fearsome and glittering. In a terrible voice, held sworn that that's what happens to her if she ever talked about them. (151)

Due to the extreme harassment, anxiety, stress, low self esteem and depression were permanently associated with Laurie. When the couple went out, they locked her in a basement, where her leg was tied to the pipe like animal. Her lonely life is full of sufferings and traumatic. She is powerless and helpless and was unable to stop or rebel the exploitation. The continuous process of abuse keeps her in mental stress, which unconsciously develops the habit of dissociation.

Fortunately, after two years, she starts living with her parents, but was unable to live fearless life. Laurie becomes panic and abnormal in the house due to the appearance of particular object, smell or situation, which gives her the sense of traumatic past. For example, knife in the kitchen. Parents were taking care of their daughter, but unfortunately, after a few years, her father and mother die in a car

accident. Once again, she is totally collapsed and the incident increases the more grief in her life. Almost, all the psychiatrists agree that the person with dissociative identity disorder is unable to remember everything about the past. This is also right with Laurie. She is unable to remember incidents and events logically of her past life. After releasing from the custody of the couple, Laurie is unable to remember what actually happened to her. She does not remember her house and relatives. She likes to remain alone. According to Barry Braun, the psychologist, dissociation or splitting is the only means to get away from the rigorous state of mind. By the process of dissociation, the split personalities help to cope with the critical circumstances. It also helps to survive. In the same way, Laurie dissociates and tries to cope with her critical situation.

Laurie is dissociated into four alternate personalities – Kate, Leona, Debbie and Lee. Kate, the split personality, is protector alter which tries to manage temper and anger of Laurie. She is confident lady, who avoids the feelings of hurt, fear and shame. She has dominant nature. When Laurie is arrested for the charge of professor's murder, she supports and defence Laurie. She is aware of the psychological disorders of Laurie. Without her, it was impossible to Laurie to survive. Eventually, she convinces the authority that Laurie has not killed the professor Allan Grant. Sigmund Freud in his work *Interpretation of Dreams*, explores that to fulfil wish, one splits into a personality who has the capacity to manage the critical situation. Accordingly, Laurie splits in a personality which is dashing like Sarah. Even though the dissociative identity disorder is a painful experience, here the split personality Kate is helpful.

When Laurie was taking education in the college, she loves Allan Grant, who was Professor of English. But still her confidence level was very low due to fear, so to experience romantic moments in her depressed life, she consciously creates alter personality of Leona, who always writes love letters to the professor. One-night Laurie, in the control of her alter personality Leona, goes to the house of Allan to express love but at the same time Karen Grant, wife of Allan, kills the Professor and disappears. There was always extreme conflict between husband and wife. Leona is frightened to see blood and dead body. Meanwhile the police reach the place and arrest her, who is subsequently saved by the alter personality Kate. Leona is passionate and romantic but makes addition of more problems in the life of Laurie.

When Laurie, in her childhood, was in the custody of the couple, she develops the alter personality of Debbie. Debbie was also four-year-old. She alters at the time of torture every time. This alter personality helps Laurie to survive in critical circumstances. When Laurie's parents were died in a car accident, again to less the pains and suffering, she frequently splits in the personality of Debbie. Lee, nine-year-

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old boy is another split personality who helps to bring all the personality together as one. Sarah, elder sister of Laurie, takes Laurie to the psychiatrist, Dr Justine for treatment. The doctor takes efforts to cure mental disorders of Laurie. Sarah treats her lovingly, which also helps her to come at the normal stage. The end of the novel is happy and optimistic.

Horst and Hart in their article writes, “Although the concept of dissociation had been described earlier, Pierre Janet” was the first psychiatrist to show clearly and systematically how it is the most direct psychological defence against overwhelming traumatic experience. He demonstrated that dissociative phenomena play an important role in widely diversion post-traumatic stress responses. (399)

Kathryn Livingston, the psychiatrist, in her booklet entitled, *Understanding Dissociative Disorder* describes identity alteration as switching. She gives the process about the radical changes occur in the person’s behaviour when he/she switches his/her identity. For example, the character speaks in different voice. In the novel, there are many examples of alteration and with it changes voice, tone and even attitude of Laurie. Laurie’s dissociation is also a psychological deficiency. She has gone through traumatic experience for a long period and hence according to theory of dissociation, Laurie’s dissociation is nothing but defence mechanism in order to divert from the stressful situation. Her dissociation is a psychological strategy by the subconscious mind to manipulate reality in order to defend against feelings of anxiety and traumatic condition; otherwise it was not possible to remain alive.

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**The Search of Historical Truth in Julian Barnes' *Flaubert's Parrot***

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**Abstract:**

Julian Barnes has often been labelled as a post-modernist writer, especially because of his extensive formal experimentation of his third novel, *Flaubert's Parrot*, published in 1984. This novel aroused the discussion whether it should be called a novel at all as to most of the readers it appeared like a collection of essays. The novel suggests emphatically that art cannot fully represent life. It draws attention to the limitations of art and reminds the reader that what he is reading is fiction which is intrinsically connected with reality. By remaining truthful to Flaubert and employing new narrative forms and techniques, Barnes has tried to write Gustave Flaubert's biography in *Flaubert's Parrot*. Julian Barnes' love for the continent and for France in particular is well known. Because of his fascination for Flaubert, he has written numerous essays and reviews on him. He wanted to write Flaubert's biography but not in traditional way. Using various metafictional techniques, Barnes has written *Flaubert's Parrot*, based on Flaubert's life. He has experimented it with the interplay of life and fiction and composed a novel unique in itself.

**Keywords:** *Biography, past history, parrot, Flaubert, author – worship.*

Julian Barnes has often been labelled as a post-modernist writer, especially because of his extensive formal experimentation of his third novel, *Flaubert's Parrot*, published in 1984. This novel aroused the discussion whether it should be called a novel at all as to most of the readers it appeared like a collection of essays. The novel suggests emphatically that art cannot fully represent life. It draws attention to the limitations of art and reminds the reader that what he is reading is fiction which is intrinsically connected with reality. By remaining truthful to Flaubert and employing new narrative forms and techniques, Barnes has tried to write Gustave Flaubert's biography in *Flaubert's Parrot*.

Gustave Flaubert was a French novelist. He has been considered as the leading exponent of realism and formalism in his works. His main aim in art was to create beauty which often surpassed moral and social issues in his depiction of truth. He was a perfect stylist and his every book was distinct from his other book. He is

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best known for his masterpiece *Madame Bovary* (1857) which is realistic portrayal of bourgeois life. The novel was led to a trial and charges of the novel's alleged immorality.

In *Flaubert's Parrot*, Barnes is preoccupied with the question: How do we seize the past? This question can be applied to individual as well as to mass psychology and the answer varies according to the mindset of the concerned nation and culture. In case of national history, evidences play great role to understand the past of that nation. However, to seize the past of individual personalities is a very difficult task. To understand any person fully is a difficult task as there can be layers of a single personality. The whole person cannot be understood. And the quest becomes more difficult here as Geoffrey Braithwaite wants to understand Flaubert by finding the 'true' parrot. To reconstruct the life of a dead writer who lived hundred years ago is a difficult challenge. Braithwaite is aware of that. Further, he himself is crisis of his past, his private life and his wife.

Julian Barnes' love for the continent and for France in particular is well known. Because of his fascination for Flaubert, he has written numerous essays and reviews on him. He wanted to write Flaubert's biography but not in traditional way. Using various metafictional techniques, Barnes has written *Flaubert's Parrot*, based on Flaubert's life. He has experimented it with the interplay of life and fiction and composed a novel unique in itself.

In this novel, instead of plain narration and unified plot, there are fifteen chapters. The first one named 'Flaubert's Parrot' and the last one named 'And the Parrot...' are directly related to Geoffrey Braithwaite's search for the 'true' parrot which Gustave Flaubert used while writing the story 'Un Coeur Simple'. Out of thirteen remaining chapters, one chapter is a bestiary, one is Flaubert's Apocrypha, one is called 'The Train-Spotter's Guide to Flaubert' while one is 'Examination Paper'. Most of the chapters are concerned with Flaubert's early life, love life and literary criticism. As Higdon says, "*Flaubert's Parrot* deftly deconstructs itself into various types of competing documents: the chronology, biography, autobiography, bestiary, philosophical dialogue, critical essay, manifesto, "train-spotter's guide," appendix, dictionary, "pure story" and even examination paper." (Higdon180)

The search for parrots starts with two parrots and ends in multiplicity. Seemingly, Braithwaite does not find the genuine parrot but it is possible that one of the parrots he encountered was the authentic one. However, it is beyond our knowledge to identify one. Still, Braithwaite constructs his own probable story.



The novel begins with the description of Flaubert's statue with which Braithwaite begins the whole project. He observes the ruined statue of Flaubert and thinks to himself:

Why does writing make us chase the writer? Why can't we leave well alone? Why aren't the books enough? Flaubert wanted them to be: few writers believed more in the objectivity of the written text and the significance of the writer's of the writer's personality; yet still we disobediently pursue, the image, the face, the signature.... Don't we believe the words enough? (Barnes12)

Braithwaite, here, observes the general tendency. People wish to remember their beloved writers by preserving the house they used, the things they used, by worshipping their photographs or by erecting their statues. Actually, very few people realize that a writer can best be remembered by reading his books. But as Braithwaite says, words are not enough for us. He further gives example of the famous author, R.L. Stevenson-after whose death, his business-minded nanny quietly began selling hair which she claimed to have cut from the writer's head forty years earlier. Buying this hair, people made fool of themselves. They tried to remember Stevenson through it. Sartre also tried to enclose the philosophy of Flaubert in one of his books, though unsuccessfully, as he could not complete this book. In his quest to understand Flaubert, the protagonist of *Flaubert's Parrot*, Geoffrey Braithwaite, attempts to identify the particular green stuffed Amazonian parrot which Flaubert borrowed as model while writing the story 'Un Coeur Simple'.

When Braithwaite visits a museum in Rouen, he finds there a parrot with a description saying that Flaubert had been lent the bird by the city's museum and had kept it on his desk for three weeks while writing the story. It is a story of a simple, sacrificial Norman domestic maid, Felicite, who devotes her life to serve a largely ungrateful family, to her nephew and to an old man with disease. All of them casually depart from her as they forget her or die. When Loulou, her pet parrot, also dies, she gets him stuffed. She regards him as the incarnation of the Holy Ghost, conventionally represented as a dove. At the end of the story, she herself dies. "...she thought she saw, as the heavens opened for her, a gigantic parrot hovering overhead." (17) Loulou, the parrot, becomes the symbol of salvation for her.

A few weeks later, in Croisset, the village where Flaubert lived most of his life, Braithwaite discovers another parrot, stuffed and green. He gets confused and the question of authentic model for Felicite's Loulou arises in his mind. In this quest, he finds references from Flaubert's life between 1853 and 1876. He refers the autobiography of David Hackney, who has cited this story. After Braithwaite comes home, the duplicate parrots continue to flutter in his mind. He writes letters to various

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academies who might know if either of the parrots had been authenticated. He also writes to Mr. Hockney, the author of the Michelin guide books and the French Embassy. He believes that he will get reply soon.

After the discussion of Braithwaite's main concern in the first chapter, Barnes talks about Flaubert's early life, love life and literary career from second to the fourteenth chapter by using distinctive techniques. For example, he offers three alternate chronologies of Flaubert's life; one positive, second negative and the third that comprises of quotations taken from his works and letters. This is a completely new way to handle biographical details of any person. Which one of them is 100% true? Here, Barnes wants to emphasize the fact that nobody knows what really happened in the past.

The last chapter 'And the Parrot....' tells how Braithwaite spends two years to solve the case of stuffed parrot. He did not get satisfactory replies from the Museum of Rouen. He made a summer trip to Rouen and visited Hotel Dieu. The authorities of Hotel claimed their parrot to be real one. Then he met M. Lucien, a Flaubert scholar at his house. He informed him that the Museum at Croisset, set up in 1905, decided at that time to have Flaubert's parrot. They went to the Museum of Natural History. There were fifty parrots. They followed the description of Loulou in the story and selected one of them. Forty years later, Hotel Dieu started making the collection. They followed the same procedure. That's why, there are two parrots.

Further, he added that we have to remember two things. Flaubert was an artist. Why should he describe the parrot as it was? Secondly, Flaubert returned the parrot in 1876. Stuffed animals get the moth, change colour and fall apart. So, either of them or neither anyone could be Flaubert's parrot.

Next day, Braithwaite visited Museum of Natural History of the original fifty, only three remained. Braithwaite's search for Flaubert's parrot results not in finding one but in getting three more candidates for the position. Neither of them or anyone can be Flaubert's parrot. We cannot find out the past.

This novel uncovers Barnes' approach to biography and truth, the central issues of *Flaubert's parrot*. Barnes does not believe in the traditional approach to biography which needs documentation, evidences, hypothesis drawn after study and also balancing of contradictory opinions of experts who have studied it. In one of the interviews conducted after the novel's publication, Barnes explained:

I don't think I'm capable of writing a straight biography. There's a tumulous of opinions that gradually grows over a dead writer, and I see no good reason for adding to it. I looked for a way of approaching

Flaubert obliquely – of sinking the shaft in at a different angle.  
(Walsh 20)

The story of a R. L. Stevenson's hair suggests that much of what is found as 'true' about any person's life can be misleading or blatantly true. Barnes begins the novel with this example as he wanted to foreshadow Braithwaite's way to understand Flaubert by finding the 'authentic' parrot. Barnes expands his opinion on author worship and says, you may feel "close" to a writer when you walk round his house and examine a lock of his hair, but the only time you are truly close is when [you] are reading words on the page. This is the only pure act: the rest – from fandom to fest schrift – is dilution, marginality, betrayal – the higher sentimentality. Biography is only sophisticated hair- collecting.

This question clears Barnes' views about biography and author worship. He has ironically made his protagonist of the same type who thinks that by finding the 'true' parrot, he will understand Flaubert. Barnes thinks that in order to understand Flaubert or any other writer, we should read his books. While commenting on the novel, Merritt Moseley says,

.... And the meaning of *Flaubert's Parrot* ramifies further and deeper, becoming a complicated and subtle examination of truth, knowledge, art and love. But all this is obliquely approached through the parrot and related questions about Flaubert's biography. (Moseley 70)

Julian Barnes has created a work of art *Flaubert's Parrot* with a lasting effect.

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**Dreams and Hallucinations in Emma Tennant's *Hotel de Dream***

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**Abstract:**

The present paper analyses Emma Tennant's *Hotel de Dream* in terms of the magic-realist technique of using dreams and hallucinations of the characters and mixing it with the reality. Tennant has deliberately mixed the outer and inner spaces by using the dreams of the characters. The narrator constantly reminds reader that they were reading the dreams of the characters and not the reality. But in true sense these dreams reveal the hidden desires of the characters that rule their social behaviour. The select novel is a complex web of dreams and realities that in combination puts forth certain unsaid and uncensored truths and tore off the masks to show the suppressed realities of the characters. On many occasions in the novel it becomes very difficult to differentiate between dream with reality. This technique of Magic-Realism makes the readers estranged from the story and pose them on the position of a third person with a critical attitude. This position allows them to grasp the meaning in-between the lines and enjoy it as a literary work instead of a life experience. In the paper, it is also worthwhile to analyse these dreams with the principles laid down in Psychoanalysis. The paper begins with a short introduction to Magic realism and continued with the analysis of the novel in the context of dreams and hallucinations.

**Key Words:** Magic Realism, Dreams, Hallucinations and Psychoanalysis, etc.

Magic Realism is a significant genre of the contemporary postmodern literature that attempts to mix the real world with the magical world. The authors use this genre to destabilize the established notion of truth, mainstream history and the proclaimed political propaganda. The authors use several techniques to achieve this literary motif of mixing reality with magic. They use fantasy, dream, hallucination to reveal the hidden desires of the characters that most of the time rule the outer world. Two dictionary definitions of Magic Realism will reveal us the significant characteristics of the genre. According to *Oxford Companion to English Literature*,

Magic realist novels and stories have, typically, a strong narrative drive, in which the recognizably realistic merges with the unexpected and the inexplicable and in which elements of dreams, fairy story, or mythology combine with the everyday, often in a mosaic or kaleidoscopic pattern of refraction and recurrence. (422)

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The definition reflects that the readers were allowed to resemble the literary text with the socio-political reality but at the same time it is blurred by the author by mixing it with the magic elements. The similar line of thought can be traced in *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*'s definition which highlights on its use of dreams, myths and fairy:

Magic realism— [is characterized by] the mingling and juxtaposition of the realistic and the fantastic, bizarre and skilful time shifts, convoluted and even labyrinthine narratives and plots, miscellaneous use of dreams, myths and fairy stories, expressionistic and even surrealistic description, arcane erudition, the elements of surprise or abrupt shock, the horrific and the inexplicable. (488)

Thus, these two definitions divulge that it is literary genre that juxtaposes reality and magic and creates a literary space that contains the multiple versions of truth. In the present paper an attempt is made to analyse Emma Tennant's *Hotel de Dream* in terms of its use of Dreams and Hallucinations in order to mix the outer and inner realities.

Emma Tennant's *Hotel de Dream* (1976) is a magic realist novel, which explores the nature of illusions and reality. The story revolves around hotel inhabitants, whose dreams control their actual lives. Further, complications arise when the dreams of the characters intertwine with each other and it reaches at its peak, where two fantastic characters gradually develop into the actual human being. The magic-realist style of narration obscures the distinction between the reality and dream. The transaction between the reality and the magic frequently, evokes the ominous Gothic atmosphere, in which, author utilizes the elements of satire, allegory, and parody, to reveal the contemporary social conditions.

The magic elements of the novel enable author to explore the psychological motivations of the characters. The novel prominently uses the features of Magic realism like, supernaturalism, authorial reticence, irony regarding author's perspective, inexplicableness of the text, oral tradition, story within a story, exaggeration, history, meta-fiction hybridity, carnivalesque, metaphorical use of language, magical and realist time element, detailed description, and bond between Science and Magic. Besides these prominent features of Magic realism, the novel also utilizes several other magic realist techniques in its structure, setting, and plot.

Magic realist authors use dreams, illusions, and flights of the fantasy to explore the personal as well as social realities. These dreams help the author to explore the suppressed desires of the characters and to encompass the contemporary socio-political issues. Through the dreams of the characters, author explores the facts

of the inner conflicts and the social environment. *Hotel de Dream* represents a dreamy space, where anything can happen by abandoning the laws of probabilities. The novel is actually a series of a free-floating imagery, and so whatever happens in the novel is beyond the reason and logic. The third person omniscient narrator of the novel switches between the dreamy world of the characters and their actual lives presented in the novel. But on many occasions, both the exact contradictory phenomena- dream and real- melt into each other and create a 'fantastic reality'. This magic realist feature is rightly described by Isabel Allende:

. . . magic realism is a literary device or a way of seeing in which there is space for the invisible forces that move the world: dreams, legends, myths, emotion, passion, history. All these forces find a place in the absurd, unexplainable aspects of magic realism. It is the capacity to see and to write about all the dimensions of reality. (54)

As a magic realist author, Tennant uses the invisible force of dream to explore the past and present of the characters, along with their secret desires and passions. The title of the novel stands for a dreamy world, in which, the characters reveal their secret desires and passions. Each character is introduced in the novel as they are dreaming in their sleeps, for instance, "MR POYNTER DREAMED he was in his City" (7), "In Room 22, Jeanette Scranton dreamed she was on the edge of a vast beach . . ." (16), "MISS BRIGGS DREAMED she was at the Royal Garden Party. . ." (22). Thus, whenever a new character is introduced in the novel, it starts narrating his/her dream. In the traditional sense, the narratives depict the events, which actually occur in the lives of the characters. However, in the magic realist fiction, the plot is revealed through the dreams of the characters. Therefore, what actually happens in the realistic plot of the novel is that, these characters go to sleep in order to see their dreams. But, the dreamy and unrealistic plot of the novel, which in fact occupies more narrative space in the novel, reveals the psychological and social dimensions of their personalities. By using this device, Tennant obscures the boundary between the reality and dream, and this confusion reaches at its peak when these dreams start shaping the actual lives of the characters. These dreams can be interpreted as a part of their wish fulfilment or can be seen as their attempt to escape from the adverse reality of the world.

The novel starts with Mr. Poynter's dream, in which he sees that he is in his city where, the atmosphere is pleasant and healthy. In it, he decides to meet his wife and daughter, and so visits to his residence where, his wife tells him a supernatural experience in which a gigantic woman enters in the house through window. As he enters in the house, the evidence of this supernatural incidence is still apparent in the form of sand on the floor, but it is not clear whether it happens or not as he reacts to it



normally. On the whole, the irony is that, this event is a dream within a dream, and therefore, thrice removed from the reality. This dream of Mr. Poynter is interrupted by Mrs. Routledge.

The next part of the novel begins with the dream of Jeannette Scranton. The author in a very economic style reveals many facts of her life. For example,

In room 22, Jeannette Scranton dreamed she was on the edge of a vast beach. She was naked, and carried the big brown carpet-bag she took with her wherever she went – to staff-room meetings, downstairs to tea at the Westringham even – and she could tell from its weight that it contained its usual load of unmarked exercise books, exotic make-up that was seldom used, and the bundles of letters from the lecturer in linguistics who had once said that he was going to marry her (16).

This extract reveals many facts about her hidden desires and psychological motivations. Her nakedness can be interpreted in the light of Freudian psychology. According to which, nakedness in the dream is a symptom of a sex starvation. The description of bag reflects her routine life, and the bundle of letters tells about her secret love affair. Her physical appearance can be resembled with Mrs. Poynter's hallucinatory image of an enormous naked woman. This overlapping of one dream with another maintains a narrative thread which defines these patches as a novel.

The third dream of Miss Briggs reveals that she is in the Royal Garden Party. In it, she sees that Queen praises her as, "A woman who is a true member of the human race. A woman understands the pitfalls and evasions of life and has strived to overcome them. For this we have decorated her" (23). Furthermore, she offers her the crown of kingdom and declares that she has decided to go to live at Connecticut in Australia. She tells that she has chosen this village because, it is situated under the foot of the nuclear power station, and if in future, a nuclear annihilation appears she would be the first to face it. Further in her dream, she imagines the disastrous effects of the nuclear bomb on the physical surroundings.

Each picture had undergone an unmistakable change. Some had suffered crude alterations, others—and this was more ghastly—showed only subtle traces of the subject which . . . The kings and dukes of the past, still astride their proud mounts, were in the most part faceless . . . long aristocratic noses deformed by radioactivity and tapering fingers bunched into crude, . . . Black, destroying clouds raged over grey skies. Transformed by nuclear gases, quiet Sussex parklands stood defoliated and bare, dead and dying deer grouped about the edge of a metallic lake. (27-28)

This vision of holocaust reveals how severely the contemporary society is under the threat of nuclear annihilation. Though, this is a dream, the effects depicted due to the nuclear bomb are real. Thus, her dream reveals her personal attraction for the political power and on the other hand, the contemporary fear of the nuclear holocaust.

These dreams are interrupted by Mrs. Routledge, the caretaker of the hotel for the breakfast. But, soon after the tea they again return to their previous dreamy world, where they can play out their illusions. Another important point is that, these dreams are not the original dreams, but they are deliberately created by the author to reveal the personal and the social issues. The novel allows reader to have a glimpse in a nostalgic longing of the characters and an imaginary return to the world that is past. The plot of the novel is just like a pendulum, which moves between the reality and illusion and explores their actual life; they are leading in the real world.

Besides the dreamy and illusionary world, other characteristics of the magic realist writing can be observed in the novel. Realistic representation of the fantasies is one of them, in which the fantasies and illusions are written as if they are real. It is generally observed that the dreams are not logical or many times they reflect the irrational events and situations. In this dreamy world, the social and cultural banalities are unbuttoned, and in the absence of these restrictions, the suppressed desires are freed and fulfilled by any means. Nevertheless, the dreams reflected in the novel are coherent and logical. They are capable to explore the personal desires along with the contemporary social issues. For instance, if one skips the first lines of each section, which is deliberately written in the upper case, instead of dream, the text of the novel will become a reality. Thus, what are revealed in the novel are absolutely the dreams of the characters, but their logical coherence creates a simulated image of the real world. For instance, Mr. Poynter's dream starts with his routine preparation for the day: "He stepped smartly into black trousers with a thin red piping, a jacket with gold epaulettes and five rows of medals and pulled on a helmet from which a scarlet ostrich plume nodded and pranced as he made his way over to the public window" (7). This is not about something odd or something abnormal, but, it reflects the routines of the characters. Such kind of reflection is one of the prominent features of the realistic fiction. The description of his residence is also realistic and author made it more realistic by using the similes.

Jeannette Scranton's dream is also revealed in a realistic manner and in this case too, if the reader unfortunately misses the first line of her section, he would think that what is revealed is a reality. This interweaving of the dream and reality is sustained throughout the novel. At one point, it seems that it is a dream and on the other, it is a reality. Thus, the fantasies of sex, social attention, and happy family life

are played out in the dreamy world of the novel, which is one of the major features of the magic realist fiction.

The Magic realist texts are always difficult to understand because they compile the fantastic world with the real world, and it becomes impossible for the readers to understand what is real and what is fantastic. As the imaginative worlds are incompatible, no one can fully come into being, and each remains suspended, and, therefore, in the dreamy world of *Hotel De Dream*, everything is obscure. The text of the novel is in fact the combination of fragmentary views of the dreams, and it becomes more incomprehensible when the dreams are intermingled with each other, without any indications. Or many times the dreams of characters are intermingled with the reality or the illusions of others. For instance, Mrs. Poynter sees an enormous woman through the window, her description of the woman resembles with the image of Scranton, which Scranton had seen in her dream. This is an overlapping of Scranton's dream on the fancy of Mrs. Poynter. Afterwards, in the fifth part, Mrs. Routledge sees the sand on the bare feet of Scranton. This event is inexplicable; if Scranton has visited the beach in her dream how it is possible that Mrs. Routledge sees sand on her feet. The question remains unanswered that whether this event is reality or illusion of Mrs. Routledge because other characters react as if they haven't noticed it.

Besides this overlapping of dreams and hallucinations with each other, another important fact contributes to inexplicability of the text is that the sections of the novel are not properly linked with each other. The sequence of these fragmentary extracts is also illogical, and therefore, the questions like, why the dream of Mr. Poynter appears first? or why the dream of Scranton appears second? or is there any relevance of the dream of Miss. Briggs in the actual plot of the novel? remain unanswered. This ambiguity in the narration creates the confusion in the mind of the reader. The characters are unfamiliar with each other. The only reason that the narration compiles his/her dreams in the novel is their residency in the same hotel, Westringham. Another important fact is that, they belong to different professional backgrounds. For instance, Mr. Poynter is an Army officer, Scranton is a school teacher, and Miss Briggs is a journalist. Moreover, even though their dreams overlap with each other, they are different, and reflect different realities and personal psychological motifs. For instance, Mr. Poynter's dreams reveal his unhappiness with his family and his hidden sex aspirations for Cecilia Houghton; Scranton dreams reveal her sex fantasies and sex starvation as she appears naked in her dreams. Miss Briggs's fantasies include the social and personal problems. The only reality comes across in the novel is that all these characters are residing in the same hotel but all other related questions are deliberately neglected. Why all these characters are

residing in the hotel, Westringham, or what are the motives of these characters, is suspended in the novel, which creates inexplicability in the text.

Another incident occurs in fourth section of the novel, in the case of Cecilia Houghton, where Tennant provides a space to her imaginative characters and exposes their hidden desires for Cecilia Houghton. As a romantic writer, she is writing a love story of Melinda and Johnny. In this episode, she speaks with her fictional characters. The scene is created as if it is a communication between the real characters of the novel. If a reader misses the line that, “Mrs. Routledge had placed the novelist in room 24. . . (30)”, which reveals the fact that she is a fictional author. So, it would be difficult for the readers to comprehend this part of the novel. Thus, the inexplicability of the text is a prominent feature of magic realism, which could be seen in this novel. The end of the novel is also inexplicable and open for the multiple interpretations.

Thus, in the conclusion of the paper it can be argued that the author has used Dreams and hallucinations in order to crack down the traditional method of reading and perceiving a literary text. It deliberately keeps distance with the readers. The narrator of *Hotel de Dream* speaks with readers about the dreaming of the characters, and whenever the narrative seems like reality, he reminds the reader that what he is reading is a dream, not reality. This intrusion of the narrator weaves the fragmented narrative blocks into a well-organized narrative structure.

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**Process of self-discovery in F.G. Paci's *The Italians***

Jayashri M. Lohar\*

**Abstract:**

Canadian literature is enriched with ethnic literature that reflects Canadian diversity. Ethnic minorities speak through their works. Their voices reflect their Canadian experience. F. G. Paci is a remarkable Italian-Canadian novelist whose works project Italian immigrants' voice. *The Italian* is his first novel and presents Italian family in Canadian society. Immigrants or ethnic minorities always face clashes of cultural diversity. They are highly influenced by their respective ethnicity and Canadian culture. The present novel also reveals struggle of Italian family to know their existence, identify and position in their family and in Canadian society.

**Key Words:** self-discovery, canadianess, immigrant, struggle, etc.

Frank G. Paci, the name is one among the others that enriched Canadian literature or more specifically 'Canadian Ethnic Literature'. Today's, Canada is the result of multicultural policy that offers liberal democratic citizenship to all with equality, but if we look back even during 70s and 80s when policy was implemented officially had to stir the attitude of the society that was constituted of mainstream, minority, ethnic minority, immigrants, etc. The members of ethnic minority community felt difficult to be assertive and then the literature worked as a buffer through which ethnic minorities started giving vent to their feelings, emotions and experiences while mainstream society started understanding their responsibility being the dominant culture in the society. Thus, ethnic literature had always been an inseparable part of Canadian literary landscape.

This paper started with the mention of F.G. Paci, and the mentioning is the deliberate one. He, like others, helped to mark an Italian existence in Canadian society, which had been silent till 1970s. Italians are not the recent immigrants to Canada though they remained behind the curtains for a long period. It is through the writings like Frank G. Paci, Nino Ricci, etc. an Italian voice became stronger and made its existence felt to the mainstream and dominant society. F. G. Paci stands important figure when it comes to an Italian-Canadian literature as his contribution helped to create Italian-Canadian Literature phenomenon. He is a winner of many prestigious awards that marks his importance. Thus, this paper discusses how his novel reflects Italian inner voices and struggles in new country with the help of *The Italians*.

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The novel gives wonderful description of how members of Gaetano family discover their existence, roles and identities through a long process of struggle. Every single member of the family is caught in the struggle to know their respective positions and identities in the family and in the new country. Everyone, right from their immigration to Canada struggles to locate their existence as their migration; cultural uprooting and cultural adoption of new country seem to blur their very identity and existence. Thus, their lifelong struggle ends with the revelation that brings them together as a family and as a family they assert themselves strongly in the new country to prove their worth.

Lorianna, the eldest child of the family is an immigrant child who immigrated to Canada with her parents. It is in her childhood she is taken out of Italy and then settled in Canada. Two countries differ in every aspect and thus she, while growing Canadian, goes away from her Italian heritage. Once she is grown, she is married to Lorenzo, who is 'straight off the boat' (5). Lorianna who 'manages' to be a 'Canadian' after a long struggle, all of a sudden made confront 'Italian' heritage through Lorenzo. In her struggle she confides herself to the church and Virgin Mary as her family does not help to ease her struggle. Her father Alberto is always engrossed in work in order to give a better life to his family, her mother Giulia is always inaccessible as she cannot communicate in English, her brothers Aldo and Bill are caught in their own struggle. Thus, she always cherishes a thought of becoming a nun and devotes herself to Virgin Mary instead of struggling dilemmas of Canadian and Italian culture. Whatever the culture is, Virgin Mary remains unchanged and thus represents stability. Obviously, Lorianna's wish of being a nun reflects the need of stability and urge to get rid of struggle that is caused because of different cultures she is caught in. It is with this wish of such stability somehow, she agrees to get married to Lorenzo to shun her parents' fear that she would end in marrying a non-Italian. The marriage that takes place without much thought and expectations brings her to face the struggle that had never ended for her. The marriage is the proof that she cannot run away from it. She has to decide what she is and where she belongs to. It cannot be as simple as she thinks.

For she couldn't help feeling, also, that the old country had had its revenge on her through Lorenzo. Revenge perhaps for having turned her back on it, revenge for having straddled the fence too often, she didn't know. But she had been born in the old country and was, she knew, accountable to it in some way. There was, for one thing, all the shame she had to make up for. (71)

Her marriage with Lorenzo is the proof for her that the old country is seeking revenge. He is the one who wants her to behave like an Italian wife. Lorianna, far



from Italy is not aware of the cultural practices and roles played by Italian wives and thus she finds it difficult to be an Italian wife Lorenzo is expecting of her. He always makes her speak in Italy. He always tells her that it is she in his Italian house and thus has to speak an Italian. She keeps on reminding him of Canadian society in which he is struggling to get settled. She remembers him of indignities caused by Canadian society and thus compels her to speak in Italian instead of English. Lorianne is the one on whom Lorenzo takes all his frustration caused by Canadian society as she always represents Canadian society to him. He wishes to turn her from Canadian to Italian only to prove his potential to himself as he cannot change Canadian society into Italian one. In this way he is the one who perfectly represents Italian heritage to her that she has turned away from.

It is with passing of the time and with patience she gets her strength over Lorenzo. She succeeds to teach him that he is in Canada and he has to acquire the culture and become Canadian. She develops her position in his house as he starts worshipping her and her body. He learns to respect her wishes and feelings. He learns to speak English. It is through such struggle she gains her strength and power as a Canadian wife. She understands though that she still has to return to her heritage sometimes only to maintain the irrevocable ties. She promises to herself that she would make trips to Italy with her children to make them know their origin so they don't have to suffer this struggle.

It is like Lorianne, Aldo is also an immigrant child. He is also confused because of the cultural differences. He finds difficulties to get along with Canadian ways that tend to shake his belief. He always finds it hard to understand the Canadian ways even after twenty years in Canada.

At times the people in the new country are beyond me, Lori. They mock. They desecrate. I simply can't understand them. There seems to be too much taken for granted. There's too much money. Too much leisure. Too much fun. (37)

The differences in culture make his personality more pensive and vulnerable. Canada and its ways always threaten and question his identity and existence. He fails to define his existence in the frame of Canadian society. Right from the childhood he is caught in confusion to know his existence on the backdrop of Canadian society and its values.

... Frail from birth, he had shunned the team sports that served as a melting pot for the Italian and Canadian kids in his neighborhood. He could remember in grade school how he always dreaded being chosen for the organized games; the team captains always picked him last. It had been difficult for him to make friends with the Canadian kids, and

Italian kids taunted him. .... He developed martyred attitude toward the whole neighborhood. He felt himself to be utterly alone and unwanted outside his home and school. Then he found refuge in the church. (61-62)

As a result of the confusion he comes to cherish church which gives him some sense of belongingness. The church symbolizes connecting object in between Canadian and Italian culture and thus he grows interest in it. While growing, he decides to be a priest as if he seems to understand his position. Not only Aldo but his family takes it for granted that his becoming priest in new country will grant them firm existence and Canadian identity. He is considered as jewel in the family. He grows into a priestly personality. Then he leaves home for the seminary and further education. In Toronto, again his beliefs are shaken to the roots. He is taken by the incidents occurring one after one at the seminary that makes him question his faith again. He is shaken because of the incident where a wounded man enters the seminary and spoils the very sanctity of the place. He is shaken by the ways they are educated in the seminary. He, outside Ville, found his dream to become a priest is broken in Toronto. He feels cheated, disappointed and baffled by what he comes across. Church always soothes him while seminary exhibits him the falsehood of human life.

It's such a shocking thing to tell you, I know. But I have to. There are things that I so little understand, not why they happen, but that they have to happen at all. I long sometimes just to find a girl and settle down like you and Lorenzo. I often question the value of it all- to be a priest amidst all this grossness. (36)

Aldo's words to Lorianna clear of his feelings. As he is shaken to his roots, he feels to be a common man instead of becoming a priest. His urge for common life brings him to a relationship with Evlyn. Now it with her instead of church, he finds peace of mind. He grows intimate to her and thus decides to get married and settle down. Decision of marrying Evlyn though is not easy for him as he knows what he has to sacrifice for marrying her. He understands that he will let down his family and everyone in the family will be disappointed beyond reconciliation. But then the father's accident clears him everything. He vows himself to become a priest instead of marrying for his father, for his family and for his ties with ethnicity. He, then more than ever understands what position he holds the family and what role he plays being an elder child of the Italian family. He understands more than ever clearly that he cannot have the life so easily he has been mocking at. He always had stood as a person who carries ethnic heritage on behalf of his kinships. He understands that it is destined that he is the one in the family who has to carry the heritage. He in the new

country finds his new role as a priest and position in the family as an elder that is well defined by his responsibilities that come to him with his well-defined position.

The youngest child of the Gaetano family who is born and brought up in Canada has to struggle more than anyone else in the family to define his position and identity. Being Canadian born he is the one in the family who knows very well that he is a Canadian one more than Italian. He feels to be a stranger in the family of Italians. His ways reflect Canadian ways. He understands Canada and its ways more than anyone else in the family. But he is the one who is always neglected by the family. Family fails to know his identity. But at the end it is Bill instead of Aldo who confirms them Canadian identity. It is Aldo, the first in the family who comes to know that his little brother has proven their worth of immigration. But it is Alberto, who fails to understand Bill's struggle. Alberto always thinks Aldo will be the one who will grant them Canadian identity by becoming a priest and making them feel proud. But it is before Aldo, Bill proves their Canadian identity not only for the family but also for the Italian community in Canada. He makes every Italian feel proud because of his achievement. His success as NHL player does not only register his individual success but it symbolizes success of any Italian immigrant in Canada. But before coming to the front Bill also has to suffer the struggle his family is suffering.

He is the one who right from the beginning wants to prove himself in the eyes of his father, Alberto. Alberto finds him fool as he quit education only to play 'Kid's game'. Bill wants to prove that it is not a 'Kid's game' but a thing that can grant them Canadian identity. Alberto who has toiled a lot in order to provide comfortable life for his family, does not understand Bill's growing popularity as a national player of Canada. Alberto fails to understand that only by playing 'kid's game' this generation is earning a better life they ever had thought of. Thus, Bill's struggle is actually to prove himself right in his father's eyes. Bill knows his Canadian identity and asserts it very strongly, but the same thing takes him away from his family. It is the family he does not understand. He never felt sense of belongingness in the family of Italians and thus he cherishes hockey than anything else in the new country.

Nevertheless, he was determined. For on the ice he achieved a sense of belonging, of being wanted and admired, which he never got at home. He felt somewhat alien in a house filled with Italians. He was more at home on an ice surface. There his rhythm of freedom was unquestionable. (40)

Bill, in his early age itself understands that it is because of the game, people started have noticing him. He started having different treatment. This attention by the people made him think that he was more a Canadian than an Italian. Anyhow being

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born and raised in Canada, he was far from feeling any sort of belongingness with Italian culture. In fact, at a point he thinks that it is may be because to run from the Italianness in the family he was strongly attracted towards the hockey that symbolized Canadianness. But while running away from the Italian culture he did not know that he was brought closer to his community more than Aldo, Lorianna or Alberto for that matter. His success has made him ideal Italian in Canadian society. He understands it when he is invited to Rossini hall, an Italian community owned hall, where all Italians want to honour him. He feels very strange as he never thought that ultimately, he would make Italians feel proud as if he has proved their existence in new country.

He had some second thoughts about the Rossini Society banquet. He felt somewhat guilty about the distinction of being honoured there. His father had been a long-time member but had never been inside except for the occasional wedding. He really had no loyalty toward it and hadn't felt himself connected with it in any way. It seemed he had gained the honour through the back door, as it were.

They should've honoured someone who really deserved it, like Alberto. Not him, for playing "a kid's game". He was no Garibaldi. He felt he had been thrust into a role he was unworthy of inheriting.

But the people who had organized the "night" had told him that all the Italians in Marionville were joyously proud of him. He had made good according to the new country's own rules. That, after all, was what they all wanted for themselves and their children. This had greatly surprised and flattered him. It had seemed an indirect acknowledgment from his father. (193)

Bill right from the beginning was very much sure of what he is and where he belongs to. He always had known that he does not share any cultural heritage as he is a Canadian. But finally, he is realized what he is and where he belongs to. Though he does not understand any tie with his heritage it was always there and it will always be. It became clearer than ever with his success in NHL. While giving a speech in Rossini Hall, he realizes and feels the bond with Italians more than ever.

.... He had never really understood them or the country from which they had come. And he had wanted his father to understand him! But it was because he himself was making a violent break with his roots that they were honouring him now. He realized that he had a stronger bond with them than Aldo. What it was he wasn't quite sure of. But he knew it had to do with his name and what he was doing with it in the new country. (197)

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Like Aldo, Bill also comes to realize his position in the family and his identity as an Italian-Canadian after Alberto's accident at plant. Hockey had become a way to escape Ville and his Italian family but it is for his family he has to return to Ville and his family in order to take care of his father. He willingly joins plant and finds familiarity with it. He accepts working in plant as he knows very well that it was the plant that had giving his father more than he had expected. Further, it is the Ville that makes him feel proud for himself. The neighborhood that he had tried to run away, now regarding him as something important and precious. This is how his struggle comes to the point where being a Canadian national player he comes to face his Italian roots.

It is Alberto and Giulia in the first place who migrated from Italy to Canada for the better life for the family. They are immigrant parents. They are always Italian even after spending years in Canada. Alberto works in a plant happily because he knows that it is providing comfortable life to his family he would never ever have thought of back in Italy. He is aware of the pathetic conditions in Italy and thus he does not have any complaints about Canada though he fails to understand it. He knows that he never can assume that identity, but he expects it from his children and more specifically from Aldo. He does not regard Bill to be a capable of doing so. He always keeps on showing his discontentment towards what Bill is doing. Alberto was able to see that his Canadian son was earning money and popularity by playing 'Kid's game' but that never excelled Bill's position in Alberto's eye. Alberto who took lot of efforts to put his family in comfort was unable to understand how Bill and his generation can have that privilege so easily. On the contrary, he regards Aldo highly as he would be the one in the family who would grant them Canadian identity and prove their worth coming to Canada.

With passing of the time Alberto comes to see that it is the Bill because of whom he sits in the honorary place at Rossini hall. It is Bill, of whose achievement everyone in the neighborhood is proud. Then Aldo, after many upheavals become priest finally. Alberto is made realized that it is Bill who confirms their identity in more assuring way than Aldo. So being father he witnesses two sons struggling for the same thing in their own way where his Italian son loses a confidence in the middle of it and finds himself difficult to find his position. While his Canadian son who always had been ignored confirms his identity.

Giulia, apart from anything else, struggles her own alienation. She is the one in the family who never brings herself to learn English and thus communication is broken with her children. But being a mother, she understands her children and their suffering. Any setback in the family she blames it on Alberto for uprooting them from Italy. She always remains in her core. But her sullen personality always worries

over her children. On the contrary, her children one by one go away from her and become Canadian. Thus, struggle of immigrant parents continues where children try to know their identity.

The family of Gaetano is not efficiently communicative to each other. The cultural differences have made it worse. Children and parent always feel the gap in between them. But it is Alberto's accident that clears all fog and brings the family together. The accident does not only bring back family together but every child in the family understands its role and responsibility towards family. It is Aldo who gets baffled in the middle of priesthood, but accident makes him realize that his being priesthood would mean more than he ever had thought of and thus with clear mind and resolutely moves forward and becomes priest. Lorianna finds her new strength and power as a daughter, sister, wife and a mother in a family. Bill comes to see that he cannot escape his ethnicity as it will always be there when outsiders tend to threaten him of his peace.

In this way, Paci has wonderfully described struggle of the family which finally finds its roots and thus confident more than ever. Finally, everyone in the family knows that they have certain position in the family and the new country that cannot be denied and thus with new gained confidence move forward.

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