



# Literary Vibes

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## **Editorial**

Literary Vibes, A Refereed National Journal in English Studies, is published twice in a year since 2012 with the objective to provide an integrated platform for research in English Literature and English Language Teaching and to deliver free access to the knowledge produced through research.

Most of the articles address the current issues in the field of English Literature thus making it possible to have a full length research on the discussed writers. A few papers touched upon the English Language Teaching.

We hope this issue of the journal will help teaching and research community in their research endeavour. On behalf of the members associated with this journal, we extend our gratitude to all those writers who have shared their creative taste and encouraging advice.



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## **Urge for Self-Discovery in Alice Walker's Works**

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..... Literature is that it embodies the productive energies of the society, the writer does not take the world for granted but recreates it, revealing the true nature as a constructed product. In communicating this sense of productive energy to his readers, the writer awakens in them appetites ....<sup>1</sup>

In struggle is existence; what counts as significant is how one confronts the trials and tribulations of life, and how one prepares for the inevitable. The way one struggles and courts death is more significant than how one lives. This is the message the women intellectuals – Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, and Anita Brookner – try to promulgate. And their contribution in this regard is significant.

Moreover, one has to culture one's self to endure with patience the stresses and strains, the tensions and anxieties, the trials and tribulations, and the plights and predicaments with grace, patience and endurance. At this point it ought to be stressed, that Alice Walker has a great concern for the female life cycles, biological trap, anatomical problems, castration complex and they are based on her high level of mentation and maturation of what it is to be a female. Therefore, she projects the truth that one has to be true to one's self first and foremost.

In fact, if the individual experiences self discovery then that individual could redefine his or her life, in spite of the great odds and challenges he or she has to confront. With self discovery one could transform the life style of others too. Incidentally it ought to be noted that Alice Walker is acutely aware of what it is to be a woman. Therefore she creates the right kind of woman consciousness in her writings. Moreover she rouses the conscience of the perceptive readers

and makes them appreciate the plights and predicaments of women. Thus, she has revolutionized thinking and reshaped and revitalized life for women. In this regard, Alice Walker places the utmost stress on social justice for women.

Alice Walker is conscious of the dreams of most of the women that they will evolve from their suspended state to emerge as women fully empowered to prevail and triumph over circumstances. The strong argument of Alice Walker is that women will no more be treated as mere objects of pleasure but will be properly judged from the strength of their intellectual and moral character. To reach this level, the women need proper higher education and the capacity to indulge in self discovery.

Alice Walker pointedly argues that the women are not mere ciphers. Far from being the squareroot of minus one – less than nothing – the women have been positive dreamers, intellectually prone witnesses, and passionate lovers.

Alice Walker has understood the plights and predicaments and the biological conditions of women better than the male writers. It is precisely because the male writers are incapable of understanding what it is to be a female. Therefore, the male writers are not capable of projecting the right image of women. Many American male intellectuals, such as William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Edward Estlin Cummings, John Barth, James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Saul Bellow, Norman Mailer, Stephen Crane, and Philip Roth, to quote a few, have not introduced female characters with satisfaction.

In fact there are no female protagonists in their writings. It is because they have no knowledge of the physical conditions and mental psyche of the women. Therefore, the male writers do not project the right kind of image of the woman. Neither do they fully represent the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of the women.

Alice Walker in her individualistic and unique manner, explodes the stereotypes introduced by the male chauvinistic writers. Moreover, when one dispassionately examines the female protagonists, such as Meridian and Celie, introduced by Alice Walker, one conclusively appreciates the fact that she has in a balanced manner fused subjectivism with objectivism in her literary products.



The female protagonists created by this mature woman artist serves to negate the wrong images of women introduced by the male writers. Further, there is the definitive tracing of the course of the women from her state of submissiveness, dependent complexes, castration complex, and fear psychosis to a relieved and freed state of assimilation and finally to the desirable position of emergence.

One can detect in the works of Alice Walker of how the male is made to accept the claims and rights of women for equality of educational and socio - politico economic opportunities and a recognized status in society. In this context, Alice Walker recommends to the women that they should emerge with rich education and economic independence and get recognized as the capable, effectual, and essential units in the post - modern civilized and sophisticated society.

It ought to be poignantly stressed that the study of women is a painful history of struggle against biological determinism, denials, deprivations, degradations, exploitation and dehumanization and outrageous assaults on female modesty and honour. There is again the female psychological urges toward a state of submissiveness, and acceptance of the dominance of the male chauvinists.

Alice Walker wants the women to realize their potentialities and also their limitations and endeavour their best to rise wherever they are and strike upward economic mobility and gain recognition. The resources they have in them and in the place where they are to be put to the optimum use is the recommendation of this woman genius. In this connection she finds a world of significance in the observation of Booker T. Washington:

A ship lost at sea for many days suddenly sighted a friendly vessel. From the mast of the unfortunate vessel was seen a signal, "Water, water, we die of thirst!" The answer from the friendly vessel at once came back, "Cast down your bucket where you are". A second time the signal, "Water, Water, send us water!" ran up from the distressed vessel, and was answered, "Cast down our bucket where you are". And a third and fourth signal was answered "Cast down your bucket where you are". The

Captain of the distressed vessel at last heeding the injunction cast down his bucket and it came up full of fresh sparkling water from the mouth of the River!.

To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land or who underestimate the importance or cultivating friendly relations with the White man, I would say, cast down your bucket where you are - ---- cast it down in making friends in every manly way .....<sup>2</sup>

Alice Walker, the creative genius, reposes faith in the basic goodness and rationality of the women. She is confident that the women in a sensible way would slouch off the debilitating influences imposed on them by the male chauvinistic society.

Moreover, with commitment the women should shed their inferiority complex, dependent complex and fear psychosis. They should gain recognition through education, economic independence, and a status in society. Thus, the empowered women would become capable or unselfish devotion to the common good.

Alice Walker witnesses in the empowered women greater and greater commitment to understand self, multiplied in terms of the community, the community multiplied in terms of the nation, and the nation multiplied in terms of the world. This woman fictionist wants every woman to understand what her place as an individual is and the place of the person who is close to her. Every woman has to understand the space between her own self and others, before she can understand more complex or larger groups.

She underscores the importance of self discovery. Barbara Christian defines self-discovery as given below:

Self knowledge is critical .... if women were to develop the inner resources they would need in order to cope with larger social forces....<sup>3</sup>

Further more, between the two ends of the spectrum, namely isolation and emergence, Alice Walker, the gifted artist, wants the women to shed their complex of expensive materialism. On the other hand, they should opt for simple living and high thinking and this mode of living should enable them to redefine and reshape their lives.

Moreover, through their inner strengths they should turn human from being mere mules.

At this juncture it is significant to make a note of the strong recommendation of Alice Walker, that the women must indulge in self discovery. Emancipation and empowerment of the women can be caused only by the women. It depends only on their realizing their potentialities and putting them to optimum use and thereby striking upward economic mobility.

That is precisely why this creative artist argues for the women attaining economic stability and feminine ideals. In this context, the effectual lines of Langston Hughes in his poem, "Madam and the Fortune Teller" is worth recording. Incidentally, Langston Hughes has been the literary mentor and trend setter for many women writers which list includes Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, and Anita Brookner. The relevant lines of Langston Hughes run as shown below.

She said, your fortune honey  
Lies right in yourself  
You ain't gonna find it  
On nobody else's shelf <sup>4</sup>

Moreover, Alice Walker wants the women to be conscious of the twin plus points which are exclusively enjoyed by women only. The first one is that the woman only can carry the universe within herself' and approximate creation by giving new births. And this is a great asset only reserved for the female sex. Secondly, it is only the woman who can initiate a man into right action. If Ophelia had been beside Hamlet throughout, then Hamlet would not have met with the tragic end. And it is universally acknowledged adage that behind the phenomenal success of every man there is always a woman to guide, instruct, educate and initiate him into right action, and in the right direction.

The female protagonists in the works of Alice Walker such as Ruth, Meridian, and Celie, appreciate their mobility without losing their sense of community nor their spiritual center. They move from dire poverty and dehumanization to a more humane way of living. They strike improvement in their lives through education and career undertakings and gain recognition.

All these they achieve only after they indulge in self discovery

and come to realize their inner strengths and the twin plus points open only to the female sex.

Being the center and circumference, the self holds the systems of the personality together and provides it with unity, stability, and equilibrium.

The women suffer and struggle not because of fate but by man-made designs to keep them in a continual state of subjugation. With this end in view the women are denied education and are kept in a state of economic dependence. By keeping them ignorant, poverty stricken, and dependent, the male chauvinists could keep them in a state of subservience and have a tight control over them, and thereby exploit them, and dehumanize them.

Therefore, Alice Walker, advocates to the women that they should not turn into defeatists, and meekly accept their subservient state as that which has been destined by fate for them. The women have to confront the harsh actualities and the role assigned to them by the male chauvinists, and endeavour to rewrite their fate and redefine their lives. Their aim should be to realize their hopes and aspirations and not to allow them to turn into dreams that are deferred.

Alice Walker does not subscribe to the view that it is the fate of the women to be subservient and remain ever inferior. She argues that the women can become the rulers of their destiny by diligently cultivating self confidence and by channelling their reaction and responses in the right direction. In this context, the definition of ‘self’ as presented in A Concise Psychological Dictionary is given below:

[Self is ] the result of man's awareness of himself as a separate object in the environment enabling him to regard himself the subject of his physical and mental states, actions, and processes, and emotionally experience his own integrity and identify with himself in relation to his past present and future.....<sup>5</sup>

Yet again, the human self is multidimensional in character. It is a blend of the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual selves. All these four areas have to be nurtured and developed simultaneously. But often one or the other of these four gets neglected, and thereby the evolution of the human self is incomplete. With such a background one

has to examine the literary products of Alice Walker.

Alice Walker, as stated earlier, recommends that the women should indulge in self discovery. On her part, she persistently endeavours to use the whole range of her voice to express the totality of the self. Through her literary products she creates self affirming protagonists; the protagonists who are able to discover their inherent strengths and divinity.

This awakening enables these characters to emerge from the context of oppression and at least to begin to assert, if not to achieve their inner potential. That is why Alice Walker places the greatest accent on self discovery. The woman who knows who she is and what she is will find scope to emerge into responsible character.

In this context, Jean Nash Johnson observes as follows:

The individual human heart is more revolutionary than any political party or platform .....<sup>6</sup>

Alice Walker who is preoccupied with the survival whole of the women is committed to exploring the oppressions, insanities, the loyalties, and the triumphs of Black women. Her political awareness, her Southern heritage, and her sense of the culture and history of her people form the ultimate base of her material. Like William Faulkner she argues that the values of the past should be hauled to vitalize and rejuvenate the present. And she uses this as literary grist to plead for justice for the women. Francis Harper makes an apt observation in this regard.

Alice Walker made clear her purpose when she wrote that her story's mission would be in vain if it did not awaken in the hearts of our country men a stronger sense of justice and a more Christian like humanity ....<sup>7</sup>

All the same, Alice Walker does not want the women to entertain radical or revolutionary postures. Neither does she advocate the kind of defeatist tendencies of Sylvia Plath. On the other hand, she wants the women to face all challenges and grow mature enough to redefine their lives on a perfect design and fitted to a proper order and experience transformed lives.

Alice Walker creates positive images of Black women, such as

Ruth, Meridian and Celie, and refers constantly to their exploration or self, and their complexities, and their *Angst*. The problem of identity, the loss of it, and the consequent search for it are at the center of the private, public, and literary life of Alice Walker. And identity is gained on the realization of selfhood is what Alice Walker contends.

The tension between feminine qualities and the contrary outlook and predicaments of women is adequately captured by Alice Walker. She argues that women cannot survive, and emerge and rise unless they generate some measure of self reliance in the Emersonian perspective and self definition in the Whitmanesque manner. The recommendation of Alice Walker is that all women should achieve fulfillment and understanding, and focus on attaining economic stability and feminine ideals. She does not want women to lack self knowledge. Therefore, she underscores the importance of self discovery.

Thus, Alice Walker places the stress on the importance of and appreciation of self discovery on the part of women. Only then women could persevere in their commitment to self development.

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## **Elaine Showalter's Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness: A Study on Inventing Women**

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Women have no wilderness in them,  
They are provident instead  
Content in the tight hot cell of  
their hearts  
To eat dusty bread.

- Louise Bogan, Women.

Feminist literary criticism is informed by feminist theory or by the politics of feminism. The language, the structure and being relate to feminist principles and ideological discourses. It analyses the ways in which literature portrays the narrative of male domination in regard to female bodies by exploring the socio, economic, political and psychological forces with an insight into literature. The classic works of 19<sup>th</sup> century women authors such as George Eliot and Margaret Fuller with their chief works in women's studies and gender studies by "third wave" authors mark their broad and varied representation of the concept. Before 1970s, there was representation of women's condition within literature in the first and second waves of feminism. This included the portrayal of fictional female characters. Apart from this, the feminist criticism was concerned with the exclusion of women from the literary canon. Lois Tyson relates the reason for this to be that the views of women authors have often not been considered to be universal ones.

The third wave feminism has given rise to the development of more complex conceptions of gender and subjectivity. There has been a close association with the birth and growth of queer studies concentrating more on feminist concern with representation and politics of women's lives that has had begun to play a crucial role in criticism.

Feminist literary criticism is essentially considered to be the political, social and ethical movement for equality of the sexes and thereby to end discrimination against women.

“Feminist criticism seeks to uncover the ideology of patriarchal society in works of art” (Nayar, 8). Ross C. Murfin has noted, the “evolution of feminism into feminisms has fostered a more inclusive, global perspective” (Murfin, 25).

In fact, feminist criticism is not chiefly a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon. It goes all the way back to ancient Greece, in the work of Sappho and in Aristophanes’ play *Lysistrata* where women were depicted to be taking over the treasury in the Acropolis, a female chorus as physically and intellectually superior to the male chorus. Feminism has focused upon what has been absent rather than on what is present, thus reflecting its concern with the silencing and marginalization of women in a patriarchal culture in which men have been favoured. Let us go back to Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*. A women’s role in these tales is firmly set either as a nun or as a mother. One can find the tales narrated by women narrators to be of individual hopes and that of their dreams which are not satisfied with the tradition that determines their status in society. Thus the tales portray the feminine ideals of the Middle Ages and also of individuals who fall short of these ideals and solutions of people who seek happiness and respect in society. Men had different roles in society and they were classified on the basis of jobs and social status. Chaucer’s women narrators are realistic in nature and do not lack the dimension of humanity. “Chaucer’s Wife of a Bath who has more than a match for each of her five husbands blatantly values “experience” over authority”, comments Habib.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the flowering of numerous major female literary figures in both Europe and America from Mme de Stael, the Brontës’, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Margaret Fuller and Emily Dickenson and also modernist female writers like Hilda Doolittle (H.D), Gertude Stein, Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, Rebecca West, Simone de Beauvoir and Elaine Showalter.

Elaine Showalter is a renowned American literary critic, feminist



and writer on cultural and social issues. She is one of the founders of feminist literary criticism in United States Academia who played a key role in developing the concept and practice of gynocritics. Gynocriticism is concerned with women's experience and women's writing. Her well known works are "Toward a Feminist Poetics" (1979), "The Female Malady : Women, Madness and English Culture" (1830-1980) (1985), "Sexual Anarchy : Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle" (1990), "Hystories : Hysterical and Epidemics and Modern Media" (1997), and "Inventing Herself : Claiming a Feminist Intellectual Heritage" (2001)." In 2007, Showalter was the chair of the judges for the prestigious British literary award, the man Booker International prize. Showalter chiefly focuses on the development of women centered criticism and re-evaluation of women's writing based on an expression of women's experience. She writes :

Feminist Criticism began when women who were students, teachers, writers, editors or simply readers, began to note the limited and secondary roles allotted to fictional heroines, women writers and female critics, and to ask serious questions about their own literary study (Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan, 35).

The conceptual theories of Showalter highlight the need for feminist concepts and their framework they can share. She suggests gynocritics' theories centered on the experience of women as writers.

Elaine Showalter's *Feminist Criticism in Wilderness* is an essay that allows the reader to study the field of literary criticism from the feminist point of view. The essay is an attempt to discuss various aspects of feminist criticism while trying to attain the aims pointed out, simultaneously portraying the problems it faces and also the reasons for these problems. The essay was first published in "Criticism Enquiry" in 1981. It was reprinted in 1985 as *The New Feminist Criticism* edited by Showalter. She writes in the essay that like feminist creative writers, feminist critics also face certain obstacles which have got highlighted after the rise of feminism. In the essay, Showalter argues that there are basically two kinds of feminist theories.

The first concerns itself with the women as a reader and may be called 'feminist critic'. The second concerns itself with the women as

a writer and may be called ‘Gynocritics’. Showalter propounds her theory on four models - biological criticism, linguistic criticism, psycho-analytical criticism and the theory of women’s culture. She asks the question, “What is the difference in Women’s writing?”. Here, we begin to see a shift from an endocentric to a gynocentric feminist criticism. There can be no more revisionist readings of the male canon the momentum of women’s criticism. Showalter recalls the year 1975 when no theoretical declaration could be explained properly the different ideologies going under feminist reading and writing and she had to convince herself upon this concept. The situation gave way to a great anxiety at isolation of feminist criticism from theory based male criticism. It was clearly evident that the strategies adopted by feminist critics were not fixed but incoherent and multiple. There was a debate that followed in Europe and United States about how feminist criticism should define itself with respect to the new critical theories. Showalter terms even this phase as Evolutionary. Here is where Showalter began working on providing a ground for feminist criticism. This has not been done on a simple basis, but has been the tumultuous and an intriguing wilderness of difference itself. Showalter opines that *Ecriture Feminine* is mostly about women’s repression that has slowly become gynocentric, stressing more on women’s writing. In her description, she says :

Look at the history, styles, themes, genres and structures of writing by women; the psychodynamics of female creativity; the trajectory of the individual or collective female career; and the evolution of a female literary tradition. (*Critical Inquiry*, 12).

The essay begins with Showalter’s pointing out a dialogue by Carolyn Heilbrun and Catherine Stimpson that two poles were identifiable in feminist literary criticism, one that seems to be concentrating on the errors of the past and the other that focuses on the beauty of imagination. ‘Female servitude’ has existed in the society for ages and both the aspects contribute in removing its effects. Mathew Arnold also said that criticism has to pass through a stage of wilderness in a process to reach at the desirable standards. Geoffrey Hartman quoted that all criticism not only feminist criticism is in wilderness. She clarifies that wilderness in feminist criticism is due to lack of an

exclusive theoretical framework for feminist criticism. It is always observed in association with some other strategy and hence fails to work consistently. To quote here, feminist critics supporting Marxism treat feminist criticism in a different manner than those opposing racism. An early obstacle that rose in the establishment of the above said theoretical framework was that many women were incapable to respond to the demand of openness needed for the success of feminist criticism. Women in some aspects of society had been locked out and in some other cases locked in. They were restricted to take part in some aspects of social interaction and in a few other cases, they were forced to participate. Thus, feminism was believed to be equivalent to opposition to the established canons. Showalter says that this ‘theoretical impasse’ was in fact an evolutionary phase. Here, at this stage, feminist criticism moved on from the stage of awakening to the stage marked by ‘anxiety about the isolation of feminist criticism from a critical community’.

There has been a serious debate on the definition of feminist criticism the issue which made the feminist critics unable to address. The communication has been unclear as it was based entirely on the media of feminist critics. According to Showalter, feminist criticism is revisionist as it is dependent on male creative theory, the creative works and interpretations analyzed and produced on the basis of male experience. This concept has to be changed to achieve feminist criticism that is ‘women centered, independent and intellectually coherent.

The definition of ‘feminine’ has always been a problem though accepted that a women’s writing would always be feminine. The second mode of feminist criticism studies this definition. It analyzes that women are writers of the concepts of ‘history, styles, themes, genres and structures of women writers’ and various aspects of female creativity and female literary traditions could also been dealt with. Though ‘gynocritics’ has been coined as ‘specialised critical discourse’, identifying the unique elements of women’s writings is again a major problem. French Feminist Criticism has identified the influence of female body on female language and texts differently in different countries. There has been a concept which studies that men and women use language in a different manner while creating texts as

factors like biology, socio-cultural beliefs could affect the language of a gender. The concept considers the ‘oppressor’s language’, the language used by men to dominate women. For a woman, the popular language could be like a foreign language that she might be uncomfortable with. So, there has been a call for development of separate feminine language though their language is marked by secrecy. Hence, feminist criticism has been working for providing women to have an access to language where there is an availability of wide range of words to them.

History has not included female experience and it is inadequate to understand the experience of a woman. It is to be understood that woman’s culture is not a sub-culture of main culture but part of general culture itself. Evidently patriarchal society when applied restraints on them, they could transform it into complement. Wilfred L. Guerin in his book *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* remarks :

Showalter’s biological model is the most problematic: if the text can be said in some way to mirror the body, then does that reduce women writers merely to bodies? Yet Showalter praises the often shocking frankness of women writers who relate the intimacies of the female experience of the female body. (Guerin). Biological model of difference says, “anatomy is textuality.” Feminist criticism totally rejects the attribution of literal biological inferiority preconceived by the Victorian physicians and anthropologists. (85).

Showalter writes : Victorian anthropologists believed that the frontal lobes of the male brain were heavier and more developed than female lobes and thus that women were inferior in intelligence. (Critical Inquiry,8).

Hence, the bio-feminist criticism stresses the significance of the body as a source of imagery that influences women’s writing. Nancy K. Miller in her words says “the body of her writing and not the writing of her body”. According to Mary Doly and Julia Kristgeva, language is not an intellectual luxury but an essential part of struggle for women’s liberation. American, French and British feminist critics have all drawn attention to the philosophical, linguistic and practical problems of

women's use of language. 'The Oppressor's Language' commented by Rich has been criticized as sexist, sometimes as abstract.

Nelly Furman explains :

It is through the medium of language that we define and categorize areas of difference and similarity, which in turn allow us to comprehend the whole world around us. (Furman,6 ).

Showalter asserts, "It incorporates the biological and linguistic models of gender difference in a theory of the female psyche or self, shaped by the body, by the development of language and by sex-role socialization" (Showalter). In his essay 'The Relation of the Poet to Day Dreaming'(1908), Sigmund Freud maintained that "the unsatisfied dreams and desires of women are chiefly erotic; these are the desires that shape the plots of women's fiction". In contrary, the dominant fantasies behind men's plots are egoistic and ambitious as well as erotic. Showalter's cultural model defines the ideas and the ways in which women conceptualize their bodies and their sexual and reproductive functions that are intricately linked to their cultural environments. At the same time, her concepts offer a collective experience that unites women over time and space finally redefining women's achievements from women centered point of view. Much of the feminist literary criticism continues in our times to be interpreted with the movement by political feminists for social, legal and cultural freedom and equality.

In a nutshell, the demand has been not just the recognition of women's writing but a radical rethinking of the conceptual grounds of literary study. Sandra Gilbert also opines that feminist criticism would like to decode all the disguised questions and answers all that has been kept in guise existing between textuality and sexuality, genre and gender, psychosexual identity and cultural identity. Thus, the goal of feminist criticism is committed to expanding the canon to include neglected genres of women's writing, such as diaries, letters, science, fiction and romance.

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## **Origin of Drama: A Journey Through Thespis to G. B. Shaw**

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Drama is the medium for perception of an agile instruction and a mode for rendezvous of great art performed on the stage. Drama in its novice roots dates back to sixth century BC in Greece. People give more importance to the sacrifice of the goat at the beginning of the celebration on the altar built at the centre of the stage called as Orchestra, and after that the celebration transforms to a systematically adopted dance and the sounds of the hymn with similar uniforms of people on the stage. The hymn known as ‘Dithyramb’ is a collection of different sound patterns adopted from various places of Greece to honour Dionysus, the Greek god of fertility, wine and celebration. Women were not allowed to participate and were restricted to a lesser number compared to men to rejoice the celebration of the god of Dionysus.

Thespis invented masks into drama and ‘hypokrites’ originated from his fresh mind of new thoughts. ‘Hypokrites’ involves the speaking of the actor with a mask on his face on the stage. This system of drama is called ‘tragedy’ and Thespis was regarded as the first actor on stage in the Western world. This method turned the course of drama that reinstated the saga of multiple characters thereby leading to a discussion between the two actors. Masks of gods are worn by the actors to create natural aura of dramatisation. Peter Elliott remarks, “The two famous masks of Comedy and Tragedy most commonly associated with both drama and theatre are Greek in origin. Thalia is the mask or muse of comedy and has a smile on her face, while Melpomene is the muse of tragedy and has a mouth that curls downwards in sadness.” Thespis travelled on his cart to different places of Greece to conceptualise his novel idea of hypokrites and spread the drama in his own style. Every year in Greece a drama festival

commemorates in the honour of Dionysus and in this festival great dramatists take part to show the world their work of art on stage. Thespis won the first prize for his dramatic work, a tragedy that shook the audience's emotions. The female characters are introduced in his play by men wearing female masks and discussing various concepts of the societal life such as ritual, tradition, marriage and honesty.

The three great dramatists of the fifth century BC were Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Aeschylus invented the second actor on the stage to assist the first actor in discussion rather than creating hymns from behind. He wrote eighty plays and only seven survives. Sophocles introduced third speaking actor on the stage reducing the chorus of the play and these three actors on the stage make tragedy even closer to the audience. He is the man who has invented the painted panels at the background on the stage known as 'Pinakes'. He is best known for his Oedipus the King and Antigone that rattles the audience mindsets. He has written complex plays with complex characters. The third greatest ever is Euripides, the last well-known playwright of the fifth century. His famous plays are Medea and Helen of Troy. His plays are realistic in nature that attributed humanistic advances and the promulgation of reality.

These myths are retold by each generation in a new perspective to put them fresh and bring these myths to life in the olden Greece. The Greeks called this interpretation or retelling as 'theatre'. The Greeks divided drama into three categories: satyr play, tragedy and comedy. Satyr plays are based on the oldest myths related to the Greek gods. Satyrs are half humans with a goat's body from the waists. These satyrs are considered the close associates of the god Dionysus. The satyrs are the interludes between the tragic plays to provide comic relief in the middle of such plays. The audience relaxes by the light comedy performed through the mixture of satyr and comic interventions of actors. The tragedy is of course a crucial medium for the playwrights and continues up to present generation. The comedy is as good as it is in the oldest form, takes its advantage in re-inventing the old and complicated masks to a newer one with a tinge of softness and natural exposure of a character.

Kotter points out that "Drama is introduced to England from Europe by the Romans, and auditoriums are constructed across the



country for this purpose.” Drama in England started with street theatre of folklore themes such as Dragon and Robin Hood. The actors perform across England to explore new traditions and also for money and good hospitality in return of their performances. Slowly the people of England started to show interest on Mystery Plays that represent Biblical Concepts. These performances take place on moveable pageant wagons. After this period, the English Renaissance that dates back around 1500 to 1660 achieves potential success in dramatics. Mystery plays such as Nicholas Udall’s *Ralph Roister Doister* and unknown author’s *Gammer Gurton’s Needle* are more popular dramas of sixteenth century. This century also witnessed the world famous dramatist William Shakespeare (1564-1616) whose plays still amuse us with its complicated netted characters that follow the footprints of the playwright himself. He wrote thirty-eight plays that include the combination of tragedy, comedy and history. Some of his great works are *Hamlet* (1603), *Othello* (1604), *King Lear* (1605), *A Midsummer’s Night Dream* (1594 - 96), *Twelfth Night* (1602), and *Henry IV* (1597). Other successful dramatists are Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Thomas Dekker and John Webster. Ben Jonson is curious about his characters in his plays to wear masks to give a new dimension in dramatics. His masking of characters on the stage takes over the orthodox embellishment of conventional performances and gave a new twist of real characters through his masks. *The Alchemist* and *Bartholomew* are his best works of masquerades.

In the year 1580 four stalwarts formed a group who wrote for the public stage known as ‘University Wits’ and this name was coined by George Saintsbury, a nineteenth century journalist and author that include Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Kyd, John Lyly and Robert Greene. These four major wits witnessed a drastic change in shaping English drama to its extreme with their powerful skill in ordaining each other’s talent. Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II* and *Doctor Faustus*, Thomas Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy*, John Lyly’s *Campaspe*, *Endimion*, *Love’s Metamorphosis*, Robert Greene’s *Friar Bacon & Friar Bungay* and *James IV* are the leading stage performances of the sixteenth century. John Fletcher’s *A Wife for a Month* and *The Scornful Lady* are noteworthy plays that startled with their climaxes and surprised the audiences. The Interregnum period that ran across

sixteenth century from 1649 to 1660 marked a disaster for the English drama. The stage performances are banned during this period by the puritans for religious reasons. After the coronation of King Charles II (1630-1685), drama regained its strength under the ubiquitous shadow of Charles. *All for Love* (1677) by John Dryden and *Venice Preserved* (1682) by Thomas Otway stirred remarkable resonance in the history of English literature.

In the eighteenth century ‘closet drama’ gained attention where dramas are no longer performed on the open stages rather confined to reading in a small domestic rooms for special occasions. The Restoration Period is replaced by Sentimental Comedy and Domestic Tragedy such as *The London Merchant* written in 1731 by George Lillo and a passionate interest on Italian Opera dominated this era. English Music Halls are the popular medium for entertainment for public in contrast to English Drama in this century.

All the major playwrights employed conflict based plots, irony and paradoxical dialogues to gain attention and exploit audience of what is to be a nonsensical attribute of myths turning to reality. The shrewd conscience of the plays is to induce the labyrinth of seriousness and pounding over the comic relief for entertainment. The techniques employed are disguise, suspense, soliloquy, contrast and allegory to satisfy the burlesque needs of the public. During the nineteenth century a great marvel occurred with the birth of Henrik Ibsen, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw and W. B. Yeats who satisfied the niche of drama to its glorified potent and given the world a miracle of ideas through their plays. Of these four valiant and indomitable dramatists George Bernard Shaw stands out as the cynosure in the dawn of the English Drama, who is the trend-setter for the modern English drama and literature. He is regarded as the tremendous reformer of the New English Drama and a meticulous moderator of the English Plays from Shakespeare to Harold Pinter and Ben Jonson to Samuel Beckett.

## **Emblematizing of Characters in the Novels of D. H. Lawrence**

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David Herbert Lawrence was born in 1885 at the East Wood Colliery village in Nottinghamshire. His father was a miner, strong, lively and pleasure-loving. His mother, Lydia, who was a former school mistress belonged to a middle class family. She met Arthur Lawrence at a party in Nottingham and was attracted by his graceful dancing, musical voice, gallant manner and his overflowing humour as well as good spirits. She married him knowing little what it was like to be a coalminers wife. Whatever romantic notations she found were soon shattered. The married life of Lawrence's was quite unhappy she was thoroughly disillusioned. It was an endless battle between sophistication and coarseness decency and drunkenness, education and ignorance.

D. H. Lawrence was physically delicate and sensitive fourth child cleaved to his mother and with her encouragement, excelled at school and went on to win a scholarship to Nottingham High School in his twelfth year. He took up opposition as a pupil teacher in the East Wood British School in 1902. Qualified as a teacher, he became Junior Assistant master at the Divison Road School in Corydon a Suburb of London.

His literary interest had begun to burgeon by 1905. The white peacock *The Trespasser* in 1913 Lawrence's reputation began to grow, for he published not only a book of poems, but the powerful "Sons and Lovers" one of the many of his finest novels, strongly autobiographical. It narrates the growth of a sensitive young man in a coal mining environment through emotional turmoil in his relations with a spiritual sweetheart, an earthly one and his possessive mother, by whom he was influenced and also liberated himself only after her death.

A literary man is a product of his society as his art is a product of his own reaction to life. The greatest artists are conscious and sometimes unconscious exponents of their time spirit. The literature reflects the writer's time spirit. No writer can escape the influence of his age. Literature always expresses the thoughts and sentiments of the human mind which are closely connected with and conditioned by the age.

Lawrence is distinctively gifted with a mystic insight into the regions of human relations. He belongs to the age of disillusionment. The disillusion was the result of deep war. If found expression in novels, which strived to portray the lives of people then living were not up to the proper standards. D.H. Lawrence was dissatisfied with the state of the world and trends of the world then existed. Hence, he desired to turn to the primitive tradition, which may soothe the era.

The disillusionment and frustration generated by the world war in the years after 1918 seems to have had great impact on the ideas and minds of writers who belonged to that period, Lawrence was one among them.

The works of Lawrence were later evaluated and it was understood that he did not cater to the low taste of the people. He presented the new morality of sex which was antagonistically counter to the Victorians reading by D.H. Lawrence is an exploration into an entirely new and unexplored region, which is strikingly strangely and fascinating. Lawrence impresses the reader in highly original and unconventional manner regarding his theme, technique, style and his skill in symbolizing and also in characterization.

As a novelist, he differs from other novelist, he handles his characters very well in his novels "Sons and Lovers" and "Rainbow" He eliminates the regular character figures of Heroes, heroines and villains. The character and life of his characters can be associated with the life of men and women in general. A few incidents in his novels symbolize the life of common man. We understand this when we take into account the life of Walter Morel and his wife in "Sons and Lovers". In Rainbow life of three generations and their love marriages can be associated with the life of common man in the novel at one point or the other Lawrence makes his characters symbolic in his novel Rainbow.

Lawrence is distinctively gifted with is mystic insight into the region of Human relations. He employs the traditional technique in his novels that is to engage a common man in the story and make the characters emerge by arranging different events of which few events may resemble the lives of common men. He creates different characters and also employs nature as a symbol with different incentives in his mind.

D.H. Lawrence makes use of different characters ad symbols in such a way that they are complimentary to each other; Characters in his novel “Sons and Lovers” Miriam is associated with religion, Clara is associated with liberation. Mrs. Morel is associated with sophistication, Mr. Morel with coarseness. Paul can be associated with manumit as he frequently contrives form Miriam to Clara and also towards his mother.

“Sons and Lovers” mostly revolves around the protagonist and main character Paul and different issues and aspects pertaining to his life. Lawrence makes use of different symbols in order to portray different situations of Paul’s life meaningful for the readers to understand well at the beginning of the last chapter “Derelict” we find Paul, the protagonist of the novel, in an astounding mood of melancholy and dejection.

The protagonist is in vanquish completely owing to a sense of vacuum, at the end of the novel, Lawrence is trying to expound the meaningless life of protagonist after the death of his other. We find him craving for his mother and he wanted to follow her in the darkness.

Lawrence made use of darkness as a symbol of meaninglessness and nothingness of Paul’s life, but, by the end, the novelist made use of other positive symbols such as faintly humming, glowing town which drive him suddenly from death to life. Glowing town can be associated with life, while darkness with death.

Lawrence abruptly alters the life and destiny of his protagonist from death to life. He portrays the change of decision making, use of negative to positive symbols in “Sons and Lovers”. The origin of the novel “Sons and Lovers” is connected to Lawrence’s life. It is flashed out by the demise of his mother Lydia. Lawrence anatomizes his childhood, adolescence and manhood with regard to his mother’s impact especially its psychological influence on his sexuality. This novel deals with the autobiography of Lawrence’s life. Lawrence

basically belonged to the mining town of East wood which is modified to West wood in the novel.

Pau's father Waller is the prototype of Lawrence's a father – his mother Lydia counterfeits the role of Gertrude, she is depicted as a refined lady with a scholarly bent who was destined to lead and unhappy life. The death of his brother, Ernest in real life is marked the death of William in the novel.

The place in which Lawrence grew up had been a major coal mining area for hundreds of years. Lawrence comes from a financially in stable families. The wives of the miners who lived in, their surroundings were repulsive with their quality of life and lack of their husband's ability to provide them with a lifestyle at least to the level of 20<sup>th</sup> century living standards.

In "Sons and Lovers" novel, we find that the autobiographical element is manifested as it reflects and talks about the life of Lawrence and his family. The crumbled marriage or his parents is portrayed in the novel with a direct resemblance to Mr. and Mrs. Morel in the novel. Lawrence actually portrayed his father under the cap of Mr. Morel, who failed to earn either affection from his wife or the respect of his sons.

Lawrence produced his writings from his own experiences. He tries to depict his father as a hero, but tries to paint the moral brutality of his father and the growing unhappiness of his mother which are delineated in the novel. In other words, we can say this novel stands as a symbol of Lawrence's own life.

According to Lawrence "if you wish to look into the past for what next books, you can go back to the Greek Philosophers Plato's dialogues are queer little novels. It seems to me it was the greatest Pity in the world. When Philosophy and fiction got split, they used to be one right from the days of Myth. Then they went and parted like a nagging married Couple, with Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas and that beastly Kant. So the novel should come together again in the novel."

Lawrence employs various symbols to enhance the structure of his theme in the novels. A symbol is an effective image that has an incomprehensible meaning. He loved nature so, he made ample use of flowers in different situations. He made use of the garden and the pollen, dust covers her face. Lawrence wanted to portray this situation

as a temporary death of Mrs. Morel which was a means for her to escape from her life. At a later stage in the novel sunflower is used as a symbol when Mr. Morel was ill and gazed at sunflowers which is associated with life and it represent other main symbols such as flowers, the sun and fire. He made wide use of different of flowers in different situations which delineated different meanings to the readers.

Lawrence made use of nature largely and also heavenly bodies such as the sun, moon, stars as symbols just as snow, fog, rain are made use of as symbols to portray climatic changes and their impact on the characters as well. Lawrence employs nature largely as a symbol. He makes use of the pine grove and the wheat personify of life and death.

Lawrence differs in his symbols when “Sons and Lovers” and “The Rainbow” are brought into contrast. In “Sons and Lovers” he labored a lot to portray nature as a symbol. In “The Rainbow” nature is not extensively used as a symbol when compared with sons and Lovers. The Rainbow is a aspect of nature and it is frequently used in the novel to Portray different situations of different women belonging to different generations.

In “The Rainbow” Lawrence made use of symbolic ritual scenes and religious symbols such as cathedral and Architect of Church. A few situations are associated with rituals. When Anna is proud of her pregnancy and dances naked in her room in the frenzy of freedom before the dazed eyes of her husband. She is influenced by David, who dances and before the Lord and uncovers himself exultingly for Michel. She performs the dance considering it as a religious act. We come across many such ritual scenes where Lydia emerges into life after the death of her husband and children. The open country of Poland evokes in her a desire to live. This transformation of Lydia has been portrayed by Lawrence, he make use of a number of flowers and seeds as symbols to portray Lydia’s regeneration into life. Here Lydia’s life is associated with the fragrance of flowers, Lawrence at this point suggests fragrance of flowers, Lawrence at this point suggests that fragrance of her youth is back in her life.

Lydia’s emergence back into life after facing the trauma of her husband’s death is symbolic ritual-scene delineated by Lawrence. We find much symbolic character in “The Rainbow” as we find in *Sons and*

*Lovers*” Ursula is depicted as a modern, ambitious woman who wants to conquer the man’s world just as Clara in *Sons and Lovers*. Anna symbolizes mother-hood. She found sexual fulfilment in the motherhood, in bearing child after child.

Anna in “The Rainbow” is a symbolic of the mother. Anna and Ursula both are the symbols of young emancipated women at work. Mrs. Morel in “Sons and Lovers” is also symbolic of mother, children became the center of her attention and their achievement was a source of her joy. Anna can be brought contrast with Mrs. Morel in *Sons and Lovers*” who is satisfied in bearing male child one after the other.

In conclusion, we might state that Lawrence succeeded in his use of symbols as narrative technique in his novels “Sons and Lovers” and “Rainbow”. Lawrence’s use of symbols as narrative technique is perhaps more than the other novelists of his time. His skill is more pronounced by this aspect. His deft use of symbols makes his writing intricate and convey to the readers his expertise in this aspect.

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## **Experimenting the Business Principle of AIDA (Attention – Interest – Desire- Action) in CLT Class Room**

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Once when Sri Aurobindo, a renowned philosopher and a poet of Bengal, was asked why he was writing poetry in English and not in Bengali he said “ English has certain features which suit the nuances of feeling and poetic thought and very soon there will be a globalization leading to the unification of all countries.” Beyond any doubts his words proved to be prophetic today.

Globalization has increased the interdependence of regions around the world. However, while opportunities offered by globalization can be large, some people do not benefit from globalization, and in some cases, they are harmed by it. In India, in particular, globalization has resulted in a division of wealth in which the poorer classes, generally found in the rural regions, are being left behind. The result is a less developed region in which people have fewer opportunities subject to lower quality of life.

These days, English, emerged as global language, fluency of English is becoming increasingly important. It is true that English language plays a pivotal role in providing opportunities for the new millennium generation. Apart from holding a position of second language it is also the language of instruction in higher education. English language has made communication across the cultures much easier. One thing that all linguists and researchers of languages unanimously agree is the unprecedented role that English plays nowadays. Anderman and Rogers point out that it has developed into a

lingua franca (Anderman & Rogers 2005:1) which gives people the opportunity to communicate more easily and overcome borders (Anderman & Rogers 2005:180).

It is quintessential to admit that the role of English language in the global context can't just be expressed in words; the influence of this commanding language is quite vast and diverse to define. But in spite of the growing demand for the language, the standards of the students with respect to English language skills are much below the accepted level.

In this paper our aim is to explore those strategies which are novel in nature and effective among the students to enhance communication skills which are meant to be indispensable double edged weapons. Despite a whole lot of books on these titles, none of them completely answer the specific needs of the students seeking employment in this global market. There has been a long felt need to design new strategies to meet the needs of the student community. One such method we felt feasible in an English class room is Experimenting the business principle of AIDA.

AIDA is a simple acronym that was devised a long time ago as a reminder of four stages of the sales process (Strong, 1925). AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. It was a strong marketing strategy designed to attract the best customers.

ATTENTION: The ability of an instructor in a classroom depends on how best he could draw the attention of the students. In doing so the teacher has all the flexibility to adopt a strategy that best suits his classroom. More than anything else in drawing the attention Grooming and Etiquette plays a key role because it best goes with the statement "the first impression is the best impression". This might be the reason why major focus is levied on grooming these days unlike the past where subject knowledge alone was taken as a parameter to qualify an individual as a teacher/lecturer/professor. Effective body language is another important aspect to be practiced in the classroom. It is rightly said by the experts of Communication skills that in absence of effective body language an individual can communicate only 20 percent of the information effectively. Words carry the stated meaning and body language transmits the implied meaning. When the stated meaning and

the implied meaning are put together, we get the actual or total meaning and hence effective communication takes place.

As Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes real-life situations and communication in context it is more apt for modern English classroom instead of traditional language teaching that emphasizes more on grammar rules. To achieve expected results, let the students be given a free zone where they play, experiment and get back to share what they have learnt. Here the facilitator can focus more on attention grabbers such as minute for minute, echo-clapping, secret code etc.

**INTEREST:** The principle of AIDA says “the more you understand your audience, the better you will be at gauging interest levels”. Likewise, the facilitator in the classroom must be very careful in determining what interests their students more. If students feel that they are learning to do something useful with the language to realize their dreams they will be easily motivated to involve in the activities. During the process of generating interest, it is better that the facilitator emphasizes more on fluency without worrying about perfect grammar. Errors may be tolerated during the activity which can be corrected later. Pair work and group work can be used extensively in a CLT class room, so that all the students have plenty of opportunities to practice the target language. Infact pair work gives confidence to learners to try out whatever language they know, in the relative privacy of a pair or small group, without fear of being wrong or of being corrected in front of the class. Moreover, it engages learners in using the language purposefully and co-operatively, concentrating on building meaning, not just using language for display purpose. Similar to pair work group work also allows the students to talk about their own ideas, opinions and real life facts, so that they can develop real communication skills. Once interest is generated among the students to learn time and place are no more constraints for the learning process.

**DESIRE:** Burning interest in pursuit of knowledge or achieving something is called desire in general. Desire is commonly created with a sense of urgency. Principle of AIDA believes that creating burning desire in customers to have the target product is almost a success. Similar to this if teachers can create desire in the students to be effective communicators in English it indicates that they have almost approached

their objective to see their students with good skills.

In the process to instigate burning desire the facilitator can design innovative techniques or activities such as Name Game, Group Competitions, and Board Share etc. In the Name Game the students can be asked to introduce themselves and their likes with a condition that their like should start with the first letter of their name. Soon after the first participant completes his introduction, the second participant prior to introducing himself he has to introduce the first participant and then himself.

For Example: Student 1: This is Joseph. I like Jasmine.

Student 2: (Pointing the first participant) He is Joseph. He likes Jasmine. I am Rahul, I like rockets. Likewise, the activity is extended to nearly twenty to twenty-five participants in a classroom. During the activity students will be totally absorbed and carry a burning desire to do better than others. This kind of healthy competitions will not only promote the zeal of the students but also help in teaching grammar (I like; He likes etc.)

In Board Share activity the students are divided into groups and are given a task like jumbled sentences (slips will be provided). After 2 to 3 minutes of given time span, one from each team is welcomed over to the board and is asked to write the sentences in order so as to make a meaningful paragraph. Once the teacher/ facilitator is successful in creating a burning desire among the students they will automatically get into action.

**ACTION:** In business terms, a "call to action" begins with a verb that tells the customer what to do. Think of this as an opportunity for you to invite your customers to use or purchase your service. The more urgency you create behind this action, the better the business is.

Applied in a CLT class room desire to learn enables the students to get into action. To promise the active participation of all the students it is better to divide them into groups and assign specific roles such as Time Keeper, Note maker, Developer, Conflict Manager, Spokes person, English Police etc. Once the roles are assigned the students will be determined in fulfilling the objective of their specific roles. Among all the role of an English Police is quite interesting because he has to see that all the group participants should communicate only in English.

To mention GalleryWalk, Hot Seat, etc., are a few more techniques to motivate the students to get into action.

To conclude we would like to quote the words of Rebecca Alber, “What works for one teacher might not work for another...”. In fact, every teacher/facilitator has his own flexibility to design activities and techniques that best suits his classroom and surroundings as he himself is the manager of his classroom.

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## **Tagore's Views on Man and Religion**

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Rabindranath Tagore was brought up in an atmosphere charged completely with religious fervour. His father, Maharshi Devendranth Tagore was one of the religious leaders of those times. The verses of Upanishads were uttered daily in their family. A lesser level man under such circumstances would have accepted the rich religious inheritance and would have leaded a happy life. But the dynamic mind of Tagore could not be passive receptor of the accepted doctrines. Tagore is a revolutionist and so he begins to believe in his 'own religion' and as almost all his thoughts there will be duality as in his 'own religion' too. He is both rational and irrational. In his own way he starts his argument on religion with its equivalent term in Sanskrit, that is 'Dharma.' He goes on saying in Sadhana, "Dharma which is translated into English as religion has a deeper meaning in our language." (74) He stresses the same and say in the Religion of Man, "In the Sanskrit language, religion goes by the name dharma, which in the derivative meaning implies the principle of relationship that holds us firm, and in the technical sense means the virtue of a thing, the essential quality of it: for instance, heat is the essential quality of fire, though in certain of its stage it may be absent." (89).

Religion and its meaning: It is the essence and importance of 'dharma' that influences Tagore more when he speaks about 'religion'; he strongly refers to what he means by 'dharma'. He clearly knows that the English term 'religion' does not express the complete meaning that is given by 'dharma' in the Indian tradition. But as there is no better word in English literature, Tagore is compelled to use the term 'Religion' in his English writings to express the true nature of the Sanskrit word 'dharma'. One must be aware of what does this 'dharma' says. This according to Tagore it is one's true nature. Usually one thinks of 'self' in a narrow and partial way. One generally and falsely

feels the 'ego' as self, but originally it is far beyond this rigid meaning. By the first sight earth appears to be flat and many people in ancient times believed the same. But after experimental observations the man could know that it is spherical in shape and not at all flat as the ancient man thought. In the same way 'self' is also thought to be the narrow and egoistical one. But when it is observed in totality one sees that its essential reality is not egoistical but far beyond that. If the man travels above the egoistical view, he realizes the real area of self. Here Tagore says, "Within us we have a hope which always walks in front of our present narrow experience; it is the undying faith in the infinite in us." (51) Actually speaking one's self will be always struggling hard to reveal itself by crossing the obscurity of a narrow vision. So Tagore says with the expression of emotion, "If these were inevitable with in him, he has glimpses of the infinite, which give him assurance that thus truth is not in his limitations." (Creative Unity, London, Mac Millon 1962, P.75) When a man starts to think in this way, he gets the awareness that he has to travel long to know this. Suddenly he realizes that the real greatness lies in achieving the yet unknown to him. This Tagore explains, "In what to be he is infinite, there is his heaven, his deliverance." (153) As soon as the hurdle 'narrow' is broken, the state not yet achieved seems to appear and attracts the man. The intensity of the will to reach the yet to reach becomes stronger and prepares him to sacrifice his presents a contrast between what he is and what he ought to be. Therefore Tagore says, "Man's history is the history of his journey to the unknown in quest of the realization of his immortal self-his soul." (33)

Man is never satisfied with what he is and he always in the depths of his being feels the stronger urge to break through the immediate limitations and marches towards the truth of his real self. Thus he searches within and that is called self-realization. The conflict between the appearance and the real being rises to a contradiction. The truth of one's higher being stirs one's religious consciousness and creates a faith in him that he is a lot greater than what he appears. To make it clear Tagore says, "Religion has its function in reconciling the contradiction, by subordinating the brute nature to what we consider as the truth of Man." (The Religion of Man, P 90) So, man seeks the help of religion to clean the darkness created by the basic instincts of 'self'.

In this way man is inspired by the religion and moves on towards the higher level, that level is inward and is beyond the normal limits. At this Tagore says, “He has been building up elaborate religions to convince himself, against his natural inclinations of the paradox that he is not what he is but something greater.” (38) Thus man tries to realize the hidden truth in him. Therefore, religion is never a passive acceptance but an active effort towards realization of one self. Tagore says, “Consists in the endeavour of men to cultivate and express those qualities which are inherent in the nature of man the eternal and have faith in him.” (89) The religion gives strength to man’s faith in the nature of his ideal. By solving the contract between individual self and universal self, religion takes man to a new height and that arena will be free from all contradictions and gives man liberty to travel since he becomes ‘religious’, man than, “Finds his meaning in the fundamental reality comprehending all individuals – the reality which is the moral and spiritual basis of the realm of human values..... religion is the liberation of our individual personality in the universal person.” (120) Thus religion widens one’s vision and highlights his human values and makes him understand the basic truth of religion.

Thus ‘religion’ which frees man from the ignorance of his true-self, leads him to the consciousness of a transcendental spiritual unity. This consciousness gives rise to awareness of a unity whose basic nature is spiritual and which shows him the truth beyond the facts of his immediate experience. The beyond, though outside man’s immediate possessions is never un-human. Here Tagore accepts Adharvaveda which says, “One aspect of Man’s self is seen directly here, but the other is the vast unseen.” (24) So the vast unseen also an aspect of man’s self. Truly speaking Tagore doesn’t believe any of the realistic beyond the human truth. He says, “The ultimate truth for us is human truth, and that is why this world we know is necessarily a human world. Even if there is any other beside this, it is non-existent for us, not only for today, but forever.” (42) Tagore believes that religion is predominantly spiritual. Truly the spiritual has a human aspect, which is important for religion. Even though one receives only faint indications of the spiritual from within the frontiers of the physical existence, Tagore says that one seems to have a stronger faith in the spiritual life than in the physical. The great soul who understands



completely the comprehensive spirit within and without him, this spirit is dearer than all else. Here Tagore quotes approving the ancient saying, “He is dearer than son, dearer than wealth, and dearer than all else is this spirit who is in our innermost heart.” (39) Tagore is one of the opinions that man’s soul is bound to win its prosperity through spiritual life and all great religious of men are directed towards this great end.

Tagore repeatedly stresses the principle of unity as the most fundamental in the mystery of existence. He says, “It is some untold mystery of unity in me that has the simplicity of the infinite and reduces the immense mass of multitude to a single point.” (Creative Unity, Introduction-iii) He extends his saying and says, “The quality of the infinite is not the magnitude of extension, it is in the ‘Advitam’, the mystery of unity. Facts occupy endless time and space; but the truth comprehending them all has no dimension; it is one. Wherever our heart touches the one, in the small or the big it finds the touch of the infinite.” (4) The evolution of the world on the physical level too reveals an urge for achieving an ever-higher unity. The realization of this unity, according to Tagore, it is very essential for man’s emancipation. Most of the times the wrong views of the finality of multiplicity of things drive him away from truth. Such a view only lures him to gather variety of external possessions and denies the joy of the realization of the real unity. He also says that this realization of unity provides him with the key to unlock the truth of his spiritual life. So Tagore says, “Through all the diversities of the world, the one in us is threading its course towards the one in all; this is its nature and this is its joy.” (86) So in the realization of unity only lies man’s joy. Tagore wants to finalize this and says, “We must know that, as, through science and commerce, the realization of the unity of the material world gives us power, but the realization of the great spiritual unity of man alone can give us peace.” (130)

More than this ‘comprehensive spirit of unity’ the religious consciousness of man has a divine character and this religious man expresses his “reverential loyalty” of this awareness of unity. So religion, as Tagore tells, transforms one’s vision inward and there he sees glimpse, his unity with the infinite. In the middle of practical world with all physical needs and temptation of modernism, this religion gives one the needed vision of unity. So, Tagore remarks, “Our

religions present for us the dreams of the ideal unity.” (89) This unity as per Tagore ‘is not a mere subjective ideal but an emerging truth. Whatever the name of the religion Tagore emphatically says, “The consciousness of this unity is spiritual, and our effort to be true to it is our religion.” (10)

What Tagore wants to tell about man is quite simple but his arena is very wider. The start of religious consciousness provided man with a great evolution in the moral and spiritual aspects of man. The primitive level of understanding of religion didn’t enable our forefather to know the truth of the ideal religion. But the urge to realize the fuller meaning of the ideal religion laid path for a process of gradual evolution. It guided man to look in himself for the truth of religion. He gradually begins to learn that the cult of power and greed is not the real meaning of religious. Tagore in his own words says, “Through it all there must have been some current of deeper desire, which constantly contradicted the cult of power and indicated worlds of inner good, infinitely more precious there material gain. Its voice was not strong at first nor was it headed by the majority of people; but its influences, like the life within the seed, were silently working.” (50-51) At first man was mainly concerned with maintaining his life by making a sort of adjustment with the physical world and hence, “The first expression of his religion was physical.” (46) Therefore his duties were the physical forces of nature and his worship was to in over these forces for his personal benefit. But when he found time to look into the inner reality, “The mystery of his own personality gained for him its highest importance.” (46) This gave him chance to proceed in the direction of man’s religion. He began to know that the truth of ideal religion doesn’t lay anywhere outside his self, but within him. It changed the entire way of his worship. The older ways of magic and blind rites were forgotten and man approached the right path of considering the higher spirituality. In Tagore’s words, “Its evolution has been from the external and magical towards the inner as well as moral and spiritual significance.” (41)

Tagore treats man as a bearer of a great dignity to the earth. Tagore never believes that Srikrishna, Shankaracharya, Jesus Christ, Buddha, Mahammad etc as avatharas in popular sense. Most of the religious people believe that avatharas are God in human form.

Generally, people attribute super-natural qualities to these religious men and come to the opinion that God himself takes his birth in this world to set it right. When there is inhumanity spread everywhere in the world and sinners dominant God takes birth to establish peace in the world once again. This is the general belief that many religious too believe. But Tagore solely contradicts this idea and reveals that all the above said are perfect men. This employs that according to Tagore avatars means great men. Avatara is a permanent link and mediator between man and God. Great men are they who remind one of one's greatness. Man, due to ignorance sometimes because of his lower self, forgets the real nature of him. These great men come to remind man of the divine origin and to remind him that he is immortal. These great men do not invent any new method, do not preach any new theory but they awake one's mind, they tell one to rise above one's narrow self. With the light of their heart great men remove the darkness of ignorance from man. They teach one that man is above all narrowness, customs and creeds which make man not only small but also they limit God too who actually dwells in all human hearts alike. So according to Tagore all great men are those who have developed in themselves all human qualities in best way, they never cease to be human, but become perfect men. Thus Tagore doesn't accept that great men are God on the contrary he says that they are the path showers for attaining highest human ideal.

The ultimate destiny or goal of human beings is get freedom or liberty. But Tagore's freedom differs in many ways from the traditional concept of freedom. According to him freedom consists in the realization of spirit within man and within the whole universe. Man will be capable of attaining freedom not by performing ceremonies but by rising above the ego and by uniting oneself with the whole universe. Man can achieve freedom by eradicating ignorance which is negative and developing the positive quality of love in himself. He has to develop moral and spiritual aspects in himself to get divinity in him which is said to be the real freedom. To attain this, he has to pass through pain, suffering and death. Until man identifies himself in his surroundings, he forgets that to live is to grow out of himself. When he understands this, he doesn't bother about death at all. Man realizes that death opens gates for greater and wider life. Tagore points out that the

history of man is not a record of aimless events. Tagore says that man is infinite in strength, love, sense of purity and goodness. There is a purpose for man's life. Tagore compares man's life with 'lotus'. Through many births, surpassing many evils and sufferings the life of man unfolds its petals one after the other like a 'lotus'. Life of each individual proceeds towards its full expression. And thus the history of the universal man is connected with the development of individual man. In this way Tagore says that man collecting and developing his inner strength birth by birth finally tries to become equal to God too. Thus Tagore as he does in all his works gives priority a lot to 'humanism'. So for Tagore, man is everything and omnipotent.

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## **Development of Speaking Skills through Literature**

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Speech is the natural form of a language. In speech, we make use of oral signs that are addressed to the ear. A child acquires the power of speech by responding to the sounds made by people around him and by imitating them out of his need for communication. In the teaching of English as a second language, after having given the learner a chance to listen to the language, the learner must feel the need for communication. We generally speak more than we write. So, as teachers, it is our responsibility to practise speaking and listening skills more than the reading and writing skills. Language teaching, especially second language teaching, has always been a matter of debate and discussion. It has constantly compelled teachers to evolve and adopt newer strategies and techniques of teaching. This paper has focussed on the premise that the goal of our language course should be truly to enable our students to communicate in English. They should learn how to speak the language efficiently.

Nunan (1991) argues, “Success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language”.

Hence, it is necessary that the students should become confident enough to speak the language or else they will be de-motivated. It has always been a daunting task for learners of English to master the language. They face a lot of difficulties and challenges while acquiring the language. For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple and neat. The solution to this problem of developing fluent speaking is Literature. Literature is the supremely civilizing pursuit. The present paper suggests teaching speaking skills through literature as a possible and effective solution. Literature always stimulates the emotions of the students. Literature is also associated with intellectual activity. Through the different tools of literature, the students comprehend and learn the lexical items, semantics, vocabulary,

phrases, idioms, use of tenses and various parts of speech which, undoubtedly, enhance their speaking skills.

### **Problems Faced by the Students to Speak English Fluently**

It is generally noted that the learners acquiring English as a second language in India are shy about speaking the language in front of other students. There could be various reasons for such behaviour. Either they are from such a cultural background where they cannot talk loud in the class, or they lack the confidence in speaking in front of others. But then they should always remember that the more they practise, the more they will improve their speaking skills. We need to realize that we learn to speak only by speaking.

It has also been seen that the learners are apprehensive about speaking English because they find the language difficult to cope with if the way of teaching is above their current skills and their standards and interest. If the tasks done in the class are too difficult or too easy, they will certainly revert to their first language either for their comfort or for some emotional support. This is the greatest hindrance in their acquiring the language since they translate word for word to check if they have understood the task before attempting to speak.

### **Use of Literature to Develop Speaking Skills**

We as teachers should assist the students to overcome these difficulties. An effective way to do this is to use literary tools to develop speaking skills. Literature involves a special or unusual use of language and provides the students with tools for their own creative activity. These tools are prose, poetry and drama. The students are able to explore the linguistic and conceptual aspects of the written text and use it to improve their speaking skills as well as diction.

We see literature assists the students to unravel the many meanings in a text. Furthermore, literary texts have a powerful function in raising moral and ethical concerns in the classroom and encourage our students to explore these concerns and connect them with the struggle for a better society. Note what Gillian Lazar declares:

Literature provides wonderful source material for eliciting strong emotional responses from our students. Using literature in the classroom is a fruitful way of involving the learner as a whole person,

and provides excellent opportunities for the learners to express their personal opinion, reactions and feelings. (1993, p. 3). So, when the students share their opinions, reactions, and feelings in the class, subconsciously they are working on their speaking skills. As they are aware of the fact that they have to speak in front of the entire class, so they are careful to use the correct pronunciation and appropriate vocabulary. They are also particular about the use of tense and verb. It is necessary to use literary forms like prose, poetry and drama to develop speaking skills.

### **Prose**

Teaching speaking skills through stories is very effective as it is very interactive. Students have fun; they enjoy themselves and are enthusiastic. Stories enrich their visual imagination and creativity. Students are introduced to literature and the beauty of the language. Stories can organize, retain and assist students to access information. Stories help them store information in the brain. So, when students are taught speaking skills through story based activities, activities not only enrich their active and passive vocabulary but they also concentrate on the stress, intonation, pause and articulation of voice.

When students get an opportunity to narrate a story in their own language, they can put the information stored in their brain into a meaningful text. This helps them to bring out the emotions, which provokes learning. Once the initial hitch of speaking in front of others is removed, the students become more comfortable in sharing their thoughts. Furthermore, when they see that their stories are valued, recognized and heard with interest, it gives them a confident stand. Therefore, stories can help students develop a positive attitude towards learning process. They become more active, experience things directly and are able to express themselves in the way that best suits them. Stories not only improve their vocabulary, sentence formation, the use of tenses and verbs but also work positively on their fluency when they speak. Stories assist them to build up an overall personality of students as they are connected to the society directly, improving their communication.

### **Poetry**

Poetry has always been very beneficial to enhance the language, means

speaking skills of the students. When students hear poetry in the class, they compare and contrast different point of views and develop understanding of significance of figurative language.

In poetry words are chosen for their beauty and sound and then arranged in such a manner that they rhyme. Poetry is such a sophisticated literacy tool that it works on the moods and emotions of the students. They are able to express ideas that are meaningful to them without the constraints of grammatical accuracy. When they listen to poetry, it facilitates awareness of pronunciation, intonation and sentence flow. They practise specific language structures such as phrases, idioms, word order and verb tense.

Teachers can have activity-based poetry classes to enrich the speaking skills. They can create an atmosphere for the students to be wholly involved in the activity by showing pictures to introduce the topic. Instead of reciting the poetry simply, teachers can have some kind of dramatization of the poetry. When students dramatize poetry, they will automatically be involved in it completely. Furthermore, they will talk about their response, share ideas and discuss the theme. This will enrich their confidence in speaking fluently. Poetry is indeed very effective.

## **Drama**

Drama assists the students to concretely explore the mysteries of human communication. It offers ways for students to respond to and express their individual and shared understanding of a text. Students develop an active, interactive and reflective relationship with the text and they can respond to the text socially, emotionally, morally, physically, spiritually and culturally.

When students work in dramatic contexts, they are offered the opportunity to use language as it is used in real life. Undoubtedly, drama enriches the spoken language. Through drama, students enhance the speaking skills and gain confidence as when they act and assume roles and interact in improvisation. They are more likely to remember the context they are learning because they are able to create and actively express the deeper meanings of that context through dramatization. They are also able to analyse and explain personal preference and construct meanings. It has been observed that in acquiring speaking



skills through art forms, like drama, the students are also offered opportunities to learn more about themselves, others and the worlds in which they live and grow.

Hence, when the students want to acquire proficient speaking skills, drama has always been of great help. When students enact a drama, they play certain roles, which might be closed to what they see in the world around them or in history. It brings out their inner potential to think deeply and express their ideas. They are able to express themselves explicitly as they can relate to the characters; they try to give their best performance. Unconsciously, they are working on their imagination, vocabulary, sentence structure, stress, intonation and rhythm. The modulation of the tone is extremely important during dramatization. When students work on this, it automatically enhances their speaking skills.

Thus, my hypothesis in this paper is that literature is indeed a very authentic tool to impart speaking skills. If we look at every poem, story or drama as a mini-lesson, we as language teachers can use these little jewels to teach the spoken language to the students effectively so that they can communicate with a variety of audience and use it for different purposes.

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## **Cultural Synthesis in Literature with special reference to E. M. Forster**

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In one of Forster works (two cheers for Democracy) he observed that the public schools developed the mind but failed to develop the hearts and they came out with undeveloped human hearts'. Developing human hearts was his only goal to achieve through his writing. The system of education which has to develop the mind has to accept others and facilitate gently connect to others in the society; he feels it had failed to do so. Thus his plots were centered on developing 'undeveloped hearts' for making existence a reality. The ability to make co-exist 'binary oppositions', he thought to connect' should be only motto of life

"East is East and West is West, The Train shall never meet" said Rudyard Kipling. But E. M. Forster wanted to make the two ends meet and co-exist. The protagonists in his novels try to bridge the gap between the two alien cultures by being present in the culture.

Culture as defined earlier is the way of life followed by a society which is governed by a set of traditional norms, beliefs and the outlook that the society possessed.

Describing himself as a child of unbelief, Forster felt faith as a stiffening process, and a start of mental search which ought to be applied sparingly in life. It insists, he believed, mainly on the spiritual aspect of life to the utter neglect of the body.

His beliefs were the result of the liberal spirit of the age that

weakened the dogmatic orthodoxy in religious thinking. Forster also believed that a return to faith will not solve the muddles of mankind. He was becoming conscious of the connection between religion and the rise of capitalism.

“The influence Christianity retains in modern society is due to the money behind it, rather than to the spiritual appealing it has. It was a spiritual force once, but the indwelling spirit will have to be stated if it is to calm the waters again and probably restated in a non-Christian form”

Howards End (1910) an ambitious novel. Here the clash of values is clear and fundamental. The thinking, sensitive Schlegel sisters are opposed to, yet very much involved with, the worldly-wise Wilcoxes. The Schlegels meet and befriend a poor young man hungry for culture. The association forces them to reflect on their own wealth and that of the businessmen Wilcoxes. Mrs. Wilcox is a sensitive soul to whom they feel drawn, but she is ill and dies. Her death is mysterious as her life. Leonard Bast, the Schlegels' poor young friend, loses his job. Helen Schlegel tries to enlist Mr. Wilcox's sympathy and help, but fails. Stung by his indifference, the romantic, idealistic Helen takes Leonard and his wife Acky to the smart wedding of Evie Wilcox. In so doing she embarrasses all concerned (especially Mr. Wilcox, whose earlier affair with Jacky Bast is exposed), not least her sister Margaret, who forgives Wilcox his shady past and marries him. The Schlegel sisters become joint mistresses of the Wilcox house. Howards End, but not before Helen has had a child by Leonard and not before Charles Wilcox, the eldest son, has killed Leonard in a fit of righteous anger and been committed to prison. Howards End, a title to which Forster attached the famous sub-title, 'Only Connect.....' is about the failure of human relationships, about the failure to connect passion with reason, the heart and the head.

Howards End is a novel of integrity. No other term will serve at once to indicate its ethical and aesthetic unity. The novel is about the connecting of earth and man, though Forster shows that such a connection exists when the spirit of life is strong in character. Rather, the novel is about the connecting of man with man and of man with mankind.

Forster's ethical vision is presented in the allegorical contrast between the inner world of personal existence, represented by the cultural sisters Helen and Margaret Schlegel and the outer world of the practical organization of living represented by the business-like, British-to-the-backbone, empire-building Wilcoxes. It is predominantly the upper middle class world; with town houses and country houses for the well-to-do, a world where class distinctions are taken for granted.

“In contrasting and bringing together the two families – Wilcoxes and Schlegels, each with its faults and its virtues, Forster while himself firmly a Schlegel, is trying to work out a formula which should preserve the best qualities of each kind of outlook.”

“The Prophecy of Howards End may be found in its epigram ‘Only Connect!’ The novel's special concern is human relationship. The novel dialectical in nature, in so far as it deals with the conflict between the two economic classes, in so far as it deals with the discrepancies between the township and countryside, in so far as it deals with the relation between the sexes, and lastly in so far as it deals with the conflict between reason and passion – between prose and poetry. And the novel suggests that all the conflicts can be overcome of averted only if we can connect the two conflicting poles.”

In all his novels, Forster's style is the same: he follows almost the same pattern and always moves forward rhythmically. At least three major characters of Howards End change their ‘positions’ in the plot, i.e. are reformed: the two Schlegels sisters and Mr. Wilcox. The Schlegel sisters at the end of the novel are not what they had been in the early part of it and this is equally true also of Mr. Wilcox. The rhythmical movement of the narrative is manifested in the almost repetitive actions of the major characters with occasional divergences, conditional to situations newly arisen as a result of interactions of the characters.

Lionel Trilling says that

“ Howards End is undoubtedly Forster's masterpiece; it develops to their full the themes and attitudes of the previous novels of Forster and throws back upon them a

new and enhancing light. It justifies these attitudes by connecting them with a more mature sense of responsibility”.

Trilling further writes: ‘Howards End’ is a work of full responsibility. Its theme is ‘Only connect the prose and the passion’ and it shows how almost hopelessly difficult it is to make this connection. That the insights of Forster’s earlier novels could have come to face this difficulty is their justification”. John Sayre Martin says that

“Howards End, Forster’s fourth novel, has a wider social range than his previous fiction. In addition to the society of the cultivated and well-to-do, it deals with the world of business and that of shabby gentility”

Trilling says that “Howards End is a novel about England’s fate, for it leaves too much of England out of account”. But Martin admits that in one respect the novel is concerned about England. He writes:

“Nevertheless, in one important respect, the world of Howards End does resemble our own world of England that is socially and spiritually is fragmented. Except in their formal dealings, the various classes of society scarcely communicate with one another. There is a gulf between rich and poor, and a subtler, but nonetheless insidious one, between men and women. Public life is divorced from private, the outer world from the inner.”

Forster’s own evaluation about it:

“Howards End (and not A Passage to India) is my best novel and approaching a good novel. Very elaborate and all pervading plot that is seldom tiresome and forced, range of characters, social sense, wit, wisdom, colour.”

In short, Howards End, Forster’s masterpiece attempts to impress Forster’s concerns for humanity; what he wants from the society is that there should be human understanding and love.

Forster’s last novel, A Passage to India (1924), is a class by itself. Here, the opposition of values and attitudes is between the British in India and the ‘real’ India of sensitive, deeply religious Indians such as

the young Doctor Aziz. Forster satirises the British Club, the superficial polo-playing, cocktail-drinking petty officials and their gossiping wives – men and women who care nothing for the ‘real’ India and who mock those who do. Mrs. Moore brings the romantic Adela Quested to Chandrapore to marry her son Ronny, the local magistrate. Adela wants to see Ronny in the context of his life and work, and she wants to see the ‘real’ India. A sympathetic British official, Fielding and his young friend Dr. Aziz arrange for Mrs. Moore and Adela to visit the mysterious Marabar Caves. It is here, in the darkness, in the heart of the real India, that Adela, in a hysterical moment becomes convinced that Dr. Aziz has sexually assaulted her. The event becomes the point about which the rest of the novel turns. Mrs. Moore leaves India, the one Briton (Fielding apart) who has in a sense ‘understood’ it and dies on the return voyage. She had believed in the Doctor’s innocence (as Fielding does) but she cannot defend him when he is brought to trial. The trial is a set-piece confrontation between the indignant British, convinced almost to a man of the Doctor’s guilt and the Indians who champion Dr. Aziz and lament Mrs. Moore. Ronny takes the case. As the trial proceeds, Adela become less and less sure of what it was that had happened in the Marabar Caves; she is affected by the Indians’ appeal to the departed Mrs. Moore and drops the charges. Aziz is freed, but nothing can heal the divisions that the case has caused or exposed – nothing that is but time and the patience of men like Aziz and Fielding.

In ‘A Passage to India’ the process of a search for new values, the ideal of integration, the quest of the individual to come to terms with his universe assumes new shape and form. Forster presents a threefold structure of Mosque, Caves, Temple and the interaction of metaphysical opposites in this triple stream contributes to the meaningful flux in ‘A Passage to India’ and also accounts for its difference, in tone and spirit from ‘Howards End’. The value of friendship is central to the novel, Aziz and his friends are discussing ‘as to whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman.’

The friendship between Aziz and Fielding is the core of the novel which embodies and unfolds the themes of separation and union, fission and fusion, hatred and love, apathy and fellow-feeling, negation and affirmation.

Aziz had invited the English and Professor Godbole to the Marabar expedition but while preparing for it

“Trouble after trouble encountered him, because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth which tries to keep men in compartments.”

This compartmentalization and stratification of Indian society on the basis of caste, religion and economic status is presented as an aspect of the social image of India. Aziz faced the problems, for instance, of Godbole’s food and other people’s food. The divisions are sometimes purely social; at other times they are coloured by racial consciousness.

Ronny and the Englishman realizes that the Indian is the ‘spoilt westernized type’. The divisions between the sexes and inequalities between men and women in Indian society are skillfully shown in scenes of the Bridge party arranged by Mr. Turton, the collector. The comparatively more advanced and more cultivated of the Indian ladies, Mrs. Bhattacharya and Mrs. Das are introduced to Mrs. Moore at the Bridge party and the description of the two ladies suggests the changing social values of Indian women.

“The shorter and the taller ladies adjusted their saris, and smiled. There was a curious uncertainty about their gestures, as if they sought for a new formula which neither East nor West could provide.”

This is the twilight world of a change from a medieval to a modern society and the awkwardness of the transitional phase becomes an object of comedy. The reference to purdah or veil is an instance of the comic. Aziz, just prior to the departure of the train to Marabar, speaks lightheartedly to Mrs. Moore and Adela Quested:

“Did you know that you are to travel Purdah?

Will you like that?”

Mrs. Tourton, who is comically and satirically portrayed, is irritated by the sight of Purdah women at the Bridge Party.

“To work, Mary, to work,” cried the Collector, touching his wife on the shoulder with a switch.



Mrs. Tourton got up awkwardly. ‘What do you want me to do? Oh, those purdah women! I never thought any would come. Oh! Dear’

The social image depicted in ‘A Passage to India’ is basically one of schism and division. The English are little Gods and they create their own heaven in the exclusive Anglo-Indian club. Friendships are formed and forged but misunderstandings and alienation cast a dark shadow over the world of human and social relationships. Bitterness replaces affection; hatred comes in the place of love and the ways of man towards men in strewn with thorns. Forster greatly cherishes the value of personal relations; they are for him the sine qua non of the humanistic and liberal creed and consequently the blindness of the Anglo-Indians to this intensely significant value is the principal cause of this human and social tragedy.

To conclude, Edward Morgan Forster, a liberal humanist was indebted to the thought and temper of Mathew Arnold. Arnold’s perception, that powers which human native must develop before a true culture can prevail the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge or the power of beauty, the power of social life and manners. Forster was an advocate of reason and emphasized the importance of the perceptions of the senses. In 1940, Forster asserted that mankind is engaged in a religious struggle as well as outer or political one, in a struggle for their value and in the struggle of the individual towards the dark secret place where she may find reality.

All the arts at their most intense and culture at its sincerest provide opportunities for us to reach the profoundest truth about the spirit. Forster was more self-conscious and intellectual was more attracted to the prophetic and to the unconscious than were his London associates. In his fiction, Forster describes the relationships between secular experience and mystical aspiration, between the tangible and the intangible, between the empirically observed and the transcendently poetic. “Personal relationships remain valid forever” says Helen Schlegel in *Howards End* and these provide the only firm reality in a world of violence and cruelty in a civilization which cherishes causes and abstracted.

Forster’s aim was to bring people together, for he believed in

social inter-course and this he achieved in *Howards End* “This novel may be regarded highly for its fusion of character and situation with idea; for the skill evinced in bringing all segments of the British middle class to bear upon each other; for the interweaving of social comedy with serious often tragic situations; for the connotative richness of its symbols; concern about the practical insignificance of the Schlegels’ culture goes a turning of the mind towards the question of ultimate sanctions.

*A Passage to India*, a classic of the liberal spirit touches upon social and cultural problems, personal relations and the liberal tradition is strong and impressive. The novel elaborates the human predicament in a universe which is not so far, comprehensible to our minds.

The Culture, that Forster aspires for is one that makes man understand not just, himself but that of mankind. His attempt to make the differing cultures co-exist is positive in approach but in reality, co-existence of cultures is evasive. In other words, the only motto of Forster ‘that is’, ‘to connect’ will get realized only when the undeveloped hearts become highly evolved art thus developed through a process of ‘self enquiry’. What Forster offers in his quest for synthesis is a mode where there is no space for mistrust, intolerance, is no space for autocracy or dogmatic religiosity, parochial and narrow ideals and ideologues political and racial tensions. The synthesis that Forster tries to bring about is through an understanding of the ‘Human’ mind, body and spirit with a liberal humanistic attitude to mankind.

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## **The Origin of Indian Short Stories**

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The short story is a piece of fiction dealing with a single incident, material or spiritual, that can be read at one sitting; it is original; it must sparkle, excite, or impress; and it must have a unity of effect or impression. It must move in an even line from its exposition to its close. - Edgar Allen Poe.

In ancient Indian literature short story had two forms – the fable and the popular tale or the folk tale. In the fable form usually the characters are animals symbolizing human beings. It is fraught with moral edification. Similarly the popular tale has the virtue of quenching the curiosity of the reader by imparting him some useful knowledge in the most interesting way. *Panchatantra* is a good example for the fable. *Kathasaritsagara* is a typical example for the folk tale. In a way, the fable and the popular tale served as models for the short story writer in modern literature in India. These two impressed the modern short story writer with their spirited narration and the use of suspense.

With the advent of the British in India, Indian literature moved in a different direction. New forms like the lyric, the novel and the short story began to appear in Indian languages. By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some of the Indians made a sincere attempt to write short story in English. They, like their counterparts in the west, followed two traditions in English short story. One tradition was pioneered by Maupassant and the other one was started by Chekov. In the first tradition, the stories are clear, simple and naturalistic. In the second tradition:

We are asked to marvel at the workings of a mind which saw life as it were obliquely, touching it almost in remote control, telling its stories by an apparently aimless

arrangement of casual incidents and producing such masterpieces as ‘the darling’.<sup>1</sup>

In a way, the stories belonging to the first tradition are similar to the ancient Indian tale in the qualities like straight narration, persuasion of curiosity and the presentation of clear picture of life. The Indian writer in English, of course, got from his counterpart in the west, a sense of realism and an understanding of the human situation in a society through firm character delineation in terms of his environment.

The rapidity of national movement, the spread of journals in English too influenced the Indian short story writers in English. The periodicals accommodated the short stories of the Indians. The short story, as a literary genre, has a unique position in the modern era. Man’s life today is hectic and he is hard-pressed for time. Such a social situation has given rise to the popularity of short story as one can satisfy one’s literary urge within the limits of time at his or her disposal. The history of the modern short story is almost as old as the history of magazines because with the rise of periodicals in the nineteenth century there emerged a recognizable body of writing which can rightly be called short story. Although story telling in the form of fairy and folk tales dates back to the ancient times, the short story as it exists today, with a conscious form, is not more than a hundred years old.

India is a rich store house of stories. *Panchatantra*, *Hitopadesh*, *Jatakas*, *Betal Panchvinshat* and *Katha Sarit Sagar* to name but a few, are perennial treasures of scintillating wisdom. The work of carrying these stories to the illiterate masses was undertaken by narrators *Puraniks* and *Hardasas* in some part of India and by the *Kirtankars* in some others. These stories were full of fantasy, episodes of joy and sorrow, emotions, philosophy and moral exhortations. The art of storytelling might have existed from time immemorial but shorter fiction in its present form emerged in the nineteenth century when Indians were exposed to Western literature. It was a century of short story.

The essence of the short story lies in its “unity of effect”. The short story can be a means of telling a good tale and of producing an effect and conveying the philosophy of life. This can be achieved by various methods. The chief requirement is brevity because it is

necessary that a reader's attention should not stray. An effect of unity or totality can best be achieved in a brief piece. The opening of a short story is of paramount importance. It strikes the key note of the theme and gives direction to the final effect produced. The story writer should always keep the denouement in view while elaborating the incidents. Before developing the plot to the denouement, the story teller should build up an effective climax so as to keep the emotional tension of the reader. It thus calls for conscious manipulation of the climax of the story. One agrees that the climax is the focal point of interest. A truly great story should have a logical correlation between various details up to the end. Like the novel. The story has to be set both in time and place. A novelist can build up the locale at leisure and give his characters lengthy pasts, but a short story writer cannot afford to linger on the past too long. To be able to confine to the limits of the length, he has to be economical. A great deal of artistic achievement depends on the creation of atmosphere in a story. Technique is as important in a short story as theme. It is the function of the story to reveal something about life through a small fragment of man's existence. Economy of words, a close-knit structure and significant theme are the cardinal points of a successful piece.

Since independence, Indian short fiction has matured considerably and is able to reflect the social realities and to record with precision the blows to the traditions and the value system. Nothing escapes the notice of the storyteller; political behavior, the joint family system, the generation gap; the changing attitudes towards love, marriage and sex, the invasion by feminist ideology have all been subjected to incisive analysis. These fiction writers are watching with concern, the shift in moral values and are trying to analyze the period of transition. Since a writer too is a part of the game of see-saw of old and new values, the tussle between tradition and modernity, he/she considers it his/her duty to focus on the issues that concern society.

It was in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the Indian short story in English gained momentum through a collection of short stories entitled *Stories from Indian Christian Life* by Kamala Sathianandan. K.S.Venkata Ramani and K.Nagarajan in a way pioneered Indian short story in English. In his *Jatadharan and other stories* K.S.Venkata Ramani records the social conditions of the times. He comes before us

with his leaning towards didacticism. In his own words:

Almost unconsciously I find I developed a didactic tail which my compassion for all life refuses to clips.<sup>2</sup>

In his stories Venkata Ramani does not hesitate to present a humorous and realistic picture of Indian villages. He also expresses his reformatory zeal to educate the illiterate villagers. In his *The Bride Waits* he exposes the social evils of the times. Even the language is in keeping with characters and situations. K.Naga Rajan in his Short Story Collection entitled *Cold Rice* presents a colourful picture of the coastal regions of southern India. He has succeeded in using sparkling dialogue, spontaneous humour and a sense of a sudden revelation of the events. In a nutshell,

Naga Rajan reveals himself a shrewd observer of human nature as well as of the contemporary society.<sup>3</sup>

Next appear on the scene, Manjeri, S.Iswaran and Mulk Raj Anand. Iswaran has about ten published volumes of short stories to his credit. His short stories concern themselves with the consequences of the world war and the nationalistic movement. The characters are mostly from orthodox Brahmin families, judges, lawyers, doctors, policemen, drivers, fishermen and beggars. His stories like *Sea-Shells*, *No Anklet bells for her* and *Revelation* represent his art as a short story writer.

Mulk Raj Anand aimed at the presentation of the predicament of the men and women of his times. Though he is the most prolific as a short story writer, one notices his sympathy for the underdog that dominates in them. Among his short stories, *The Barbers Trade Union*, *Lajwanti*, *Lament on the death of a Master of Arts* represent his art as a short story writer. As Professor Kantak rightly observes,

A simple how are you? Would certainly be preferable to speak O' brother! What is the condition? <sup>4</sup>

In fact, Mulk Raj Anand tried to bring out local colour and the Indian element. Mulk Raj Anand's interest in the poor and the wretched over shell, he advocates his philosophy of judging everything on the humanistic scale of values. Perhaps Raja Rao supplemented this need to preserve the artistic form. The Indian English short story owes its

origin to the ancient folk-tales; it incorporated the finished form, natural prose and technique from the Western models. Life is no longer a chronologically arranged sequence of events but a complex web of feelings, emotions, motives and memories. This accounts for the shift in emphasis from plot-oriented, moral tales to characters and situations from real life.

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## **Man and Woman Relationship in the Select Novels of Anita Desai**

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Anita Desai is an Indian novelist, notable for her studies of Indian life and portrayal of female characters in her writings. Desai's novels and short stories mainly focuses on the personal struggle of Anglicized, middle class women in contemporary Indian as they attempt to overcome the societal limitations imposed by a traditional-bound patriarchal culture. She explains the essentiality of familial bonds and addressed such themes as Gee man anti-Semitism, the dissolution of traditional Indian values and Western stereo types of India. She not only ushered in new possibilities for Indo-English writers, withstand to be an inspiration for upcoming young writers.

Anita Desai, Christened as Anita Mazumdar Desai, was on 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1937 in Nussorie, born to a German mother, Tovi Nime and a Bengal business man D.N.Malzumdar. She was an Indian novelist and Emeriti's John E.Buchard Professor of Humanities at the Nassachessette Institute of Technology. She has been short listed for the Booker Prize three times, was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award, in 1978 for her novel, Fire on the mountains, by the Sahitya Academic, India's National Academy of letters. She grew up speaking German at home and Bengali Urdu, Hindi and English outside the house. She first learned to read and write in English at school and as a result it became her 'literary language'. Despite German being her first language she did not visit Germany until late as an adult, she began to write in English at the age of seven and published her first story at the age of nine.

She was a student at Queen Mary's Higher Secondary School in Delhi and received her B.A. in English Literature in 1957 from the Miranda House of the University of Delhi. The following year she married Ashvin Desai, the director of a Computer Software Company and author of the book: Between Etemities: Ideas on life and the



cosmos. They have four children, including Booker Prize winning novelist Kiran Desai. Her children were taken tour for Weekends where Desai set her novel the village by the sea.

Desai published her first novel, "*Cry the Peacock*", in 1963, she considers *Clear Light of Day*(1980)her most autobiographical work as it set during her age and also in the same neighborhood in which she grew up .In 1984 she published *In Custody* about an Urdu poet in his declining days which was short listed for the Booker prize. In 1993 she became a creative writing teacher at Nassachuretty Institute of Technology. Her novel, the *Zig Zig way*(2004), is set in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Mexico and her latest novel "The Artist of Disappearance came in 2011".

In 1993, Merchant Nory productions released *In Custody* directed by Ismail Merchant with a screen play by Shahrukh Hussain. It won the 1994 president of India Gold Medal for Best Picture and stars Shashi Kapoor, Shabnam Azmi and Om Puri.

Anita Desai has been one of India's best known women writers for over a half century. She was one of the first writers from the sub-continent to introduce western readers to post Independence India. The bulk of Desai's stories are about women, particularly the woman who feels her to exist on the fringe of her society. "Anita Desai continues her peerless exploration of the tensions between social obligations and personal independence. The complex dynamics of families and the class between the old and new" of all the contemporary Indian English Novelists, she is undisputedly the most popular and powerful novelist. She has made commendable contribution to the Indian English Fiction. She is a novelist of urban malice and is a fine mixture of Indian, European and American sensibilities. She writes instinctively as if writing is an urge for her. Writing is a process of herself discovery to go deep into the complexities of existence. She is essentially a psychological novelist. She does not reflect on social issues in her works. She sees social realities from a psychological point of view and does not look at them as a social reformer or a moralist. Her focus of attention is on the inner climate, the climate of sensibility. Her main concern is to depict the psychic states of her protagonists at the crucial juncture of their lives. She creates observing minutely what is going on around her.

The theme of man 'woman relationship in Anita desai's novels reveals consummate craftsmanship. Mrs. Desai sincerely broods over the fate and future of modern woman more particularly in male-chauvinistic society and her annihilation at the altar of marriage. The novelist however does not challenge the futility of marriage as an institution but discloses the inner psyche of the characters through their relations. In Desai's novels, most marriages are proved to be unions of incompatibility. Men are considered to be rational whereas women are sensitive and emotional. They have their different attitudes and interests so they look at things in different ways and react to the same conditions differently. Mostly women have been both culturally and emotionally dependent on men, any disruption of attachment or affiliation is seen not as a loss of relationship but "a total loss of self",<sup>1</sup> which is then seen as neurosis. The relationship between family and insanity as suggested here is relevant to the study of Anita Desai's characters.

Anita Desai has explored different aspects of feminine psyche which also includes man-woman relationships. *Cry, the peacock* is a family play mainly concerned with the theme of marital discord between husband, Gautama, and wife, Maya. The play is about Maya's cry for love and life of involvement. Anita Desai has dealt with a sterile woman, highly sensitive and emotional, who is married to Gautama, a busy, prosperous, middle aged lawyer. The husband is too much engrossed in his own affairs to meet the demands, partly temperamental, partly spiritual, of his young wife. Gautama's sensibilities are too rough and practical to suit Maya. She is the pampered child of Rai Sahib, and is brought up in an atmosphere of luxury. She lives to use her own words, like 'a toy prince in a toy world'. Albeit Gautama is a faithful husband who loves and cares for her in his own way, yet Maya is never satisfied and happy. Usha Pathania, a noted critic, remarks: "marital relationships are established with the explicit purpose of providing companionship to each other. However, the element of companionship is sadly missing in the relationship between 'Maya and Gautama.'"(1). The novel exposes an impression of marital incongruity and unhappy conjugal life. As Kohli points out, "no other writer is so much concerned with the life of young men and women in Indian cities as Anita Desai is".

Whatever marriages are referred to in *Cry, the peacock* are not

contented marriages in real sense of the term. Maya is deeply scattered at the insensibility, hypocrisy and contempt exposed through other marriages around her. There we find no reference of her own mother. It appears that it might be a pathetic and disgusting episode in her father's life. So he might be concealing it from Maya. Gautama's parents also lived an unnatural marital life. Each one kept himself or herself busy with his or her vocation.

Laila, Maya's friend, who marries to a tubercular man against the wishes of her parents. She is a teacher in girl's school and then she marries a man knowing his disease. Her life is fatalistic. She is gloomy and ascetic wearing no bangles or jeweler. If Maya is obsessed with the albinos' predication, laila has accepted her destiny and does not complain "it was all written in my fate long age". She reveals the mockery of the marriage, yet forebears all childish fantasies of her husband.

Anita desai in voices in the city has depicted feminine sensibility mainly through the delineation of man-woman "damp pressure of critical attention." Sister-in-law across her bed discussing her ovaries and tubes. The deficiency of privacy makes her insane. She wants to read the book but she is not left alone to read, is also a reason of her insanity.

She was oppressed at the truth and that is what one is trying to explore. For her "it is depth, which is interesting, delving deeper in a character, a situation or a scene rather than going round about it". This technique is used by her in capturing a psychological realism and an intensified expressionism'. She is very much interested in exploring the psychic depths especially of her female protagonists. K.R.Srinivas Ayengar rightly says, "Says her preoccupation is with the inner world of sensibility rather than the outer world of action, she has tried to forge a style, supple and suggestive enough to convey the fever and fretfulness of the stream of consciousness of her principal characters"(2).

Today there is a great change in fiction writing all over the world. It shifts gradually from the external world to the inner world of the individual. It captures the atmosphere of the mind and directly involves the reader in the flow of a particular consciousness. Desai declares, "All

my writing is an effort to discover, to underline and convey the true significance of things...Next to this exploration of the underlying truth and discovery of private mythology and philosophy, it is style that interests me most.....and by this I mean the consciousness labor of uniting the language and symbol, word and rhythm...one must find a way to unite the inner and outer rhythms to obtain integrity and impose order on chaos.

Among all the Indo-English novelists, Anita Desai lays stress on the landscape and correlates it to psychic states of her protagonists. Her gift of suggesting things is rare. She employs various devices such as flash backs, asides and painting the landscape scenes in order to throw clues to the action of the story. As Schyam Asnani says, “her technique is the natural outcome of her preoccupation with the individual psychology combined with her painter’s eye, her vivid awareness of external world”<sup>16</sup> She makes use of the language of the interior which requires a delicate and subtle handling with hints and suggestions. So her liberal use of symbols and images leaves the reader breathless. She is “an Indian Jane Austen and Virginia Woolf blended together” (3). Her novels are psychological revelations. The technique she has selected for her novels is the technique used by Virginia Woolf, D.H.Lawrence, E.M.Forester and Henry James. There are flash backs and streams of consciousness technique in some of her novels. With her, techniques become a matter of predominant concern. She uses the technique of contrast between various settings, characters and even between the different stages of the same character. She employs the ‘language of the interior’ to delineate the inner tensions, crises of her characters. The problem of her characters is ‘existential’.

Desai is adept at picturing beautiful symbolic scenes. The scenes she creates are approximately suitable to the situations of her characters. Her imagery and symbolism are very remarkable. They are always charged with tremendous significance and unlike other novelists, she registers as does the seismograph, the mental vibrations of her characters and articulates them by hints and suggestions, symbols and images. Like D.H.Lawrence, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Andre Gide, Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka and William Faulkner, she has made use of symbols copiously in her novels (4). There is abundant symbolism in her novels. As a matter of fact, to

discover and convey her vision of the hidden meanings of things, she feels the need of using symbols frequently. Symbols are an integral part of her novels. She has interwoven them artistically and functionally into the texture of her novels. In fact the compulsive and functional use of symbols in her writings is due to the fact what is important, to quote her own words, “is the movement of the wing one tries to capture, not the bird. That is it is the image that matters, the symbol, the myth, the fact of associating them, of relating them, of constructing with them.”

Being essentially a modern psychological novelist in thought and technique, she employs symbol spontaneously and unconsciously. She resorts to symbolistic technique in her writing out of her favourite authors.

She is essentially a psychological novelist. She does not reflect on social issues in her works. She sees social realities from a psychological point of view and does not look at them as a social reformer or a moralist. Her focus of attention is on the inner climate, the climate of sensibility. Her main concern is to depict the psychic states of her protagonists at the crucial juncture of their lives. She creates observing minutely what is going on around her.

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## **The Socio-Political and Paradoxical Undercurrents in The Plays of Vijay Tendulkar: A Critical Study**

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In the era of Independence, the patterns of Indian English Drama has evolved drastically in India. The activities of the theatre were organized and it accumulated a new swing with the commendable contribution of the dramatists like the trio of Badal Sircar of Bengali, Vijay Tendulkar of Marathi and Girish Karnad of Kannada respectively. Indian English Drama has seen the novel light of humanism and realism against the philosophical creed of Rabindranath Tagore and Sir Aurobindo. Vijay Tendulkar bagged his place as a Marathi writer but he had modified the shape of Indian Drama with the Power of his pen to represent the genuine issues forever. In his literary career for over a span of five decades, he penned thirty full-length plays, seven one-acts, six collections of children's plays, four short stories, two novels and seventeen film scripts respectively. His plays have been translated into English not merely by himself but also by others which made him to stand apart from Rabindranath Tagore, Badal Sircar, Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani who transcreated and composed their plays directly into English. However, the contribution of Vijay Tendulkar to the growth and development of Indian drama is credible for it is the cumulative effort of all regional writers producing plays in their respective languages that has enriched both in India and abroad as well. V. S. Naipaul considers him as the best Indian playwright. Arundhati Benerjee attributes, "Vijay Tendulkar has been the vanguard of not just for Marathi but for Indian theatre for almost forty years." Vijay Tendulkar was also a journalist and his journalistic vision moulded his creative talent to produce the plays to expose the naked realities of society. He would often assume the different 'roles and characters' not only from real life situations and incidents but also from the personal experience in his life.

### **The views and ideas of Vijay Tendulkar about the dramatic writings:**

Vijay Tendulkar had set up the views and ideas about the dramatic writings in different notion, manners and style respectively. The series of lectures and interviews by him on structuring a manifest and the ingredients of the play such as Plot, Characterization, Spectacle, Paraphernalia of dialogues, the insight of revolution and the extensive stage direction are the vital spheres of it. Besides this, the dramatist projected the characterization and structure to be the most significant ones of a successful play. He often used to advise the playwrights to possess the two basic qualities of the play such as “the skill of characterization” and “the sense of structure” respectively. He says that the essence and the price of dramatic dialogue are the complementary to characterization in the plays. He also says that the structure is felt and not seen in general. Vijay Tendulkar keenly observes that the Woman suffers a lot as the victim of the institutional body of powers in the patriarchal Indian society. This drastic scenario is frequently pioneered to the violence against women in the society of India. In majority of his plays, we can come across that Vijay Tendulkar appears the pre-occupational with this syndrome of Gender bias, Power and Violence. His plays reveal the message that woman possesses the strength, the courage and puissance for facing and surviving the onslaughts of institutional body of power and violence in the domain of India.

### **The Critical Study of Vijay Tendulkar’s Plays:**

Vijay Tendulkar advented and commenced his dramatic career with his commendable play “*Silence! The Court is in Session*” (1967). In this play, the gender bias and cruelty is exhibited through the paralyzed system of judiciary and the court of law in India. Leela Benare, the vital character of the plot, ignores the social taboos, leading an independent life according to her own free will and wish. On the day of mock-trial, the co-actors adeptly expose her privacy and life and ridiculously reveal her illicit relationship with Professor Damle, who is a married man and has five children. He is caused to the fact that Miss Benare is carrying his child in her womb without wedlock. Further, the absence of professor Damle during the trial symbolizes his dishonourness and shrinking of responsibility towards the court of law. The trial starts

ridiculously with the charges of foeticide laid on Miss Benare, which act is not accepted by the traditional society in general. Ever since the inception of the society, it is not consentable to have a child born out of wedlock. Therefore, this illicit pregnancy has to be terminated. Here, Vijay Tendulkar cites the existing hypocrisy, when Damle appears as a mere mute witness whereas Leela Benare delivers a lengthy speech to defend herself. Leela Benare's speech of self-defence is reminiscent of Nora's speech in Isben's play "The Doll's House". Sukhatme is playing the role of a lawyer, who highlights Benare's crime by proclaiming the sanctity of womb and motherhood as "Motherhood is a sacred thing.....Motherhood is pure" (p.79). All are acceded that the girls should be kept seven steps around the sacred fire and tied in the three auspicious matrimonial knots amidst the public at the onset of puberty so that the temptations leading to the social crimes are to be prevented. That means that, they unanimously consent with the traditional system of society that the women should not be given liberty and loneliness at any cost in general. "Silence! The Court is in Session" is a fabulously structured play with a compact plot. For all I know, to be said in a nutshell, this play is one of the most prevalent issues of society concerned that existed and staged naturally in Indian society.

Then, the issue of the domination of Males, Power and Violence is continued to direct and occupy the dramatist's psyche, when Vijay Tendulkar wrote the "*Sakharam Binder*" (1972). The dramatist sheds ample light on the domination of Males, Physical lust and Violence in a human-being. 'Sakharam, The Binder' is the protagonist who is born in a Brahmin family and always appears almost like ruffian who does not believe in refinement and sophistication of personal relationship. He disregards the culture, ethics and societal values by nature. He utterly neglects his parents though he is an unmarried man. But, he likes to provide shelter to abandoned women in postcolonial India. The women (The castoff wives) who are severely tortured and mercilessly sent out of the homes by their husbands will generally be sheltered by him and used as the domestic servants and sex partners. He rules like a tin-pot tyrant and each woman is told that it is a contract marriage, the contract breaches by mutual consent and she is free to leave whenever and wherever she likes to go in due-course. When the play opens, he has already kept six women in his home, Laxmi is being the seventh



one. As a male member of the society, he is exercising the power over these women and he never failed to remind them that they were minorities. He could do this with his tactics which reflects his frankness. He has his own strategy and concept of morality which is against to the established social norms and customs. In this context, Vijay Tendulkar portrayed Laxmi as an ideal woman. She is a loyal, docile, hard-working, religious, self-effacing and tender-hearted by nature. Besides this, she fights tooth and nail for survival, when she finds Champa securing her position in Sakharam's house. She is tactfully persuading Champa to accommodate her in the same house in spite of Sakharam's reluctance to her presence. Being a confidant in her physical charms, Champa least suspects that Laxmi will snatch Sakharam from her. Later, Sakharam exhibits his power and violence over Champa by killing her when he came to know that she has been unfaithful to him. Further, he also knows that Champa has secret associations with Dawood. This wounds the ego of Sakharam and so kills Champa brutally. Hence, the play is commendable for its realism as Tendulkar exposed the naked realities of the backward and downtrodden strata of Indian society.

The play "*The Vultures*" was in-fact penned 14 years back then it was produced and published in 1971. The play focuses on the unorganized family of Hari Pitale who deceives his own brother in business. His sons Ramakant and Umakant and daughter Manik are greedy, ego-centric, cruel and wayward by nature. They have no ethics among the siblings and morality of family, personal and human relationship in general. They ponder even to make conspiracy to kill each other. Hari Pitale realizes that his family is no better than the vultures, the scavenger birds of prey. The cruelty and obscenity of human behaviour is at the zenith state, when the brothers kick even at the tummy of their pregnant sister. Among the so-called vultures, 'Rama'-the Ramakant's wife represents the tender bird; docile, helpless, submissive, gentle and kind-hearted by nature. She has been utterly disgusted with the impotency of her husband. In the claustrophobic and awkward milieu of the family, she cultivates an affair with Rajininath, the half-brother-in-law. Rama is treated malevolently in home because of this prop- inanity. Finally, Ramakant aborts the foetus of his wife with severe physical violence. Thus, the

play exhibits the brutal violence in the family at various levels among the siblings such as the sons against father, brothers against sister, brother against brother respectively. The Violence is prevalent in their family which is intentionally leads to the brutal form in due-course of span.

The play "*Ghasiram Kotwal*" (1972) is an another theme by Vijay Tendulkar which is based on the power and violence in Indian society. The play is set up in Poona of the Peshawas. The crux of the play is the attachment between the Power and Corruption in Indian society. Ghasiram is the protagonist of the play. He is a Brahmin by birth from Kanauj. He comes to Poona in search of his bread and butter. Despite he is a Brahmin, he takes up shelter in the house of Gulabi, a courtesan by profession. He accompanies Gulabi in her erotic songs and dance on various occasions. One day in the dance programme, Nana is bruised at his ankle. Then, Ghasiram forgetting his Brahminism, he catches the king's foot with his hands. As a reward of his flattery, Ghasiram wins the favour of the king. However under the suspicion of a mysterious theft, he was put into the prison. Ghasiram feels himself humiliated out of the wickedness and fun of the people of Poona. The Violence, revenge and cruelty grip his consciousness. Soon- After his release (Ghasiram) from the prison, Nana, the representative of the Peshawas appoints Ghasiram as the Kotwal of the city not on the basis of talent, but because of his lusts after Ghasiram's young and beautiful daughter, Gauri. Ghasiram on his part violates his duties and misuses his position to terrorize the Brahmins of Poona, who had humiliated him previously. Gauri, the miserable victim of Nana's sensuality became pregnant in course of time. In this regard, Ghasiram blackmails Nana and created much nuisance in public. So, Nana kills Gauri in order to conceal his offence, due to this revelation, Ghasiram becomes fury against Nana. As Ghasiram has this notion of retaliation in his mind against the people of the city, he persecutes the people severely like a bruised panther. Consequently, the People of Poona agitate and organize a revolt against his atrocities towards people. Even Nana feels that, he has no longer in need of Ghasiram, he terminates Ghasiram from the position of Kotwal by using his royal authority. Now Ghasiram loses both his daughter and his position of Kotwal. Ultimately, Nana commands the death of Ghasiram too in course of

time. Here, Vijay Tendulkar indicates and highlights the indisputable fact that the religiosity and sexuality are misused by means of exercising one's power without rationality. This gist is extracted from the ancient phase of the chronicle of India.

The Play "*Encounter in Umbugland*" is 'a Political Allegory', which was produced in 1974. Here, Vijay Tendulkar presents the political milieu of India of late sixties in the mode of drama. The play commences with the celebrations organized on the occasion of 60th anniversary of the coronation of King Vichitravirya. On this occasion, the king delivers a speech expressing concern about his successor to the throne of the state. The king also prefers to become a hermit after surrendering the power, as he is too old and has been advised to have the rest in serene milieu. Soon –After this, the king expired unfortunately. Then, there was a political crisis in the state, as there was no consensus among the five ministers on the issue of the succession to the crown. Finally, they came to a conclusion and made a resolution to give the responsibility of the state to the Princess Vijaya, who was weak, feeble and ignorant by nature. They wanted to make her a puppet (queen) in their hands. Here, Vijay Tendulkar has portrayed her well and graphically depicting her development in the respect of administration. As she was an arrogant natured and self-opinionated girl, she used to administer the state properly as per her will and wish. Despite she was an inexperienced and whimsical ruler; she used to use the noval devices to vanquish her foes in the course of her administration. 'Vijaya, the young princess is very fond of her attendant Prannarayan, who is a eunuch by birth. She appoints him as her chief advisor in the respect of administration. She has learnt the gimmicks, pros and cons of politics by him. Thereby, she could become a powerful and reputed queen in the state.

Instead of being a puppet (queen) in the hands of five ministers, she could have attained an ability to make a direct interaction with the people in the respect of ruling. More-Over, she could accumulate the reputation in public on her own. This adept of Princess Vijaya sprouted the bewilderment and discontent among the ministers. The Cabinet Ministers tried to convene a rebellion meeting and plot against her but in vain. Why because, they did not have such guts to invade her. Hence, they utterly defeated themselves in this regard. Eventually, the

Ministers comprehend themselves that she is “a born dictator”, thereby, they thought to have an idea that, it is better to surrender meekly to her authority. The play ends with the grand reception arranged and awaiting the queen due to the royal victory of her over the rebellion cabinet ministers. Thus, Vijaya, the young princess wins over her cabinet ministers and sustains a good reputation in all the respects of her tenure across the state.

“*Kamala*” (1981), This play deals with the real life story of an actress in about two acts. These two acts depict the deplorable state of women who are treated as mere objects to be bartered, bought and sold as the toys. Here, Vijay Tendulkar uses the ‘Media’ as an instrument of the mechanization of power in society. Jaisingh Jadhav, who is a young and dynamic journalist in society then. He is a publicity oriented personality by nature. Here, he purchases a woman by name “Kamala” for a meagre sum of Rs.250 at a flesh market of Luhardaga Bazaar in Bihar. He wants to expose this illicit racket of women-selling to the rich people as slaves in open fair. “Mrs.Sarita, Jaisingh’s wife fails to appreciate and compromise with the attitude of her husband. He fights for the emancipation and equality of women but keeps his wife “Mrs.Sarita” as his slave. She performs all sorts of household works and activities as a ‘bonded labourer’. Here, the tragedy of the life of “Mrs.Sarita” becomes conspicuous to the public as “Kamala” considers “Mrs. Sarita” as another purchased slave. Hence, “Kamala” ponders and proposes that both of them must live together like siblings. Then, “Jasmine” wants to take “Kamala” to the press briefing to prove his point of view. But, here he has to surprise that “Kamala” exposes the sadistic attitude of “Jaisingh” towards his wife “Mrs.Sarita”. Now, “Mrs.Sarita” musters up the entire courage and put forward the strong resent and resistance against the male domination in Indian society. Here, she does like this to prove her calibre in this regard. As “Vijay Tendulkar” was considered as the angry young man of Marathi and Indian theatre as well for four decades, he was always fond of portraying and flaying the naked realities about the human life and nature in Indian society.

In the play “*Kanyadaan*” (1983) Vijay Tendulkar flays the theme of social upliftment and highlights the chaotic and audacious consequences of disturbing the existing social equations in society. In

this play, Miss.Jyothi is the 20 years old daughter of Mr. Nath. He is a social activist by profession. He encourages his daughter Miss.Jyothi to marry Mr. Arun by name. He is a Dalit poet by profession. Here, Miss.Jyothi's father has no objection at all whereas her mother "Mrs.Sena" and her brother "Mr. Jaya Prakash" are totally against the alliance with Mr.Arun. Finally, their marriage gets settled with a mission to present the idealism before the society. However, after the marriage, Mr. Arun finds that it is difficult to compromise with his own inferiority because there exist is a remarkable contradiction in his idealism as a poet and his ego as a male in patriarchal society. Mrs. Jyothi takes up a job to meet the both ends of the married life and Mr. Arun turns to be a boozier and sadist after the wedlock. As being disgusted with the severe tortures of Mr. Arun, Mrs.Jyothi returns to her parental home. Then, Mr. Nath offers both Mr. Arun and Mrs.Jyothi to come and live together along with them in his house but in vain. After sometime "Mr. Arun" comes for looking Mrs.Jyothi, as he is repenting for what he has done against her and desires to commence the life afresh. He realizes that he is an offender, but while begging for "Mrs.Jyothi" to return with him, his true colours emerge that he draws out a knife. Then, "Mrs.Sena" asks him why he used to beat her daughter Mrs. Jyothi. Then, Mr.Arun becomes nostalgic and says that "What am I, but the son of scavengers. We don't know the non-violent ways of Brahmins like you. We drink and beat our wives.....I am a barbarian, a barbarian by birth". (539-40). Mr. Arun also says that Mrs.Jyothi had the knowledge of everything before she married him. So, she should have had the courage to bear the consequences of wedlock. These words are sufficient to change "Mrs.Jyothi's mind and she decides to go back with "Mr. Arun". Here, "Mr. Nath" proudly admires his courageous daughter and thanks god and prays for Jyothi's wellfare. As the title of the play 'Kanyadaan' "Mr. Nath Devalikar" had indeed gifted his daughter to "Mr. Arun". The portrayal of "Mr. Arun" brings out the idea of 'male domination' in the traditional and patriarchal Indian society. As per the Hindu religion the 'woman' has to yield and oblige meekly to the male domination and surrender to his masochistic power in general.

The play, *The Cyclist* (2002) is the last feather in the cap of Vijay Tendulkar in which he seeks the comments on himself and realities

surrounding him. It is a quite different one from the other plays written by Vijay Tendulkar so far. The play analyses the three journeys such as: an actual ‘global journey’ by the Protagonist, an ‘historical journey’ of the bicycle about its different phases of manufacturer and a ‘psychic journey’ of *The Cyclist* submerging into his sub- consciousness. The vital character is an enthusiastic youth, setup an itinerary around the world on his bicycle but the specific names of the places and the locations are kept hidden. The idea is being conveyed that the guy endeavours to escape from his present location and going forward to visit the distant lands with utmost relish. In connection with this, he is touring all the way and visiting the different exotic places and persons which enabling him to meet the different sorts of people at a great extent on the enroute of his trip. Here, the ‘Cycle’ symbolizes the incessant progress in spite of the various obstacles encountered on the way of his errand. Similarly, *The Cyclist* wades through the many difficulties while travelling ahead. They compulsively probing into human nature which discovering the extreme dehumanization that has set in. Hence, the journey is not merely physical but also that equally metaphysical in nature. The play exhales a breath of existentialism with a positive inference and the stoic stubbornness leads to success for the perseverant people. To be said in a nutshell, the life is not at all a misery and failure for the determined ones in their tenure on the earth. The human consciousness becomes the warfare for the counteracting forces in “The Cyclist” as quoted in “The King of The Dark Chambers and Post Office” by the Poet-Laureate of the Universe and the versatile genius lyricist Rabindranath Tagore.

Thus, Vijay Tendulkar represents the ideas of Power, Exploitation, Humiliation and Gender-Bias in his plays and how they are used as the tool of mechanism of oppression or cruelty against the minorities in the patriarchal society of India. Further, Vijay Tendulkar’s plays are not merely revolutionized the regional theatre of India but also opened the fresh vistas in the theatre of abroad as well. This is experimented and proved in Indian English Drama through the translated versions and the direct sociological plays of him.

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## **Jaya's Struggle for Identity in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence***

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Shashi Deshpande, the daughter of an eminent Kannada dramatist and Sanskrit scholar Adya Rangachar Sriranga, is a widely commended novelist who has ten novels and five volumes of short stories to her credit. Her father is called “the Bernard Shaw of the Kannada Theatre.” Like her father, she has also won various awards such as “Thirumathi Rangammal Prize” and prestigious “Sahitya Akademi Award” (National Academy of Letters) in 1990 for her novels. She also won the “Padma Shri” award in 2009 for her valuable contribution as a writer. She is a postgraduate in English from Mysore University. After her marriage in 1962, she went to England with her husband. After her return, she started writing short stories which have records of her personal life. Earlier her short stories were published in bestselling Indian Magazines such as “Femina,” “Eve’s Weekly,” “The Illustrated Weekly of India,” “Deccan Herald” and “J.S. Mirror”.

Shashi admits that three things were responsible for her development as an English writer. She says: “There are three things in my early life that have shaped me as a writer. These are: “my father was a writer, I was educated exclusively in English and I was born a female” (Of Concerns 107). This statement clearly echoes the voice of a feminist soul in her. However, unlike the early feminist authors who chose to portray the suppression of women in ordinary life, Shashi



Deshpande moved a step further and made educated women as the subject of her writing and voiced the agony of such women who have to depend on their male counterparts for the choices and decisions of their life.

*That Long Silence* is an acclaimed novel by Shashi Deshpande. In this novel the author reveals an interesting picture of an ordinary middle class educated woman. Jaya is the protagonist who lives with her husband Mohan and two children namely Rahul and Rati. The story is entirely woven around Jaya's married life and her role as a dutiful wife. She plays the role of an affectionate mother to her children, dutiful to her in-laws and her relatives as a devoted woman. It gives a simple enthralling scene solely expressed by the author. According to the author husbands don't give attention to wives' emotions, likes and dislikes. The author expresses the emotion with vivid information such as lovemaking, relationship with children, etc. Throughout the story she is engaged in searching for her identity as an individual. In this story one situation arises when husband and wife's relation was given a wacky. Two individuals though very intimate couldn't relate each other in terms of feelings or understanding. Many married women might find some instances similar in their everyday lives after reading the story. The author has done a good job in expressing intimacy and sexual feelings in a natural tone.

'That Long Silence' by Shashi Deshpande is based in the context of contemporary Indian writing in English. She is one of the most modest novelists who explores individual and universal predicaments through the female psyche.

The traditional role of woman –a dedicated wife and a dutiful mother unable to bear allegations, fails in her duty to support him at the time of crisis. She begins to laugh without control. Insulted and irritated Mohan leaves the house that leads her to engage in self-introspection. She wants to shout at Mohan, "I didn't mean to laugh, I wasn't laughing at you, I was laughing at everything – marriage, us, this whole absurd exercise, we call life"

The silence of woman symbolises helplessness. But men take it as a symbol of woman's contentment. Rashmi Gaur observes: "Jaya's journey towards a well-defined self-hood is mired in the complex

confusion of societal pressures, feminine conditioning to fashion oneself according to the accepted norms of behaviour, suppressive and egotistic male chauvinism and the continued dilemma of attaching a purpose to her life, culminating in a long silence. Her silence is symptomatic of alienation and apprehension rioted in every woman's soul in different forms – a silence which is often misunderstood by men as a symbol of woman's contentment”.

Jaya's distant cousin Kusum never agrees with her opinions. Since she has internalized all her anger and maintains silence, she takes salvage in an insane world. In her madness, she thinks that this sane world is too much for her, she jumps into the well and kills herself. Like Kusum there are many women in the society who silently swallow their pain and sufferings.

Kamat, a lonely young widower lives above Jaya's apartment. Jaya's writings receive comments, criticism and encouragement from Kamat. Jaya enjoys her intimate friendship with Kamat by sharing her opinions and ideas about her stories which she could not do with Mohan. She admires him for treating her as his equal and only in his presence. She can be in her own self. “It had been a revelation to me that two people, a man and a woman, could talk this way: with this man, I had not been a woman. I had been just myself”. No doubt Mohan encourages her to write but the way he expects. Her writing is also a kind of breaking the silence. Rajeswari Sunder Rajan argues, “Deshpande's protagonist breaks her silence at one level through the act of writing itself, at another level through renegotiating interpersonal relations within the family”. One of her stories has won the prize where she has made a mention that a man who could not reach out to his wife except through her body. This hurts Mohan because he is afraid that people would think that the man is Mohan and the woman is Jaya. Jaya doesn't want to jeopardize her marriage and thereby she changes her style of writing. As a result, all her stories have been rejected and she stops writing. Even Kamat points out that her stories lack anger. He suggests her to give her personal view and churn out her anger, “why didn't you use that anger in your story? There is none of it here. There isn't even a personal view, a personal vision. I'll tell you what's really wrong with your story. It's too restrained. Spew put your anger in your writing, women spew it out. Why are you holding it in?”

This is the problem not only with Jaya but also with all women writers. They tuned their mind and ways of life according to the need and expectation of men. Since Mohan thinks, for a woman, to be angry is to be unwomanly; Jaya sets her mind not to be angry even in writing. She confines her thoughts and defines her role according to the expectation of her husband. Naturally she has lost her ‘true self’. Anger which has been internalized has turned her to be nervous and incompetent. She says, “no woman can be angry. Have you ever heard of an angry young woman? A woman can never be angry; she can only be neurotic, hysterical, frustrated”.

Jaya married Mohan as he had decided to marry the convent educated, cultured Jaya. After the marriage also Jaya found him a stranger. Intimacy with him had seemed a grotesque indecency. In their physical union he would ask, ‘Did I hurt you?’ and her answer is ‘No’. It is sex that bring both of them together not love. She realises love is a myth, without which sex with the same person for a lifetime would be unbearable.

Jaya has shaped her life according to the desire of Mohan and loses her own identity. She admits:

It hadn’t been Mohan’s fault at all. And it had been just a coincidence, though it had helped, that just then Mohan had propelled me into the other kind of writing. “I encouraged you”, he had said to me.

He was right. But, I went on with my chest-beating out of penitence; Mohan had not forced me to do that kind of writing. I’d gone into it myself with my eyes wide open”.

Jaya willingly patterns her life to keep pace with Mohan’s likes and expectations. In a mood of frustration, she feels for the loss of her selfhood. The real picture, the real ‘you’ never emerges. Looking for it is as bewildering as trying to know how you really look. Ten different mirrors show you ten different faces.

Jaya’s looking at herself as Mohan’s wife, and his children’s mother but not as an individual is pathetic. The sense of loss of her identity makes her say: ‘I’m Mohan’s wife, I had thought and cut off the bits of me that had refused to be Mohan’s wife’.

Jaya's self-examination of her married life has brought to light that she is partly responsible for the loss of her real self. The seventeen years of their married life brings boredom, dullness and monotony instead of intimacy and friendliness. In her effort to be an ideal wife she loses her life in the name of sacrifice. Her failure to be an ideal wife and mother is revealed by her: "I've failed him(Mohan). He expected something from me, from his wife, and I've failed him." Her incapability to deal with her son Rahul's complexities make her say:

"A mother? I had been unfit to be trusted with the entire responsibility of another human being".

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## **The Diasporic Consciousness in M. G. Vassanji's *The Gunny Sack***

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Vassanji is one of the living legends in English literature. His full name is Moyez GulamHussein Vassanji. He prefers to be referred as M. G. Vassanji. The narrative structures of his novels obviously reflect the history of immigration experienced by Vassanji. He was born in Nairobi, Kenya in 1950 and raised in Tanzania. His family was part of a community of Indians who had immigrated to Africa. Vassanji was influenced by the anti-colonial struggle and the well-known “mau mau” movement created an atmosphere that persecuted Indians settled in Kenya. After this movement, M. G. Vassanji left for M.T in 1970 on a Scholarship. Completing his PhD in Physics in the University of Pennsylvania, he then migrated to Canada and settled in Toronto in 1980 accepting Canadian citizenship. Vassanji has developed a sense of detachment in *The Gunny Sack* which provides an insight into the lives of the Indian traders. Governments come and go but the Diasporas (immigrants) only concern is the security of their families, their trade and their attitude. (Vassanji: 231)

Among the Diasporic South East Asian literatures, M. G. Vassanji is well known as a popular writer of Diaspora. His first novel *The Gunny Sack* is concerned with memory and nostalgia. *The Gunny Sack* celebrated the spirit of Asian pioneers, Muslims from India who moved to East Africa in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Second section of *The Gunny sack* is very interesting. In this section one sees that Dhanji Govindji arrives to Zanzibar as a trader from Junaper in Gujarat in the

late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and then settles at Matamu in Tanzania. While Dhanji Govindji worked as an apprentice in Zanzibar and even later as the caravan he had joined, went its leisurely pace southwards along the coast making elaborate rest stops on the way. Stared at by curious or enterprising villagers as his donkey plodded on the way to Matumu, the porters sing to keep their minds off the loads on their heads, movements were afoot that would change the face of East Africa forever after (Vassanji 514). By the time Dhanji Govindji brought his bride Fatima out of Zanzibar five years later, Matamu and much of the coast was under German rule who bought it from the Sultan and the main land behind it was annexed in the name of the Herr Doctor's treaties.

The past is retrieved and reconstructed only through the backward gaze upon *The Gunny Sack*. Kala Juma, the narrator fortuitously meets Grandmother Ji Bai. She conjures from the people of past time and place and brings in the effective narration of the past "well, listen, son of Juma, you listen to me and I shall give you your father Jumma and his father and his father Huseni and his father (14). The Intention of Vassanji in producing such wealth of Diasporic literature on the Canadian literary hemisphere is to let the world identify a victimized community's past histories, Journey into present and uncertain future. (Vassanji:56)

His accountability towards his own community settled either by choice or chance in the new world is proven by his literary works. And his works are part and parcel of Canadian literature showing a Diaspora where a possibility in Multiculturalism is a reality. In the multiculturalism of Canada different voices of solitude find prominence encouraged by Vassanji are the spirit of Canadians they are identified with the Diasporas could make a mark on the literature as a whole within the circumscription of Canadian identity. Here Vassanji becomes an equal representative of Canadian 'Multiple solitudes'. Spanish Personality like Vassanji in the world of letters in a multicultural society like Canada is highly aspired for the better reasons.

The last chapter in the last paragraph in the *The Gunny Sack* captures Juma's wish. After the migration of his Forebear, Dhanji Govindji, from Junapur in India to Zanzibar, and back to Tanzania and

finally after his migration to Canada, Salim is tired exhausted by the perpetual feelings of unhomelines and impossibility of belonging.

The imaginative writings of Asian African writers such as Peter Nazareth, Pheroze Nowrojee, Bahadur Tejani, Kuldip Sondhi and Jagjit Singh who wrote about Asia and East Africa in the 1960's and early 1970's serve as prominent examples (Jagjit Singh). It is argued that Vassanji's community social-politically and historically was strictly never a part of the Black and white community. In between the two M. G. Vassanji is playing out his commitments as a historical translator but is also doing other things as well. In *The Gunny Sack*, M. G. Vassanji talks about volatile union of Africa and expatriate Indians. The identity that the Indians are searching for is produced. Vassanji's Canadian contribution to the literature in articulating the problems of Indian diasporic immigrants in Canada speaks of his postcolonial perspective in terms of immigration and multiculturalism.

Diaspora is the term often used today to describe practically the population which is considered deterritorialised or transnational that which has originated in a land other than which it currently resides, and who's social, economic and political networks across the borders of nation states or indeed span the globe. To be sure such populations are growing in prevalence, number and self awareness. Several are emerging (or have historically long been) significant players in the construction of national narrative, regional alliances or global political economies.

Within a variety of academic disciplines, recent writing on the subject conveys at least three discernible meanings of the concept 'diasporia'. These meanings refer to what we might call 'diasporic' as social form 'disporic' as type of consciousness, and diasporic as made by cultural production. By way of a few respective examples, it is further suggested that these rather different meanings each have certain utility for conceptualising, interpreting and theorising processes and developments affecting south Asian religions outside of south Asia.

### **Diaspora as Social form**

The first meaning which can be derived from contemporary literature is the most common; hence this section rehearses many well known connotations. 'The Diaspora 'was of course, at one time, a concept

referring almost exclusively to the experiences of Jews, invoking their traumatic exile from an historical homeland and dispersal throughout many lands. With this experience as reference, connotations of a 'diaspora' situation were usually rather negative as they were associated with forced displacement, victimisation, alienation, loss. Along with this archetype went a dream of return. These traits eventually led by association to the term's application toward populations such as Armenians and Africans.

### **'Diaspora' as Type of Consciousness**

Another, and relatively recent, approach to 'diaspora' puts greater emphasis on describing a variety of experience, a state of mind and a sense of identity. 'Diasporic consciousness' is a particular kind of awareness said to be generated among contemporary transnational communities. Its particularity is variously described as being marked by a *dual or paradoxical nature*. Paul Gilroy ('There ain't', 'Black Atlantic', 'Small Acts'), too, describes a kind of duality of consciousness -- with direct allusion to W.E.B. Du Bois's notion of 'double consciousness' -- with regard to diasporic individuals' awareness of decentred attachments, of being simultaneously 'home away from home' or 'here and there', or British and something else.

### **A study in Diasporic consciousness**

The phenomena of Diasporic and expatriation are by all means on old one. However, its impact in the present times is larger and deeper. It has become a contemporary social trail and also a literary genre. The growing incidence of the Diasporic has given place to dislocation, disintegration, dispossession and disbelongingness. The experience of expatriation not only gradually disconnects the individual from his roots simultaneously it polarises his existence, which straddles between nationality and exile.

Multiculturalism is the appreciation and promotion of multiple cultures, applied to the demographic make-up of a specific place, at the organizational level, for example: -Schools, business, neighbourhoods, cities or nations.

What distinguishes Vassanji's work from that of other multicultural writers is its vibrant, affectionate depiction of the double migration of his South Asian Characters. The centre of Vassanji's



fiction is the Indian Shamsi communities. The members of this community make their first voyage to East Africa in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as part of the labour mobilization within the British Empire, working functions. British East Africa and German East Africa they possessed the necessary linguistic and political inside knowledge.

The writers of Diaspora largely, south Asian Canadian writers relate history with something, enrich and change it with imagination and sensuousness of personal experience and break the culture of silence and oppression. The history of human liberation is history of the novel. In the modern literary landscape, the sense of identity-loss the human resistance and the need to share new ideas with the world recreating a world in which individuals, communities and nations violently interact with one another, constantly reinventing themselves-the self-discovery of course are inevitably part of post colonial theories and cultural studies and the multicultural writers practice all these definitive qualities in their work. (George, 171)

M. G. Vassanji's wonderful and satisfied narrative style attracts the readers a lot. He started writing novels and stories and then in 1989, after the publication of his first novel *The Gunny Sack*, he was invited to spend a season at the writing at International Program of University of IOWA. The huge-scale of migration from Africa, the Caribbean and the Asian the continent in to the American Anglo Diasporic has altered the composition of society considerably (George, 214). The things have been described with authority in their stories and novels by various writers like Moyez G. Vassanji. Canadian multiculturalism or ethnic fiction provides a particularly fantastic showcase for exploring modes of living together in a multi-cultured society. There are many illustrations derived from M. G. Vassanji's short stories and novels where protagonists feel with their multicultural tradition or modify or even discord it. Vassanji's first novel *The Gunny Sack* is a novel which explores the fantastic history and the stories of the Indian in east African and western cultural. (Vassanji:234)

*The Gunny Sack* stands witness of new history as it throws out many memories and regards the unrelieved events in the entire genealogy of Dhanji Govindji. In this story Salim is the narrator. Psychological landscape for a change uses real raw materials for the historical truths to his novels. The portrayal of man and woman

characters in M. G. Vassanji's novels like *The Gunny Sack* is no big surprise in the sense that they have been many extraordinary roles to play in the circumstances that are both unfavourable and favourable in new places. (George, 237)

*The Gunny Sack* for instance, problematizes the concept of boundaries, goals and space by questioning the primary space homeland. For Sona and Kala is Africa their homeland the place where they were born and grew up and which is the only home that they have seen but only know as the homeland of their ancestors, which is locked in the memory of Ji Bai and given to them as knowledge for the past. The very beautiful creation of geographical boundaries whether actual physically identified boundaries between different communities' races and cultures is beautifully sketched in M. G. Vassanji's first novel *The Gunny Sack* which is also the first novel to create the history and the story. (Vassanji:461)

Vassanji begins the novel at the chronological beginning of the Shamsi community in Kutch in India and moves on from there to the present through the results and decline of the Indian Shamsi community in East Africa.

“Memory, Ji Bai would say is this old sack here, this poor dear that nobody has any use for anymore”

“Well, listen son of Juma, you listen to me and shall give you your father Juma and his father Hussein and his father.....”

Among the stories of tubing from *The Gunny Sack* comes the tailor Edward Bin had this stray of the naming of Dar-es-salaam, the city Kalsum moves to with her children after her husband's death. Then gradually her son took the telling. Recalling his own form here, he remembers his mother's store and neighbour's intrigues the beauty of his pristine English teacher at primary school cricket matches. It is a vibrantly described, deeply felt childhood. The nation meanwhile, raked by political tensions on its road to independence, comes about as Salim Juma reaches adolescence. (Vassanji:261)

Vassanji through *The Gunny Sack* talks about the volatile union of Africa and expatriate Indians. The Indian identities are produced through this union. This story told by Salim Juma recounts the

consciousness of the family movement from porbander and Indian.

This is Vassanji's achievement that he objectively shows the shams is –as the Ishmachis are called in *The Gunny Sack*–to be preoccupied mainly with the survival and therefore not greatly concerned with moral Values. In the novel *The Gunny Sack* the sense of the place becomes one of the most significant elements the writer can manipulate to condition the representation of individuals and community. (Vassanji:275) Though the Indian community in *The Gunny Sack* calls itself African as far as political ideology is concerned, when it comes to the socio-cultural norms it considers itself completely Indian and above the Africans.

This novel is richly peopled with credible characters and there is a story told with humour and understanding. The events chase each other and at times they tend to make the plot sag under their weight but then that is an accepted characteristic of the modern novel. Vassanji weaves an engrossing talk using the convenient play of which houses the gathering memory of the Shamsi community in East Africa. *The Gunny Sack* is bequeathed to the narrator by Ji Bai one of his old ancestors. It's very difficult to give a description to the relationship between her and the narrator.

At least the main characters such as the narrator's Salim get their names according to this theory. Thus nicknames Sona for the golden boy the youngest and favourite, my brother, Jamal, Kala for the one who came between Salim, Salum in Swahili, and the overdone.

At one place in the novel, Kala Juma narrates his sexual encounter with the Swahili girl Amina.

A segment of the novel itself is devoted to a description of these troubled forms of African nationalism. When Juma Husein dies in Jarobi, his family of Kulsam with her Children including young Salim Junams the narrator, moves back to Dar es Salaam gradually Kulsam's son Selim Juma takes over the narrators of *The Gunny Sack* from his mother, recalling his own childhood.

The novel ends with dejected Salim alone in a basement of a flat somewhere in Canada. His last memories coming out of a *The Gunny Sack* he inherits, hoping that he will be the last migrant of his family line. The last chapter of last paragraph of the *The Gunny Sack* captures

Juma's wish the question that we should ask ourselves is; Is Vassanji's choice of the imaginative scene as a concluding part of *The Gunny Sack* a matter at chance is it a conscious discursive strategy that makes the reader reflect on the dislocated experience of the locations he occupied. The answer to the reflection above may arise out of a father sampling of Govindji's Orinary story in the first of the novel beginning with the story of Salim's Progenitor, Dhanji, and Govindji. Govindji tells his African born daughter-in-law, Ji Bai. This 'theory of creation' seems to be the basic theory around which the whole novel revolves even the main characters such as the narrator Salim get their names.

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## **Human values in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies***

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Literature is a realistic representation of life. Society benefits and is mirrored in literature while the primary function of literature is to inculcate humanistic values in society. Language is the essence of society and plays a strategic role in promoting literature. Society would be voiceless and chaotic without language. It is the medium of expression in literature and is used as a tool for conveying ideas, opinions and perspectives. It brings together people of diverse cultures, extends communication, cements relationships and expands society. Language and literature may be seen as instruments for socialization and interaction. Society is indispensable to both language and literature and provides a framework to both.

Jhumpa Lahiri simply depicts characters as they are and does not talk of morals explicitly but at the end there are lessons of humility, steadfastness, tolerance, chastity, equality, adaptability, compatibility and concern for fellow beings. Her stories are worth reading for making human idiosyncrasies thought provoking and soul searching. Certainly the paradise is not lost.

The very first story, “A Temporary Matter” throws light on the ever increasing phenomenon of crisis in marriage. The Indian-American couple Shoba and Shukumar lived happily till the birth of their dead child. This not so uncommon a tragedy strikes at the conjugal bliss and disturbs the domestic harmony. The story on the surface may appear as if it were centered around the temporary matter of power cut but there is more to it. This hour of gloom allows them to share secrets, to weed out the anxieties and apprehensions that cloud their marital life.

The final revelation that Shoba signed a lease for a flat to be on her own and Shukumar's retort about his knowledge of the sex of their still born child made both break down thus bringing to end the crisis in their interpersonal relationship. The key to healthy relationship is effective communication. However, our male and female protagonists fail to understand that this essential fact for happy life. Shukumar thought, "How he and Shobha had been experts at avoiding each other in their three bed room house. How he no longer looked forward to weekend..... How long it had been since she looked into his eyes and smiled or whispered his name on those rare occasions.... sleeping." It is sad that Shobha forgets the fact that life is all about ensuring to deal with new problems promptly and to understand that relationships are dynamic therefore weren't proactive response to change.

"When Mr. Pirzda Came to Dine" deals with Pirzda's cultural identity with India though he is a Bangladeshi. Man can divide country state or land but not culture. The complications of Indo-Pak diplomacy have given birth to Bangladesh but Indo-Bangla cultural relation is not severed for which Mr. Pirzda a Daccan expresses his happiness over Indian officials' announcement "Unless the world helped to relieve the burden of East Pakistani refugees, India would have to go to war against Pakistan". (36). Lahari introduces a visiting scholar from Pakistan on a meager fellowship to study the foliage of New England. The agony of separation from his family is deepened with the news of war breaking out between East and West Pakistan. The Indian family in Boston is a pillar of support till Pirzda reunites with his family. Regardless of region and religion both Lili's family and Pirzda behaved as if they belong to one family.

This story reminds me of the agony of the Syrian refugees of today's world. Niloufer Denvir- a photographer who captured the woes of refugees posted a picture that numbed the world-a picture of a three-year-old Syrian by name Alam khurdi, whose body got washed ashore in the process of crossing the seas. Moved by the plight of the fellow beings, a few countries like the UK, Germany threw open gates for refugees. The ageold idea of Vasudeika kutumbam that emphasizes on the concept of human beings belonging to one family came alive in the face of adversity. The very same idea brings about a positive air in a perplexed father of seven daughters and their mother left behind in

East Pakistan to fend for themselves.

The third story “Interpreter of Maladies” is about Mr. Das, an Indian-American who is on a visit to Konark Sun temple with his family. Mr. Kappasi basically an interpreter of maladies in a doctor’s office is the one taking Das family around as a driver cum guide. On hearing about his job, Mrs. Das exclaims that Kappasi’s job of translating patients’ problems to a non-Gujarati doctor was romantic. Having being flattered by her compliment, He started showing interest in her. To his keen eye the fact that the wavelength of Mr. & Mrs. Das did not match was quite obvious. To be with them for long he even added some new places of tourist importance. The most awaited moment arrived when Mrs. Das did not show any interest in going round the place thus leaving Mrs. Das and Kappasi together in car. Seizing this as an opportunity Mrs. Das makes a confession- reveals the darker side of her life that Bobby, one of their three children was not born to Mr. Das but to his friend. Since then she has guilt ridden thus getting trapped in the sterility of custom and tradition, individuals struggle to their comprehension of destiny. The Indian roots make her feel terrible. In a way the confession was her penance and expected Mr. Kappasi as a priest in a church to suggest a remedy to wash away her sin. Dissoluted, Kappasi feels that she was not pained by the wrong deed but venting her feeling expecting him to dismiss guilt saying that it was but natural to do so. However good sense prevailed over him so did not endorse her illicit act. To err is human, to forgive divine. Mrs. Das should have turned to scriptures to age old philosophy that believes in impertinent of values of trust, love and faith which connects man to another of his kind.

“A Real Durwan” is an amalgam of thought and character. Hopelessness prevails through and through, ending on an optimistic note. An old destitute woman Boori Ma – the protagonist is a refugee from East Bengal and recounts on past glory. She represents the thousands of victims deported to Calcutta after partition. Her endless tales of luxury – difficult to dismiss rants– whether true / no tare amusing The inmates enjoyed the security on account of her service as a Durwan particularly the Dalals. She epitomises the good old Indian values of eternal endurance, patience in the face of perennial threats to its glorious culture.

“Sexy” deals with immigrant Indian Dev, a married Bengali youngman and Miranda a mid westerner in Boston, a young lady new to the land of adulthood. The common threat between them being, ‘relocation’. Dev’s wife is off to India on a vacation thus bringing him close to Miranda. She fails to see the real reason behind Dev’s interest in her. Sexual desire is the drive behind his move and not a genuine feeling of love. After his wife’s arrival, Dev’s contract with Miranda is reduced to cold sex. She idealises her lover honestly though she realises the truth eventually. It is through a child’s remark about the illicit relationship his father had that opened her eyes. Miranda is conscious of the means; the irrational within that would wreck a family and thus mends her ways to rise up to the heights of nobility. She becomes conscientious and exercises a quality that distinguishes man from the other creatures i.e rationality.

Sometimes the process of adaptation is smooth as in the case of the anonymous narrator and his wife Mala in ‘The Third and Final Continent’ while sometimes it shatters innermost differences of an individual who has no option but to surrender weekly to the brutality of circumstances as in the case of Mrs Sen – a wife of an MIT professor. She takes up babysitting Eliot as a way to overcome loneliness. He eventually becomes her companion and listen to her nostalgic outpouring with great patience and admiration, though her attempts to befriend his mother goes invain. Relationships are food for the soul and the soul yearns for relationships and friendship is an important one among them. Close and meaningful relationships allow us to grow and learn; in genuine relationship we can confide, trust, love and have a deep connection. And not surprisingly Mrs Sen was desperate to get connecte. Through Mrs Sen, Jhumpa Lahiri brings to light the encompassing sympathy.

The reasons behind the emotional and spiritual distance between spouses trying to adopt the culture of their new home are brilliantly explored in “The Blessed House”. The newly married couple Sanjeev and Twinkle engage themselves in constant bickering. The conflict arises over the discovery of Christian paraphernalia: while Twinkle is fascinated by the hidden treasures, Sanjeev is sick of the endless artefacts unearthed. A house is blessed when the inmates live in joy, peace and harmony no matter how humble the dwelling is. On the other



hand, a well – embellished house may remain a mere concrete structure without the warmth and affection among family members. To honour others’ feelings and making room for their opinions make life peaceful thus leaving it in their hand, whether to make home really blessed or cursed.

The J of Bibi Haldar reflects on the world of meaningless interpersonal relations within the family but the meaningful role society plays in assisting a twenty-nine-year old orphaned woman suffering from an unknown illness. The only cousin with whom she lives abandons her for the fear of Bibi Haldar harming his child. However, people in the neighbourhood come to her rescue and find her pregnant one fine day. Wondering who the baby’s father is, they help her raise the baby. Henceforth Bibi is cured of her disease. Even the smallest act can count: be it a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts like what the Good Samaritans did to Haldar improve mental wellbeing of the doer. According to Sarah Sternward Brown – a professor of public health at the University of Warwick and a well being expert, mental being is more than just happiness. Feeling happy is only a part, other being living in a way that is good for you and those around you; engagement with the world is a part of mental well being.

Finally, “The Third and Final Continent” again is about a newly married couple Mala and the narrator adjusting to the new culture. Contrary to quite a few of Lahiri’s stories, this one depicts an ideal couple. The joy of discovering and caring for each other makes the narrator exclaim “that there was ever a time that we were strangers (197) It is not that this couple has no difficulty adjusting but come to terms with reality and accept each other as they are.

The body of literature to which most of the writers have devoted to give permanent form remain history of our age and provide means, for the next age to transcend the nightmarish crisis in human values to the idyllic past in the present. Hence modern english literature is profoundly moral. Its real aim is to redeem reality through art without being pious and preachy. I had Hassan writes “In great literature, there is no past and built in obsolescence. There is radical continuity. Men like Yeats Lawrence, Kofka are still prophets of the continuous present. They tell us what we are and how we could live” (The American Review, Oct 1967)

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## **Theme of Self in the Novels of Sidhwa**

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The chief purpose of human existence in this world is to discover one's true centre and become consciously identified with it. But finding the self, as we see in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa is not an easy task because human being has become deeply immersed in the darkness of illusion and ignorance. Hence, a little familiarity with the word "self" from the standpoint of psychology may be highly rewarding and enhance our comprehension of the characters who are engaged in the quest for self.<sup>1</sup> This is especially so because of the fact that the protagonists in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa are constantly in search of their selves. The main thematic thread on which the story in all her novels runs seems to be the quest for self. The characters in these novels march indefatigably towards an exploration of the vital sources of life and consciousness.

Bapsi Sidhwa was born in an eminent Parsi business family of Karachi in 1939 and brought up in Lahore, is acclaimed by the *Times* as 'a powerful and dramatic novelist' and the *New Statesman* has described her as 'An affectionate and shrewd observer ... a born storyteller.' In addition to writing and teaching in the United States, she is an active social worker and has represented Pakistan at the 1975 Asian Women's Congress. All her novels, *The Crow-Eaters* (1980), *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) and *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988), are experimentations in imagination with an aim to achieve artistic synthesis.

Bapsi Sidhwa through her extremely absorbing and interesting works seeks to contribute to the process of change that has already

started all over the world involving a reconsideration of women's rights and status, and a radical restructuring of social thought. Sidhwa belongs to that group of creative women writers who have started to depict "determined women for whom the traditional role is inadequate, women who wish to affirm their independence and autonomy and are perfectly capable of assuming new roles and responsibilities"<sup>2</sup> These writers wish to build a world which is free of dominance and hierarchy, a world that rests on the principles of justice and equality and is truly human. In this age of globalization, it is usually very difficult to categorize some writers and Bapsi Sidhwa is one of them. She belongs to India, Pakistan and the United States simultaneously but she likes herself to be described as a Punjabi Pakistani-Parsi woman. Sidhwa believes that all of her works have some degree of autobiographical elements. She picks up some significant incidents from her own life or from the lives of other people and flashes them out to create a larger reality of fiction. Bapsi Sidhwa, who is a new and important voice in the world of commonwealth fiction, is best known in India for her book *Ice-Candy-Man*, which was later made into a film, 1947: *Earth* by Deepa Mehta. The application of new ideas about women to their conceptions has produced extensive discussion of both how women have been represented in literature and their trend of writing.<sup>3</sup>

Sidhwa's first novel *The Crow-Eaters* is about Faredoon Junglewalla, a man of distinction and listed in the Zarathustra calendar of great men and women and whose motto in life is "The sweetest thing in the world is your need. Through this narcissistic personality, in about forty-six chapters, Sidhwa takes us into the heart of the Parsi community, portraying its varied customs and traits. It is a straight narration without any twists in the plot and we travel through the book without much mental strain. At the age of twenty-three along with his wife Putli, mother-in-law Jerbanoo and an infant daughter Faredoon settles in Lahore, never to look back. In Lahore he continues to live till the end of the novel that is 1940. His family expands and with his pragmatic intelligence and fraud and arson in insurance he becomes a man of great consequence among the Parsis. People travelled thousands of miles to see him in Lahore, especially as they wished to escape the tight spots they had got themselves into. This successful worldly man encounters disappointment and personal loss in the death of his eldest

son and a self-exiled second son.

The self is a complex and core subject in many forms of spirituality. One description of spirituality is self's search for "ultimate meaning" through an independent comprehension of the sacred. Spiritual identity appears when the symbolic religious and spiritual of a culture is found by individuals in the setting of their own life. There can be different types of spiritual self because it is determined on one's life and experiences. Another definition of spiritual identity is "a persistent sense of self that addresses ultimate questions about the nature, purpose, and meaning of life, resulting in behaviours that are consonant with the individual's core values."<sup>4</sup>

*The Pakistani -Bride* is about Qasim and his foster daughter Zaitoon. Qasim is a man who in the hands of fate had known no childhood. From infancy, responsibility was forced upon him and at ten he was a man conscious of rigorous code of honour by which his tribe lived. By the time he is ten, he is married to a fifteen-year-old girl, at sixteen he becomes a father and a widower at thirty-four. In the year 1947 he migrates to Jullundur which is in India after Partition and from there to Lahore, committing a murder at a slight provocation in Jullundur.

*Ice-Candy-Man* comprises thirty-two chapters and gives us a glimpse into events of turmoil on the Indian subcontinent during Partition. Historic truth is only a backdrop of the novel and personal fate of the Ice-Candy-Man the focus. Ice-Candy-Man is a close associate and admirer of an eighteen-year-old ayah working in a Parsi household to look after Lenny, a polio child of four. Ayah has thirteen admirers and Sidhwa says: "Only the group around Ayah remains unchanged. Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsee are, as always, unified around her." Of this group Ice-Candy-Man is a man of varied interests. On bitterly cold days when ice sales plummet, Ice-Candy-Man transforms himself into a bird man: "News and gossip flow off his glib tongue like a torrent"; sometimes he quotes national leaders and does political analysis and finally he is a metamorphosed character adopting a poetic mould, confessing that he belongs to 'Kotha'—the royal misbegottens located in Hira Mandi. When Ayah becomes a riot victim it is Ice-Candy-Man that saves her and rehabilitates her in Hira Mandi and finally we come to know that she has left for Amritsar to be-with her

parents, leaving lovelorn Ice-Candy-Man to his fate. The vulnerable Ayah becomes virtuous gaining dignity' and Ice-Candy-Man complimenting her says: "She has the voice of angel and the grace and rhythm of a goddess. You should see her dance. How she moves!" and goes into a poetic outburst "Princes pledge their lives to celebrate her celebrated face!"<sup>5</sup> Hitherto unknown talent of the Ayah is divulged.

There are a number of characters in the novel but Godmother alias Rodabai the social worker is the most mundane. She must have emerged from the depths of Sidhwa's personal experiences as a social worker. Some of the incidents in the novel, instead of being blended into the texture of the novel, are superimposed making the creativity of the author prosaic. After all, the novel is a statement about a thousand different objects and these elements are to be held in place by the force of the writer's vision, if the vision falters, the novel collapses.

A writer's imagination involves his creativity, enterprise, insight, inspiration and originality. To achieve artistic unity the writer has to realize that "Artistic creation is a process of synthesis; by effecting harmony in diffused elements, the artist creates a unity in diversity and imparts 'form' to the formless and the deformed."<sup>6</sup> Jerbanoo, Rodabai and Carol are lively characters with natural instincts and imagination. They are more familiar to Sidhwa and are within her range of experience. The characters in *The Crow-Eaters* are true to this statement. Her historic observation on the Parsi community's plight during Partition is also authentic. When Billy asks Freddy "Where will we go?" Freddy says softly, "We will stay where we are ... let Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs or whoever rule. What does it matter?"<sup>7</sup>

Lenny, the narrator of the novel *Ice-Candy-Man* is a handicapped girl and she moves from childhood to adolescence. During this journey she understands the changes taking place in the society, men's attitude towards women and women's subjugation. The whole phase helps her to develop a mature vision toward life. She gives a closer look at the relationship between men and women which awakens her young mind to develop a vision of her own. She is curious and vivacious child, who is eager to know what, is happening around her and participating in it vigorously. Lenny appears as a courageous and bold girl who is not ready to succumb communal frenzy. She is inquisitive, daring, demanding and lively. Despite various hindrances

and obstacles Lenny moves forward in life. In no way does Lenny's lameness become a source of self-pity or a constricting force on her psyche. As she observes the lives of various women around her, she understands the limitations associated with women's lives in patriarchal society.<sup>3</sup> In a domain of patriarchal culture woman is a social construct, a site on which masculine meanings get spoken and masculine desires enacted. As Sushila Singh puts it in *Feminism and Recent Fiction in English*: "Human experience for centuries has been synonymous with the masculine experience with the result that the collective image of humanity has been one-sided and incomplete".<sup>8</sup>

The protagonists, while on the one hand, come alive on account of their realistic presentation, on the other, they serve as the means of consciousness-raising among the female segment of society. Lenny's mother conforms to the traditional image of a faithful, and serving wife who seems to be capable of humouring things out of her husband. As a servile housewife, she limits her life to the four walls of her home. Lenny's mother is a representative of those traditional women who as subordinates never express their desire to establish themselves as better human beings. It is Lenny's mother and Lenny's aunty who play the sterling humanitarian role of fighting for the lives and property of Hindus when the whole train-load of Muslims migrating to Pakistan in a bid to get away from the clutches of the violent rioters. Sidhwa very clearly establishes in the narrative that women are quite strong and their strengths are revealed in moments of crisis.

Another major woman character in *Ice Candy Man* is Lenny's Godmother Rodabai. She represents a very firm and progressive facet of Parsi women in the Pre-partition society. Her boundless love for Lenny and her social commitment speaks her personality. She is also a surrogate mother for Lenny in fulfilling relationship. Her portrayal is presented to us by Lenny in a fascinated manner, as if she is an idolised identity. She is presented as an old lady, plainly attired in khaddar saris covering herself from head to foot, and a profound understanding of human psyche. She has good sense of humour, and deer-like agility, and in spite of her old age her power to mould individuals and modify system reflects her energy. She is admired by the people around her. But besides these qualities she is endowed with profound understanding of human existence and her wisdom is revealed when

consoles Ayah in the aftermath of what has been done to her.

That was fated, daughter. It can't be undone. But it can be forgiven. . . . Worse tilings are forgiven. Life goes on and the business of living buries the debris of our pasts. Hurt, happiness . . . all fade impartially ... to make way for fresh joy and new sorrow. That is the way of life. (ICM 262)

She donates blood, seeks admission to a boarding school for Ranna, traces the Ayah in Hira Mandi and manages to send her back to her people. She is a formidable person too and scolds the Ice-Candy-Man for disgracing Ayah, “Oh? What kind of man? A royal Pimp? What kind of would allow his wife to dance like, performing monkey before other men? You’re not a man, you’re a low-born, two-bit evil little mouse!” (ICM 64)

The most glorious example of her self-confidence, authoritativeness, capacity to handle crisis-situations deftly is provided by her dealing with the Ice-Candy-Man and the rescue of the Ayah. The Ice-Candy-Man is propped with the power of the pimp-community, consisting of lawless elements. Endowed with a glib tongue, he is not an easy person to deal with. I would like to quote snatches of the confronting conversation, in order to bring out, in full measure, the power to annihilate the adversary Rodabai possesses:

Affected at last by Godmother's stony silence, Ice-Candy-Man lowers his eyes. His voice divested of oratory, he says, “I am her slave, Baijee. I worship her. She can come to no harm with me “No harm?” Godmother asks in a deceptively cool voice—and arching her back like a scorpion its tail, she closes in for the kill. “You permit her to be raped by butchers, drunks, and goondas and say she has come to no harm?” Ice-Candy-Man’s head jolts back as if it’s been struck. “Is that why you had her lifted off—let hundreds of eyes probe her—so that you could marry her? You would have your own mother carried off if it suited you! You are a shameless badmash! Nimakharam! Faithless! ’-’ (ICM 92)

Bapsi Sidhwa through her characters wishes to build a world which is free of dominance and hierarchy, a world that rests on the principles of justice and equality and is truly human.



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## **Enhancement of Critical Thinking through Collaborative Learning using Technology**

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The quantum of research that has gone in various disciplines of education in the last several decades has vindicated the import of the nature of thinking as a crucial aspect in learning. Learning activities, in order to be effective, encourage and demand an active mental processing. Strangely enough, such activities have not translated successfully into practices in many learning situations. The levels and procedures of the nature of thinking that need to be conceptualized and transformed into activities must be integrated in a classroom situation. This is the point where technology can mediate and execute these activities through interactions. A teaching procedure that proposes to structure activities to advance the nature of thinking and the thinking processes, effected through the use of technology and interactive media, therefore, becomes both inevitable and indispensable.

The procedure proposed in this paper is a combination of theories proposed by the tradition called "pari-prashna" and Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956), that envisages a multi dimensional approach encompassing critical, analytical and independent thinking into its fold, sponsored by activities that stimulate such thinking. Pari-Prashna has been around in India for centuries. The word "prashna" means "questioning" and the adjective "pari" means "deep", "unrelenting". This Vedantic tradition of "pari-prashna" is perhaps even more conscientious, austere and determined in its search for Truth than what modern sciences claim to be. In order to understand and implement the procedure we need to define critical thinking at the outset.

### **What is Critical Thinking?**

Critical thinking has obsessed researchers from a variety of disciplines for more than two decades. The concept obviously, is not new. It was

the founding stone of the Vedic system of learning from the oriental perspective and traceable, to the teaching practice and vision of Socrates nearly 2,500 years ago from the western standpoint. It has firmly gained immense value right through its voyage down history.

People in the field of education and other disciplines from all directions decry that the present crop of students are inadequately equipped to think and perform their tasks. Cromwell (1986, 39) exclaims “one of the main goals of education, agreed upon by almost everyone, is the improvement of student thinking. And in the last decade there has been a growing concern that graduates at all levels do not demonstrate higher thinking abilities”. Our system of education has not helped to overcome this defect. Memory is tested compromising on the importance of understanding and application. A clear fall out is the churning out of a godown of information sans the ability to translate knowledge into meaningful application.

This imminent lack of critical thinking skills recoils in their later day work atmosphere. Hirose laments (1992, 1), “Many of today's youth lack the basic skills to function effectively when they enter the workforce. A common complaint is that entry-level employees lack the reasoning and critical thinking abilities needed to process and refine information” Howe and Warren (1989,1) endorse this view: “Business and industry continue to report that many employees are not able to think critically in job situations”.

To incorporate these critical thinking skills in our systems of learning, it is vital to define critical thinking. Though there are various definitions of critical thinking, Ennis (1985, 43(2): 44-48) captures the idea quite succinctly: “Critical thinking is the process and skills involved in rationally deciding what to do or what to believe”. Paul, (1984, 42(1): 71-74.) the director of the Critical Thinking Community, improvises upon this. He affirms “Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action”.

Definitions aside, the critical question is how to introduce these ideas in the learning system and processes. One effective method would

be a combination of collaborative learning mediated through technology.

### **Collaborative Learning**

In Vygotsky's (1978) words, learners' performances at higher intellectual levels are more effective when they work in collaborative environments than when they work individually. Group diversity improves the learning process both in terms of knowledge and experience. Bruner (1985) emphasises that cooperative learning methods impact positively on evolving the problem- solving strategies, as students confront varied perceptions and interpretations of the given situation. In short, the peer support system allows the learner to internalize knowledge and critically process them to transform into tools for intellectual functioning.

In this methodology, students avail opportunities to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas cooperatively. This group interaction enables learners learn from each other's perception, experiences, scholarship and skills. This also prompts, debates among them to arrive at a consensus. In effect, they have to transcend mere expressions of opinion and defend themselves, by reflecting upon the criteria employed in forming and framing their opinions. Each opinion is therefore subject to careful scrutiny. Developing the ability to concede an incorrect opinion if convinced about its inaccuracy can go a long way in enhancing one's analyzing capacities that are so crucial for critical thinking

### **Role of Technology**

Technological advancement has put learning systems in crossroads. On the one hand, it has enabled quick and easy access to information that has largely reduced the burden on the learner in terms of travelling from one library to another. On the other, as purists would lament, reading from the book is a lost habit as any piece of information is just a click away. The use of advanced computing, telecommunications and multi media has ensued in learning becoming qualitatively different. Classroom learning is significantly richer as students access new and diverse types of information, execute their understanding on the computer through graphic displays, controlled experiments or simulations in ways never imagined earlier. This also allows them to

reach out to fellow learners, in and beyond the classroom. They can interact / communicate their results and conclusions to their teacher and others, instantly receiving feedback / response.

One of the fundamental requirements for effecting this type of learning is the supportive infrastructure. Technological advancement demands changes in the organizational set up of a classroom. A computer system must be made available for at least every two learners in a class. Most Institutions do have wifi connectivity. Such facilities render it both possible and feasible to upload learning material and activities into the internet. The learners could access them and work on them both inside the class room and take it at home too, if need be. Of course, a computer system must be available at home too. Through this, the class work 'separately in groups' share information they know to think creatively, solve and resolve problems and collaborate to make decisions as a team.

This researcher – facilitator has conducted quite a number of courses in this method aiming particularly at enhancing thinking skills. In the present example, a simple passage from a news paper followed by a series of questions is posted into a blog site, which can be accessed by the learners. They are united into smaller groups of five members each. This passage is posted in separate blogs for each group. The questions are multiple choice items, one of which is the correct answer for the question. The learners begin to respond with their choices and their defence, posting them to the blogs, thus initiating the debate. One question is taken up for analysis and debate at a time. The learners can also access the blog of other groups and check their responses. This way every learner can access each other's response for all the questions. This is but the first part of the learning process, the second part being in creating an indigenously designed set of questions for any given passage. This is a teaching procedure that makes them evaluate, analyse and synthesise- which are prerequisites for developing critical thinking skills. A picture of the blog site is given below:

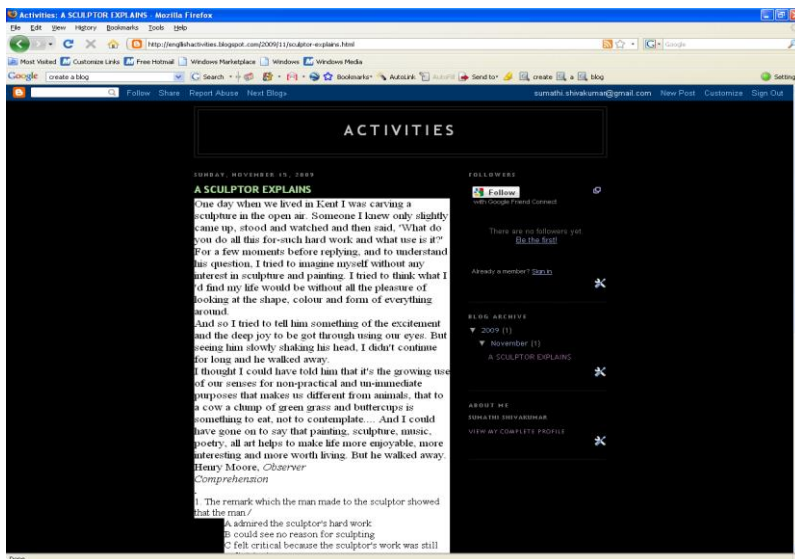


Fig.1 The blog “A Sculptor Explains”

## Significance of the questions

“The Scientific mind does not so much provide the right answers as ask the right questions”, asserted Claude Levi- Stauss. Hence, the questions that trigger the debate are decisive. One of the primary goals of education is to develop independent thinkers, which can be achieved through a process of interdependent thinking. The learners are entitled to frequent opportunities to shape and direct classroom inquiry. To fund and fuel this inquiry, it is crucial to validate the significance and the magnitude of curiosity in the process of learning.

Unlike the commonly used reading comprehension questions, the ones given here are deliberately complex that make discussion motivating and meaningful. These are the type of questions that dwell at the top of Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956). They necessitate students to EVALUATE by making an insightful choice between / among the available options, to ANALYZE by evolving a comprehensive and complex discernment using skillful questioning and to SYNTHESIZE by conceiving an innovative version. Such questions ignite the learner's interest that could perhaps make them marvel at their own intuition at creating insight. Precisely the type

advocated by “Pari Prashna”

Further more such questions lend themselves well to research, particularly in the application of problem-solving skills and perspectives in the subject of investigation. It should therefore efficiently lead learners to frame their own questions, although, this will initially entail intensive and extensive training with teacher generated questions. The actual passages used for the course pertained to management, though the questions framed were on the lines of the ones given in the sample passage appended with this paper.

In the sample passage and questions, we can notice that the passage is very simple and in easy to understand English. But the questions make the learners sit upright, think and discuss to defend their choices. Besides, they need to read rather closely at every sentence of the passage. This kind of framing helps the learner read every line of any text material profoundly to hit at the implied meanings, coercing them to think critically. The questions help them essentially to interpret the text.

As the first response, students list down smaller ideas in the form of questions that enable them answer their main question. They need to understand how related questions can be derived from larger questions and that all these smaller ones can nest inside the largest question akin to small Russian dolls. These smaller ideas help them construct their defence for their choices. However, after much deliberation they do convince or get convinced to choose the option as their answer. This way all the questions are answered within the stipulated time.

### **Advantages of this methodology**

However, heated their debates may be, the classes remain silent and hence conducive for concentrated work. Decibel levels never soar high as in conventional set up. The discussion can be carried forward during break time or even to their homes. So there is essentially no restriction in terms of time and space as in the conventional methods. Every learner has access to every other learner’s points of view unlike the traditional classroom, where only the groups’ ideas are shared. In the traditional methods, it would take too long a time to share individual ideas. Time also restricts the number of ideas for discussion. In this technology mediated situation, any number of ideas can be generated

as there is no real ceiling on time and space. As the number of ideas generated far exceeds the possibilities in the conventional methods, the knowledge horizon for each learner widens ensuing in richer input for thought. This is reflected in the widening of their thinking skills as well. Slowly they get tuned to thinking beyond surface levels, at the levels of implied signification. When they start creating their own reading comprehension exercises for unknown passages, their trust with analytical skills are challenged, leading to critical thinking.

### **Scope for further research**

The present study did not consider factors like heterogeneity versus homogeneity, in terms of both linguistic and general knowledge competence. Hence future study / research needs to investigate the effect of collaborative learning process based on group composition: Heterogeneous versus homogeneous, group selection and size etc. The present study looked only at the methodology and did not analyse the results. Hence an empirical study on the structure of learning process, teacher intervention in the group learning process, differences with reference to gender and ethnicity, and differences arising out of / due to different learning styles, certainly merit investigation. A psychological study of the group discussions and group dynamics would reveal useful information.

Collaborative learning fosters the development of critical thinking essentially through discussion, clarification of ideas, and evaluation of others' ideas. This is particularly effective if mediated by technology. Conventional processes do help in acquiring factual knowledge but seldom lead to critical and independent thinking. Therefore, if the objective is to enhance critical- thinking and problem-solving skills, then technology aided collaborative learning is certain to deliver.

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## APPENDIX

### A SCULPTOR EXPLAINS

One day when we lived in Kent I was carving a sculpture in the open air. Someone I knew only slightly came up, stood and watched and then said, 'What do you do all this for-such hard work and what use is it?'

For a few moments before replying, and to understand his question, I

tried to imagine myself without any interest in sculpture and painting. I tried to think what I'd find my life would be without all the pleasure of looking at the shape, colour and form of everything around.

And so I tried to tell him something of the excitement and the deep joy to be got through using our eyes. But seeing him slowly shaking his head, I didn't continue for long and he walked away.

I thought I could have told him that it's the growing use of our senses for non-practical and un-immediate purposes that makes us different from animals, that to a cow a clump of green grass and buttercups is something to eat, not to contemplate.... And I could have gone on to say that painting, sculpture, music, poetry, all art helps to make life more enjoyable, more interesting and more worth living. But he walked away. (Henry Moore, *Observer*)

### **Comprehension**

1. The remark which the man made to the sculptor showed that the man /
  - A admired the sculptor's hard work
  - B could see no reason for sculpting
  - C felt critical because the sculptor's work was still unfinished
  - D had never seen a sculptor at work before
2. The sculptor found it hard to answer the man because he
  - A had been concentrating so hard on his work that he scarcely heard the man
  - B had no imagination
  - C did not know the man very well
  - D could not understand the point of the man's remark
3. The man shook his head and walked away because
  - A the sculptor did not respond immediately -
  - B he could not make sense of the sculptor's reply
  - C he was only casually passing by
  - D the sculptor did not speak clearly
4. What would the author have liked to explain to the man?
  - A That men and animals enjoy beauty for its own sake
  - B That buttercups are good to eat
  - C That men, unlike animals, enjoy beauty for its own sake
  - D That men are practical in their use of beauty

(extracted from: Nash, Doreen. M. Hear Talk and Write 1, London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd. 1977.)

## **Women in Chetan Bhagat's Novels: Emancipated or Degraded?**

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Chetan Bhagat, the novelist, has turned out as a youth icon of India. The characters in his novels are social rebels and his female protagonists exhibit natural female instinct and vitality. Place of action of his novels is set in the hustle and bustle of Metropolitan Indian cities, where with growing urbanization and globalization, a number of opportunities have opened up all around. Men and women are no more seen through the old spectacle which marks men as superior and women as inferior. In this global atmosphere, so far belittled women are given their due place and respect. With their own intellect and abilities, they are seen to be working shoulder to shoulder with men.

As one notices in *One Night @ the Call Centre*, the number of men and women working in call centers is equal and women choosing to work in night shifts is common. They earn their own living and make career choices. For instance, Esha, in the same novel, resides in Delhi leaving her home in order to make her modelling dream come true. Thus, in this new era, all men and women are equal. Even in case of marriages, now girls assert their own opinions and choices. In the bygone era, a marriageable boy/girl was bound to marry the match of their parents' choice and that was regarded as their religious duty to repay the debt of parenthood. The best reference will be Priyanka, who makes her own choice in case of marriage quite contrary to her parents' expectations. Also Ananya in *2 States* tries to convince her parents till the end in order to marry her lover Krish. Thus, Bhagat's writing is more feminine than masculine. He shows his concerns more to his ladies than to his heroes. He too deserves to be criticized for creating better heroines than heroes.

Bhagat's added footage of his concern for women characters tells us the fact that steps towards women empowerment can be seen to be speeding up. Bhagat claims women empowerment as one of the positive effects of globalization; at the same time, it is incontrovertible

that his novels definitely give us cultural shocks which are an inevitable impact of globalization, modernization, and corporate exploitation. These changes represent the pathetic cry of a majority of orthodox Hindu women in Indian society, thereby, it is understood that being under the guise of emancipation, there is an actual degeneration in the status of women as voiced forth in the novels of Chetan. The sole aim of the paper is to bring out catalogue the sufferings of modern women who have not completely become modern. Though girls are trendy and externally modern but they still live in the past, intimate.

### **Youth and Love**

Love, the very essence of our livelihood, is known for its omnipresence and omnipotence. Even now, we cherish the memories of immortal lovers. In Bhagat's fiction the attitude of youths towards love, marriage, and sex is not at all emotional, on the contrary it is quite casual. Love, as it is an instinctual feeling the young generation feels the vibrations of it every now and then but the way they propose it and the carrying out love have definitely changed. As we see in his fictions, there are love proposals and rejections but everything is taken quite healthily. Vroom loved Esha, and proposed to her three to four times, and she kept rejecting him all these times. Even though it is so, they work together and maintain quite a healthy friendship. Shyam and Priyanka had been in relation ever since their college time. When they thought that they should break up, they formally come together and put a break to their relationship. Ultimately after all said and done, they come together and decide to marry but the things that happen in between show us the changed relation equations of our time. Shyam as he says, wanted to 'move on' a new terminology in the subject 'Love', develops a casual love relationship with another girl at the call centre. A marriage proposal of an NRI working in Microsoft, entertains Priyanka's fancy for the time being but when she learns about the baldness of the guy, her affection turns once again towards Shyam.

Krish and Ananya in 2 *States* fall in love with each other in a strange way. At IIM Ahmedabad, they started studying together in Ananya's room. Krish could not concentrate on his studies, as he is distracted by Ananya's looks. One day just like that he tells her so and their love-life gets started quite surprisingly. His treatment of love distinguishes Bhagat from others. His men do not chase women. The

women are the chaser and the men are the chased in his novels. Vidya chases Govind. He responds to Omi thus, “I didn’t hit on her. She hit upon me”. Vidya has hunted him and he is the hunted. Bhagat’s women take initiative in the courtship. They steer forth the courtship until it converts into the commitment of living togetherness. The men make all attempts to avoid the snoop of the women’s charms. When they fail to exorcise vitality of the counterparts, they become passive in the game. They neither expel nor receive the stimulus. Things happen to them naturally. Govind is a passive participant in the amorous pursuit. While depicting this acceptable reality, Bhagat also shows us the nonsensical attitude of fickle-minded youth. People are so much fancied by the word love, that sometimes love relations get started even between the people calling and receiving wrong numbers.

### **Marital Infidelity**

Marital Fidelity is one of the most famous and precious Indian values. The husband and wife relationship in a Hindu family is more or less one-sided, for it is the man who dominates the family scene and his wife will be instrumental in keeping the family harmonious and united disregarding how worthless and cruel he may be. But as a matter of fact, even in such a partial aka patriarchal set up, women had a pivotal role to play in the Indian household and was worshipped for her sacrificing nature. This sensitive value of marital fidelity has taken a 360 degree turn now. Govind Patel’s father who left his mom ten years ago, and then to a great shock, was found having a second wife in *The Three Mistake of my Life*. Vroom’s dad was a business man who parted his wife in the name of duty for two years, preferred to live with his secretary and so Vroom and his mother lived in the agony without him.

In the very same novel, we see another reference of marital infidelity among one of the protagonists of those six characters, Radhika. She is a married woman in her mid-twenties. Even her marriage takes place after a whirlwind courtship in college. She now lives in a joint family with Anuj’s ultra-traditional parents as her husband works somewhere else in a different city. It was tough for daddy’s only girl, but it is amazing what women do for love. She has joined Connexion Call centre in order to earn more and more a wants to give more financial assistance to her husband. Radhika proves to be the best example of a good housewife and deft customer care

representative. She is expert in handling kitchen and managing office promptly. She looks after her old mother-in-law. She loves her husband very much and trusts him blindly. When she comes to know that her husband loves some other woman of Delhi, instantly breaks her relation with him and goes to Chandigarh with Esha forever. Infidelity, thus, has resulted in estrangement of relationship and women are the worst sufferers of its consequences.

### **Pre-marital Sex**

In India, where marriage is a sacrament, a man and a woman living together without getting married is a sin. But majority of Chetan's protagonists enjoy PMS. No other writer of the past but Bhagat sanctified sex in his works. They watched the reluctance of the woman in it whereas Bhagat has installed it in the willingness of the woman. Perfect examples for this stance will be the sexual relationship between Hari and Neha in *Five Point Someone*, Shyam and Priyanka in *One Night @ The Call Center*, Govind and Vidya in *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, Krish and Ananya in *2 States*, Gopal and Aarti in *Revolution 2020*. In Bhagat's opinion, girls are in no way inferior to boys. They are equal to them in all respects. He is an advocate to the liberation and empowerment of women but the pity is that he has equaled them only in doing wrong things and taking wrong turns like Neha, in *Five Point Someone*, enjoying her loss of virginity and thanking her partner, which shows her hunger and want for sex. When Hari says in an understatement, "That was quite... amazing", Neha says, Thanks. I like it too". The word 'thanks' is very important here which suggests how earnestly she might have pined for it after getting which she thanks her lover so deeply. It is just like thanking of a thirsty traveler who is in search of water and after a long search when somebody quenches his thirst he thanks the person heartily.

In *One Night @ the Call Centre*, Bhagat celebrates the premarital sex of Priyanka and Shyam. In this scene also Bhagat gives the command in his woman's hands. She is a common modern girl and doesn't feel shy like the older generation girls. She asks Shyam, "By the way, do you have condom?". In *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, his heroine Vidya is so anxious to lose her virginity that she chooses to do it right on her birthday. Moreover, she chooses her tutor and her brother's best friend Govind for that purpose. She is younger but bolder

than all other lady characters of Bhagat. Govind is a rational man he understands that it is wrong but Vidya does not let him think anything at all. She is a pretty little seductress. Govind regrets his deeds after finishing the course but Vidya is happy beyond expectations on the contrary. She thanks God for making her adult and feels happy after losing her virginity. She says, “Wow, I am an adult now and am no longer a virgin, so cool. Thank God”. When a girl says this to a boy about her virginity, it is perplexing and intimidating to think about the young girls today who do not hesitate to lose their virginity which is the most invaluable prize that they could ever offer to their life partner in their married life.

It is obvious that the attitude of this generation towards sex is not laden with guilt. Premarital sex for them is nothing of that feeling of regret or so. Even Krish and Ananya of *2 States* are not exceptions. The accessibility of being together facilitates them to sleep together for two years without worrying about the consequences. Luckily, Bhagat ends the story with a marriage of the duos. The absence of native cultural values and accepting of foreign culture has resulted in such unwarranted actions. Both Krish and Ananya come from a traditional family setup. It is shocking to see that they are not culturally bonded with values. By this aspect, Bhagat has invited a big sign of interrogation on the chastity and fidelity of the girls in new era. Bhagat’s writing matches with the youth mentality but it fails to stand on the moral expectations of the older generations and unknowingly, it invites troubles for women that would end up in great disasters.

Bhagat seems to forget that what he celebrates before marriage is a sin in Indian society. But what he does is to present the things as it is. Need of an hour is his reader’s rationality to understand what he wants to say because even in this technical era, women are treated as sexual objects and men always want to possess and renounce them. It is impossible to stop people from looking at a girl and it is up to the girl to protect herself by being not an eye-catching object to others. Women must not assert that this is their freedom in this shameful aspect. Any culture, of course, won’t entertain sexual advancements from women in the name of freedom whereas culture functions as a protective agent for women from falling prey to the temptations aroused.

### **Anything for Whims and Fantasies**

Along with being competitive, ambitious, and techno- savvy, the new generation women in Bhagat's fiction are trendy as well. The global trend has not left the society untouched. Due to the free incoming values, costumes, dresses and the living habits of western world, the basis of Indian culture has been greatly influenced (P. Sam, and G. Sam .1051). Through *One Night @ the Call Centre*, Bhagat exposes the filth of the modelling industry. One of the main characters in that novel, Esha Sing is a tantalizing beauty and a modern fashionable girl who has moved from Chandigarh to Delhi, against her parents' wishes hoping to become a model. To achieve her fantasy, she maintains herself in figure and outlook and she has even worn a navel ring. A fully-clad female like Esha is scanned scornfully by others. Esha is assured with a modelling contract if she sleeps with a designer for a night. She offers herself but she could not get the contract. The man turns out an opportunistic as he betrays her telling that she cannot be a model due to short height. He compensates the in-bed-deed by sending her money. She repents the deed and is haunted by a sense of guilt. Whenever the guilty conscience inflicts her, she cuts her skin with sharp blade. She believes she can atone for her guilt by punishing herself. Varun loves Esha but she does not accept his proposal due to guilty conscience. Bhagat has traced the shocking causes of the dried up tears in the glowing eyes of the people of the glamour world. His portrayal of the character, Esha symbolizes 'the dark side' of the new Indian career woman of the twenty-first century. At the same time, it shows us a limitlessly compromising attitude that has come over today's youth.

Again we see girls, carrying themselves in zero figure, dressed in meagre clothes visiting discotheque and that not enough drinking vodka and other alcoholic drinks. Their only concern in life seems to be lies in making merry and merry, nothing else. They are today's urban youths, and this behaviour of theirs shows us a new trend coming in female community. A woman has got her every right to live her life as per her personal interest. However, it is not that much easy as far as she is in a family-bound set up or as far as she is in India, a country of stringent social dogmas. Being under the impact of westernization, women may wish to sport any adventure against the will of the societal restrictions and succeed, but the sport may put them into vast complications for which they should have got enormous guts and



support to meet those challenges. Is it possible? – My question to the entire women community with an added adage, “Easier said than done”.

Chetan Bhagat has deftly portrayed the element of vitality in his women protagonists. His woman characters believe in “an absolute, a perfect, a pure and a noble freedom”. They always take initiative in the courtship. Thus, they break the social protocol – man chases woman. Bhagat is the first writer among his contemporaries who has delineated woman as the hunter and the man as the excavation under her blind passion to suit his purpose. His women use all tactics to serve the female instinct. They incarnate the new woman, who chides the man for feminine behaviour. They suffer because of their strong desires for something or somebody. In order to achieve that, they are ready to face challenges and risks. Some win the game and some lose the game. Obviously, they themselves are to be blamed for it but one cannot deny that globalization is also responsible for it. To avoid this unnecessary race between the culture and their psychology, modern women’s mentality or attitude needs to be mended very seriously. It is better to follow the traces of the past rather than taking a new diversion and suffer.

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## **Towards Emancipation: A Reading of Emecheta's *Kehinde***

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Buchi Emecheta is a contemporary, preeminent African Woman novelist. She was born in Nigeria. Her Oeuvre includes 19 books -14 novels, an autobiography and four books for children. About her well-written novels which assure her a place in African literature, Katherine Frank says, "Taken together in fact, Emecheta's novels compose the most exhaustive and moving portrayal extant of the African women, an unparalleled portrayal in African fiction and with few equals in other literatures as well" (Frank, 477). Her novelistic work returns again and again to the theme of women, struggling for self-realisation and emancipation in both traditional and modern settings.

"Kehinde" is one of the fourteen novels that Buchi Emecheta has authored so far. It was published in 1994. In it, Emecheta narrates the story of a relatively traditional Nigerian woman. She lives for many years in London with her husband and their two children. She enjoys her status as a well-paid bank employee, while her husband is a storekeeper. Her husband feels that her freedom and financial independence impact his male role. Hence he returns to Nigeria where he can enjoy better status. Kehinde resigns her job and joins her husband in Nigeria. To her dismay and outrage she discovers that her husband has taken a second wife who has already given him a son and is expecting again. After a year's stay and after facing many insults and humiliations due to Nigerian degrading social mores, she returns to London. She asserts her identity and lives out the rest of her life, in control of her own destiny.

Kehinde is the protagonist of the novel. The novel revolves round her experiences. She has so far lived in London for eighteen years. Her family is an immigrant family from Nigeria. She works as assistant manager in Barclays Bank in London. Her husband Albert, is a storekeeper. Professionally she is more successful than her husband,

she earns more than he. They have two teenaged children – Joshua and Bimpe. Kehinde is thirty-five, while he is forty.

Letters arrive from Albert's sister, asking them to send money, and also to come back to Nigeria. Kehinde has no reason to wish to go back. She is quite happy in London. She has adjusted and adapted herself to British culture. At the same time, she has not lost belief in her own culture. For example, though the house they live in, is legally her house, she describes it as Albert's house, as they will do in Nigeria.

Albert longs to go back. First, his image and status there will be far better than here. In London, he depends upon his wife, financially. That financial superiority of his wife makes a dent in his image as a man, he feels. In Nigeria, men are men, women are women. There man's word is law, because it is a patriarchal society. In his homeland, he will be respected as somebody. In London, he feels emasculated by the freedom of his wife. Both are emigrants, Albert and Kehinde. They move in and out of worlds of Igbo (African) tradition and the British Western tradition. But they differ in their reactions. Albert's attitude towards England is that of rejection, rather than adaption. On the other hand, Kehinde is adaptive, flexible and adjusts herself to the changed circumstances. Here it may be pointed out, that Kehinde's progress and experiences are Buchi Emecheta's own when she lived in London after marriage. To quote, "Completion of the process of cross-cultural adaptation by Kehinde... is also the resolution of Buchi Emecheta's own cross cultural conflict as Nigerian female immigrant in London [Howley, 344]".

The second reason is, in his work place, Albert faces the problem of racism; the question of 'Blacks' and 'Whites' crops up. But Kehinde is meted at equal treatment to her white counterparts in the bank. Hence, he is eager to get back to Nigeria, whereas she is reluctant. But, she yields to his desires. She happened to be pregnant at that time. He considers this as an obstacle to going back. Hence he convinces her to go in for an abortion. Here, again she does not want an abortion, as a Roman Catholic and also as a Nigerian woman whose culture forbids it. Yet, she yields and has her pregnancy terminated. She feels depressed thereafter. He does not care and comfort her. All her acts of sacrifice – agreeing to abortion, selling the house, and working hard for the farewell part are not appreciated by her husband. After the departure

of Albert and her children to Nigeria, she stays back in London to dispose of the house. Then her inner voice, the voice of her dead twin sister, her Taiwo, starts cautioning her. After all, Nigeria is a country where polygamy is a common practice. His father had two wives, her own father had three wives. Still, she calms herself that her husband Albert is not that type of person. He will not do anything to spoil the happiness of the family. Hence she need not panic.

Eventually, after a lapse of two years, she joins her husband, without selling the house in London. She arrives with great expectations, to establish herself as been to madam of the house. She brings many western luxuries. A slew of outrages and shocks await her. First and foremost, her husband has married another woman, young and beautiful. She holds a doctoral degree and works as a lecturer. What is worse, she gathers that Albert had to marry her after she gave birth to a male child. She is expecting another baby in due course. Kehinde recollects how he persuaded her to induce abortion, even though that too had been a man child. Further, at the time of courting her, Albert expressed his views about polygamy. He abhorred it. Both had one mind about the virtues of monogamy. Her sisters-in-law condoned what her husband had done. Her own sister says “This is Nigeria. You must learn to fit into the social mores here”. Her own children move closer to the second wife. Thus, as a wife and as a mother, her dreams are blasted. They are dashed to the ground. She is forced to feel that it is not her home any longer. What is worse, she is just a senior wife now, without any special rights. In England, he was depending upon her. She is subjected to many humiliations. When they plan to visit the children at school, she sits by the side of her husband in the front seat of car. Albert’s sister claims it and tells her to go and sit at the back with Rike (his second wife). That is where she belongs. At times, she toys with the idea of committing suicide. At long last her eyes are opened to the truth. Her blind trust in Albert has been betrayed. She perceives that the culture values she has come to cherish during her sojourn abroad clash with the Nigeria values. The patriarchal system that obtains to Nigeria marginalizes and denigrates her as a woman. So, she decides to go back to London, on her own and all alone. Once she felt contempt for an African woman in London named Mary Elikwu, because she was living apart with her six children, after being deserted by her husband who

was beating her often. She preferred to live independently, rather than accept domestic violence. Now, in her rebellious mood she becomes Kehinde's role model and Icon. This marks the beginning of Kehinde's salvation and freedom.

Her friend in U.K., Moriammo sends her enough money to buy a flight ticket to London. She does not inform Albert about her plans. At the airport she learns that her husband has married a third and younger wife. After coming back to London, she stays in touch with her children, by sending them money and exchanging letters. For, she has rejected only her husband, and not her children, thus, she selects the positive aspects of tradition and rejects its negative aspects.

Kehinde emerges as the modern woman who forges her life according to her own likes and dislikes. Through Kehinde, Emecheta tries to demonstrate a balanced attitude of a woman towards traditional and modern matters. Kehinde starts picking up the pieces of her shattered life. She removes the "For sale" sign, declaring that the "house is mine".

She learns from the children's letters that her husband in Nigeria lost his job and that his health deteriorates. Their children want to come back to London, if she sends the flight tickets money. To earn that money, Kehinde accepts a menial job of cleaner of rooms in a London hotel (once, she worked as an assistant manager of a reputed bank). She redoubles her efforts to get a sociology degree which will help her to get a respectable job. She has to eat the humble porridge of the poor black woman in London. Finding the money from all these jobs inadequate to meet the financial needs for her children's fare to London, she takes up a job of teaching English lessons for a rich, Arab Sheik's wife in the hotel room. She puts up with the rudeness of the oil rich Arab Sheik. But a time comes when she can no longer bear or brook his insolence. One day he says to her that he will pay her handsomely. He does not want to sleep with her. He only desires to see how a black woman looks when she is naked and nude. "The Sheik might want to see what a black woman's body looks like, but that body was not going to be hers (Emecheta, 132)". She does not oblige the Sheik. She chucks the job.

Working hard and getting a degree in sociology enables her to

land a job in the Department of Social Sciences. She survives in that city without her husband's help. She leads her own life in her own way. Her emancipation is in evidence in the final confrontation with her grown-up son, Joshua, who comes to London, tutored by his father in Nigeria. She keeps cool throughout. But she does not mince her words. He shall not ask their tenant, Michael Gibson to quit and leave. It is legally her house, it may be his house one day. Joshua might have seen her in bed with him (Mr. Gibson). His dad has two more women as wives, besides herself. She has not complained. Joshua himself has a girl-friend now, Moya. Bimpe, her daughter has a boy friend. So, what is wrong if she lives with a nice man, like Gibson. Older people need not always justify their behaviour to younger people. Joshua stomps out, exclaiming in anger, "what kind of mother are you then?". Kehinde murmurs to her Taiwo, the spirit of her long dead twin sister, "Claiming my right does not make me less of a mother, not less of a woman. If anything, it makes me more human (P.141)". These words reveal her as a self-assertive woman. Michael Gibson, her tenant, is not a Nigerian, nor an African. He is West Indian and two years younger than she. But he has always been polite and nice to her. Hence she takes him as her man.

Thus, Kehinde is a significant example of a Nigerian woman who carves out for herself a place of total independence and fulfillment. She has broken through all fetters and shackles to enjoy freedom. She has transformed herself from a traditional woman to modern individual. She has "Come of Wisdom".

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## **Exploration of Identity in Farhana Sheikh's *The Red Box***

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Farhana Sheikh's debut novel *The Red Box* (1991) is a fictionalized narration of the experiences of Islamic diaspora in Britain. It is a captivating narrative of several pertinent issues related to immigration such as Muslim identity, double marginalization of Pakistani women, racism, influence of Palestine Liberation movement on the immigrant Pakistani youth and the role of religion as true moral guide. It depicts the reconciliatory efforts that immigrant Muslim women adopt and promote as they reinvent their identities through cross-cultural experiences.

*The Red Box* traces "the hybrid and ever changing nature of identities not necessarily going in accordance with homogeneity, stability and purity. Diaspora's hybridity implies a diversity of cultures, which co exists, compete, merge and emerge: cultures that may be the outcome of a cultural meeting or of suppression, exclusion and domination." (Georgiou, Thinking Diaspora).

Farhana Sheikh convincingly argues how several other factors such as class, gender, origin and various other axes mediate religious identity in diaspora. She brilliantly portrays the formation of new female identities in Britain and presents an occasion to celebrate the diversity of this group in Britain. According to Nasta, the author "looks primarily at the relationship between first & second generation Pakistani Muslim women as they negotiate boundaries imposed by race, class & gender on the evolution of new Asian British identities" (2000:94-95).

Ms. Sheikh depicts a network of social aspects that define the identities of the South Asian immigrants in Britain - a heterogeneous group of migrants where Indians & Pakistanis outnumber other ethnic & linguistic groups. Importantly, both culture & religion remain an essential composition of their socio economic bearing.

The Islamic female diaspora is not merely a resident in the Britain society. Consequent to the II World war, a large number of Pakistanis like other south Asians immigrated to Britain lured by the demand for labour. Initially, they saw this as an opportunity to earn, save, invest and then return to their homeland. Farhana Sheikh highlights how most of the migrants were from rural origins who preferred the social position of an industrial worker rather than that of a peasant at the mercy of landlord. They started off as a 'Sojourners', who came to Britain for a temporary stay, earn enough money to send home, buy land of their own for farming or setting up a small business. Very soon, it became clear that the identity of 'sojourners' changed to that of 'settlers'. Their families joined them, assured of the better standards of living & education. The younger generation quickly adapted themselves when compared to the first generation of migrants, who fought the anxieties of immigration process. Indians & Pakistanis, which included the present Bangladeshis, were generally called 'Pakis' and the years between 1971-76 is referred to as 'Paki Bashing' era. The natives were convinced that subordinating and controlling the racial minorities was in their national interest and so the immigrants were treated as second-class citizens. This led to minority ethnic group developing a group identity through promoting ethnic networks that strengthened group cohesiveness and solidarity (Hutnik 1991). The author observes how these efforts became a part of social structure of the group bringing comfort to the immigration process but at the same time cocooned them from the native society.

*The Red Box* was written in the first & second person voice and for most part is in the form of a dialogue among three Pakistani Muslim women-Raisa, Tahira Rashid & Nasreen Ehsan. Raisa is the second generation, educated, affluent Pakistani Muslim who is interviewing Tahira Rashid & Nasreen Ehsan-two 15 year olds-both students in South Park School on the outer fringes of East End, for her MA dissertation. Nasreen perceives her diasporic situation conservatively, whereas Tahira is liberal & rebellious. Raisa is matured, equable & understanding and seldom offers advice but is an attentive listener. They describe themselves interchangeably as Muslim & Pakistani. The girls let Raisa know the differences between their family background and life around them. The girls also tell her that their



mothers work in garment factories for their livelihood, which is the reflection of the predicament of the Muslim immigrant women in Britain. Their mothers came to join their husbands after having arranged marriages. They were emotionally & economically dependent on their families. But once in alien land, they adapted & adopted western measures of social norms, independence & individuality and allowed a change in their identity. Economic compulsions brought further changes to their identity. As demands grew for higher standards of living and better opportunities for their children, the Pakistani women entered the labour market. Tradition, sexual inequality, racism, lack of education or training, coupled with the difficulty in using the language pushed them to take up unskilled jobs. Like most Pakistani women, they worked in 'Sweat shops', sewing clothes either at home or reporting to work at incongruous & claustrophobic shops run by more enterprising among their own group. Yet it gave them confidence & helped them cultivate a significant change in their identity structure. Towards the end of the story, Raisa reveals that her mother too worked in the Sweatshop. These women cultivated their own ways of resisting discrimination, took control of their lives & finances, contributed to the welfare of their families and nurtured their own understanding of the British life. They tried to retain their cultural & religious identity, even as their children aspired to adapt to the culture of the new country. Raisa's dissertation therefore gave her an opportunity to study the evolution of identity among the Pakistani immigrants and also gave her a chance to explore her own past, as a typical example of Pakistani immigrant family. In her long confessional letter, which she writes in the 26th chapter of this novel, Raisa recalls her mother's journey from Pakistan to England. It is an often-repeated story of blindly following the husband and facing humiliation of Unimportance.

Keeping the Muslim women as the main stay of diasporic discourse, Farhana Sheikh utilizes the metaphors of 'Red Box', 'mother', 'mirror' & 'home' in a captivating story. She uses a variety of techniques such as interview, flash back, dialogue pattern & tape recording method, to weave a plot that gives a cohesive picture of both past & present. She considers the collective identification as an essential feature in defining one's identity. And that affiliation is the primary

stage of understanding the nature of collective identities. The young girls represent the young generation of Pakistani immigrant girls to live a highly regimented life in the premises of their homes marking traditional barriers but yearning to be recognized as British citizens, sometimes denying the accepted orthodox social codes. Nasreen prefers to follow the religious & traditional norms of Muslim culture, whereas Tahira is defiant & wishes to be separated from Pakistani community.

Farhana Shekh resorts to dialogue and polylogue to interweave the relationship between the three - gender roles, racism in white English schools (verbal racism & physical attacks), commitment to Islam - all of which construct their identity. Identity negotiation arises from the learning of social roles through personal experiences. Consequently, a person negotiates with society at large to arrive at the meaning of his or her identity. In this context, Farhana Sheikh offers to the reader a stimulating and delightful story to depict a group of young Muslims grappling with issues surrounding identity along with many other challenges in the late 20th century Britain.

The young generation represented by Tahira and Nasreen and their group of friends, who were born & brought up in Britain, clearly continued to be influenced by their parents, religion, language & way of life but the environment in their school made them more aware of their hyphenated identity as Britain-South Asians. They quickly took to the concept of individualism & liberalism, as they confronted both cultures at the same time. They did not reject their parents' ethnic & religious identities outright but developed a hybrid identity to navigate the cultural conflict, not only with the society around them but also very often with their own parents.

Thus Farhana Sheikh's novel, *The Red Box* is a remarkable study of immigrant issues with respect to Pakistani Muslim women who are struggling to assert their identity amidst the challenging society of London.

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**The Plight of an exploited Dalit Woman: A Study of Sivakami's  
*The Grip of Change***

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The word 'Dalit' comes from the Sanskrit root 'dal' which means broken, down trodden, or oppressed. It has also its origin in Sanskrit and Hindi word 'Dalita' which literally means oppressed. Regarding the origin of the word 'Dalit' there are variations, but it unanimously symbolizes the oppressed, downtrodden and other exploited minorities. Singha and Acharya define, "The term Dalit" literally means crushed or grounded and it describes the living conditions of a large group of socially oppressed people in India for centuries."(XXI).

Generally, Dalit refers to all the exploited and marginalized people but in its particular sense, it is used synonymous only to those who have been socially oppressed, excluded from the mainstream of the society and have been living with the stigma of untouchability for centuries. Dalits are socially oppressed, culturally neglected and economically exploited. This deplorable status has led them to paucity, exploitation, subjugation and dehumanization culminating them into a cultural silence. The situation becomes all more poignant when a Dalit is a woman. The insurgence of Dalit feminism is the need of the hour and fortunately there are women writers like Bama Faustina, Urmila pawar, Baby Kamble and P. Sivakami who have become a milestone in the arena of Dalit feminism by projecting Dalit women as the protagonists in their writings.

Sivakami, a down - to - earth woman, a leading Indian novelist-cum-politician, is the first Dalit woman to write a full length, Semi autobiographical Tamil novel Pazaiyana Kazhithalum (1989), with which she outshined the literary scenario and added a new magnum opus to Dalit literature and Dalit feminist literacy tradition in Tamil. She believes that only Dalits can write about the issues concerning them and that only woman can write on feminist issues. It is not just a question of experience but also perspective. Sivakami is a celebrated

Tamil writer and is also credited for being the first Tamil writer and is also celebrated for being the first Dalit woman I.A.S officer in Tamil Nadu has not forgotten her roots. She asserted that caste Hindus only have caste conscience and no public conscience. “They lack human conscience”. Publication of her first novel Pazaiyana Kazhithalum carried her into glare of publicity and it attracted much larger audience and was applauded widely when translated into English by Sivakami herself under the title of “The Grip of Change” in 2006.

In *The Grip of Change* Sivakami depicts the violent realities, sexual assaults, psychological torments and economical exploitation of Dalit patriarchy. By projecting a woman as a protagonist in her very first novel, she has proved that she is against the mainstream novel. She has proved that she is against the mainstream sexist ideology. The protagonist of the novel is Thangam a poor Dalit widow an other too. Ironically, she is victimized even by her own Dalit community also. She faces triple marginalization-economic oppression, gender subordination and caste discrimination. Clutched in the jaws of patriarchy she is abused raped and beaten frequently. As Vaishali ShivKumar suggests,

“a very famous statement ' woman is a Dalit from beginning to end; seems really a naked truth as this stage just because of this struggle of the Dalit women against the society, against their own caste and against the traditions of their men follow. The Patriarchy crushes down the originality, warmth, delicacy, tenderness and even beauty in them”(3).

Gayatri Chakravathy Spivak's rhetorical question in “Can the Subaltern Speak? has its background in post colonial subalterinity but it is quite relevant to Dalit woman’s plight too. They can’t articulate against the oppression inflicted upon them. Thangam is treated as a "body" in this novel. Time and again she is assaulted physically, verbally and sexually not only by upper caste patriarchs but by the womanizers of her own community too. After the death of her husband, she becomes a 'surplus woman' for her brothers-in -law and they force her to become a prostitute. Even her right on share of land is rejected on the basis of her infertile child. She can get her share of property only if her “body” can satisfy their lust. As she tells Kathamathu, "My

husband's brother tried to force me, but I never gave in..... (7) But she is unable to save her body from the jaws of hierarchy.

Devoid of money, the destitute and dispossessed Thangam moves outside her home to earn her livelihood by working as a labourer in the fields of an upper caste land lord Paranjothi Udayar and there she is raped by him. She narrates, “I didn't want it. But Udayar took notice of me. He raped me when I was working in his sugarcane field. I remained silent. After all, he is my paymaster. He measures my rice. . .”(7) what can be the justification for this heinous crime which not only shattered a woman physically but psychologically as well? This brutality of class hierarchy made her 'subaltern' who can't even speak! Thus poverty makes a poor widow to bear the sexual exploitation silently.

Caste is the most demoralizing aspect in a woman's identity that is already located at the periphery of a male dominated society. Caste disparities lead to violence against lower caste woman, who is expected to yield to upper caste male chauvinism. The cruelty of caste discrimination is exposed when she moves from passivity of active assertion of her angst against the exploiting masculine brutality and has to suffer social indignation. When the liaison between Udayar and Thangam disclosed, Udayar's brother-in-law attack her and beat her doggedly and even she is threatened to be killed (6). The duality of the upper class is exposed when Udayar abuses her, “Ungrateful Whore! Even if she was hurt by the hand adorned with gold! A parachi could have never dreamt of being touched by a man like me! My touch was a boon granted for penance performed in her earlier births. . .”(31)

These words reveal the hypocrisy of Hindu caste system who at one hand hates the lower caste considering them untouchables, and at the other hand gratify their corporeal hunger through Dalit bodies. But Thangam's saga of exploitation is not complete yet. Still she has to face oppression for being poor and particularly a 'woman' and now she is exploited at the hands of the rich of her own Dalit community. Unguarded in her own village, she seeks help in Arthur village but this help proves transitory. Not only her money is grabbed by her so called guardian Kathamuthu but her 'body' is also violated.

The rich and influential Dalit Panchayat leader Kathamuthu who

earlier gave shelter to Thangam turns into animal and once more her 'body' is abused. In an afternoon while she was sleeping in the kitchen he rapes her and she is so tormented that she can't even see his face. And then she becomes a mistress to him forever. Ironically, Thangam epitomizes the dilemma of all the subjugated women as the novel projects her in a wretched condition of an outcaste from the beginning to the end. B. Mangalam, rightly observes, "Sivakami's fiction documents violence against women within the domestic space. Her fiction exposes caste and gender hierarchies outside and inside the home that renders the woman an outcaste in her community" (111).

Dalits are 'others' in Hindu caste structure and in the novel their 'other'ness is ostensible by the setting of the Dalit communities in Cheri, (separate outcaste area for all minorities) whereas the upper castes live in gramam. The discrimination doesn't stop in separate places; it's roots are extended to the untouchability and relationships too. A Hindu upper caste Udayar feels ashamed after the exposure of his liaison with a parachi but a lower caste Kathamuthu brings a 'foreign brandy' Nagamani to home as his wife (39). Udayar's wife, an upper caste Hindu woman can send her brothers to assault Thangam for having an illicit affair with her husband but Kangawali, a lower caste woman has to bear her husband's second wife Nagamani. Later they both bear Thangam in their home. Ironically there develops a friendship bond too among these three victimized Dalit women. Kangawali and Nagamani became accustomed to having Thangam in house. After lunch, they sat together in the coconut grove chewing betel leaves and chatting. They no longer served the leftover food. She ate what they had. The yawning gap exists not only between Dalit and non-Dalits but among Dalits too. Sivakami has criticized the self destructive tendencies of Dalit community by exposing caste hierarchical order existing in Tamil Nadu, by giving an elaborated narrative in the text. She says:

Even amongst the lower castes, hierarchy existed-pallars were agricultural labourers, Parayars were drummers and menials, and the Chakkiliyars were cobblers. The first grade the pallars were absent in Puliur. The pallars considered themselves superior to the rest. The Parayars considered themselves higher than the Chakkiliyars, who in turn considered themselves superior to the para-vannaras, the washer

community. The para-vannara men washed clothes for the lower castes and the women worked as midwives for them. Similar to all other human communities, the women were considered to be lower than the men. Everyone established their worth by pointing to those beneath them. (63).

And this series of hierarchy in every culture and every social group concludes with the one and only perpetual prey i.e women of that culture or social group. Paradoxically such totalitarian tendencies survive even in the midst of the lowest of the lower castes. Each caste wants to dominate other. And such a hierarchy proves to be a curse especially for the Dalit women for which she has been waited down over the manifold layers of exploitation due to this caste hierarchy. Meena Kandasamy, a contemporary Dalit writer appreciates Sivakami for this honest self criticism, "The first Tamil novel by a Dalit woman, it evoked a great deal of discussion because it went beyond condemning caste fanatics by using fiction to describe how we were shackled, and tangled among ourselves. Instead of being the journey of her individual voice and consciousness, it was unanimous expression of the youth of this oppressed community-eager and waiting for change"(193).

Truly conforming its title, the novel *The Grip of Change* doesn't only voice the plight of an exploited Dalit woman, it records the waves of 'change' also in the Dalit consciousness; thus providing a kind of cure for the ailments of the society. Through the character of Gowri, the idea of education in recovery of Dalit's condition is also established. This novel postulates a crude stereotype of the patriarchy along with a hopeful vision presented by Gowri. The glimpses of the growing consciousness can be seen in the novel. Kathamathu, a Dalit patriarchy allows daughter Gowri to study and this is only by the awareness provided by education that she is able to realise the exploitation of woman in a patriarchal setup.

Being educated, she protests against early marriage, "The sufferings that my mother underwent in her marriage! I don't want to be tortured like her by some men"(124). She defies the discussion of her father about her marriage by working hard for her examination, and after getting success she chooses to study further in the city college. When she crossed the threshold of chauvinistic home, resisting her father's intimidation, she thinks she has conked out the tyrannical



chains. The text beautifully conveys, “During floods, waters from over flowing wells mingle with the water of huge water bodies, transgressing their boundaries.

Gowri felt that she had crossed over human-made boundaries her father, her caste and her village-and merged with the ocean of people”(95). She openly condemns the inhuman treatment of her father inflicted upon Thangam. When Kathamuthu rapes Thangam she vehemently shouts, "Dogs! Dogs in this house! Shameless as dogs!" (93). She is also critical of her father's polygamist marital state and always stimulates her mother Kangawali and her step-mother Nagamani for liberation.

In fact, Gowri is the mouth piece of Sivakami through whom she has voiced the voiceless Dalit women who are bearing the inhuman treatment silently. The vocalization and resistance chiefly rests upon fire brand spirited Gowri. Meena Kandasamy, in her article “And One Shall Live in Two . . .,” gives an insightful review of *The Grip of Change*. She called Sivakami's daring attempt of-examination as an exemplary of realistic criticism. Though the novel is fictitious the characters and incidents are realistic enough to verbalise the reality of modern society.

K. Sachidananda observes, "Dalit literature empowers the marginalised by retrieving the voices, spaces and identities silenced or suppressed by castiest powers"(14). And P. Sivakami is able to formulate the poignant tale of the women's struggle to fight and survive in a biased society and culture through Thangam's story and Gowri's protests which suggest that silence and suppression is optimistically replaced by a stimulated and resisting expression. Thus from the beginning to the end this novel serves as an icebreaker and draws attention to violent realities, sexual assaults psychological torments and economical exploitation along with a message that a democratic approach is essential to eradicate such discriminatory ideologies from social fabric.

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**Science vs Counter Science: A Study of Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome***

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The *Calcutta Chromosome* like *In an Antique Land*, has multiple stories. It is a complex novel, but that does not diminish the interest of the reader in the stories. It also follows the tradition of Indian epics. Some critics have called the novel a medical thriller, a victorious ghost story, and a scientific quest. However, the author is well rooted in his own cultural milieu. The time scheme of the novel is cyclic and not linear unlike in the west. The narrative moves between present and the late 19th century. It is rather a search for and history of the elusive and alluring Calcutta Chromosomes.

The novel begins with a quest represented by Antar, Murugan, Mangala, Lutchman, Urmila, Sonali, Romen Haldar and Mrs. Aratounian etc. The minor characters are Ava, Tara, Maria, Phulboni, a missing toothed boy, a fish seller, a stationmaster and a chain of scientists who are involved in a scientific research of malarial parasite. Ghosh employs unusual techniques in the novel. He uses Antar's character as a ploy to begin with. Antar a computer loving Egyptian clerk in New York and Ava - an employee of Lhasa at International Water Council's Continental Command Centre for Asia are used as an excuse for providing a frame work to the quest of Murugan the protagonist of the novel. Antar locates the ID card on his screen. With the help of Ava, he finds out that Murugan is his ex-colleague at Life

Watch. Both Antar and Ava go into Council's vast archives and find out the truth. "Subject missing since August 21, 1995, it said "Last seen Calcutta, India"<sup>1</sup>. The reader is informed that Murugan was last seen in Calcutta. Both Antar and Ava gather complete information about Murugan and his mission in India. Antar tries to recollect his associations with Murugan and builds up a complete picture of Life Watch. The reader is also informed about Murugan's life in United States. At last Antar traces Murugan out on computer. Murugan in India has a mission. His life there forms a major part of the novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome*. The mission is to unravel the mystery of the transmigration of spirits and thereby keeping the confrontation between the scientific method and the indigenous method of native people. It is again a conflict between the polished foreigner and the under developed countryman. Therefore, both national boundaries and community clashes play an important role for the theme of Nationalism in the novel.

Antar informs the reader that Indian police is looking for Murugan. It is suggested in the novel that Murugan is missing rather than dead. He has certain peculiarities, which make him appear older than he actually is. His friend calls him "Morgan"<sup>2</sup> and describe his as a "Corky little roaster of a man"<sup>3</sup>. He talks with fondness and combativeness. He has unmatched argumentative power, and an incessant fluency. He is even supposed to be life Watch's principal archivist. He is a graduate student of Syracuse University where he discovers the great love of his life: "the medical story of malarial parasite"<sup>4</sup>. As a student, he spent several years teaching in a small college in upstate New York, where he got interested in a highly specialized subject : "The early history of malaria research"<sup>5</sup> which later on becomes his pet obsession. He devotes his entire life in order to unravel the story of the discovery of the malarial parasite. He has certain assumptions about malarial parasite. The prime assumption is that certain story events occurred simultaneously when malarial parasite was being discovered. The second assumption is that Ronald Ross the scientist, who established the relationship between malaria and mosquito could have succeeded in discovering an antidote for syphilis as well, had his attention not been diverted by certain individuals.

He is mainly interested in reaching Calcutta before August 20th, the day which Ronald Ross had designated as “World’s Mosquito Day” to commemorate one of his findings. Life Watch was rather reluctant to let him go to India but at last permits him to go on a meager salary.

Antar, Murugan conversation sheds light on the life of Ronald Ross before he discovered the cure for malarial parasite. Murugan provides the missing links about the research. He informs that one fine morning; he gets out of the bed and finds himself being bitten by the Science bug. The idea of malarial parasite germinates in his mind due to this. Despite many hazards, he goes on doing his research work. Eventually, Ross had to compete with scientific efforts carried out by Lavarán, Koch, Grassi and the whole Italian Mob, Ross’s finding leaves all other scientists behind. He is in the forefront of scientific discovery and beats the Government of U.S., France, Germany and Russia. This is the official story conveyed by Murugan to Antar in the United States. But, the real story is something which is not known. Murugan’s aim is to bring to light the parallel research work going on along with Ronald Ross’s scientific research. In order to prove his point, he visits India.

On May 25, 1895, exactly 8 p.m., Lutchman walks into Ross’s life like a miracle. It is the second case that Ross receives. As usual, Ross performs certain experiments on him. Lutchman is a healthy, looking young man, and a government servant. It is through his experiment on Lutchman that Ross proves malaria is spread through the mosquito bite. Murugan thought that Lutchman’s arrival is not coincidental. He thinks that the whole thing was preplanned by a group of people who wanted to seize the initiative taken by Dr. Ross. It is this doubt that compels Murugan to find out the truth behind this accidental arrival. According to Murugan, Lutchman even helps Dr. Ross in certain complex matters which otherwise frustrate him: “That the malaria vander might by one particular species of mosquito”<sup>6</sup>. On August 20, 1897, Ross makes his first breakthrough. It is very clear to Murugan that Lutchman was not certainly an innocent person. He had joined Ross with the intention of fulfilling some of his goals.

Murugan tries hard to satisfy Antar’s queries. In order to convince Antar, Murugan lays bare his theory of Counter-Science. According to him, the major principle of Counter Science is secrecy. It

has to observe secrecy as a technique or procedure. The counter scientists believe that to put the idea on a piece of paper in the form of language is to establish a claim to know. And this is the first thing Counter Science disputes. In answer to the question of Antar, as to why Lutchman along with his people want Ross's help, Murugan replies that Lutchman and his supporters were working on such a mission which could be beyond the comprehension of a rational mind. Their method appears to have a lot of glitches because they did not possess the right equipment. In order to overcome such glitches, they use the date of scientific approach, and therefore they need the help of Ronald Ross.

Murugan's arrival in Calcutta on 20th August 1995 is equally mysterious. On that very day, Murugan visits the memorial of the British Scientist Ronald Ross. He is thrilled by reading a small inscription : "In the small laboratory seventy yards to the Southeast of this gate Surgeon Major Ronald Ross J.M.S. in 1889 discovered the manner in which malaria is conveyed by mosquitoes". While he is reading this, it is raining heavily. So, he has to take shelter under the gates of Rabindra Sadan auditorium. It is vacant but the microphone is on. He happens to meet two women there who are the reporters of a magazine names Calcutta. They are introduced as Urmila Ray and Sonali Das. Murugan comes to know from the two ladies that there is an award ceremony for Phulboni, a writer whose eighty fifth birthday is being celebrated. He also gathers the information that "Phulboni" is his pseudonym. His original name is Saiyad Murad Husain Later on : It is revealed that Sonali Das is Phulboni's daughter. She is married to Romen Haldar a builder and owner of a big hotel in Calcutta. Urmila Ray, a middle class unmarried woman earns her livelihood by working for the daily newspaper Calcutta.

When Murugan goes from the auditorium to P.G. Hospital where Ronald Ross's laboratory was located, on his way, a boy chased him with a painted T-shirt on his body and a gape-toothed face. The boy who chased him resembles Lutchman. Murugan knocks the boy down from the wall. The toy in the hand of the boy shatters into pieces. The image of the toy resembles the image of Mangala, a washerwoman in Cunningham's laboratory. He somehow, collects the information that Mangala is worshipped as a goddess who could cure syphilis. Murugan immediately realizes that the boy has been chasing him right from the

beginning and he wants to dodge him but does not succeed easily. This boy is none other than spirit of Lutchman or Laakhan who encountered every one of them in different forms with the help of ‘Calcutta Chromosome’. During the course of his quest, Murugan happens to meet Mrs. Aratounian and Romen Haldar. Mrs. Aratounian is the owner of Murugan’s guesthouse, who later on turns into Mangala. Romen Haldar, who has become a wealthy man, had come to Sealdah Station in the 19th Century. It is the spirit of Laakhan which enters the body of Romen Haldar. The remanifestation of the spirit of Laakhan is a reassertion of the triumph of traditional knowledge despite efforts by powerful people to resist. Through Lutchman and Mangala, it is counter science which shows its power and strength by debiting the scientists who wanted to find out the Malaria Parasite.

Murugan now, easily gets the clues about the unsaid, the unexplored and the missing presence of the counter science. In the evening, he visits Robinson Street. There is a power cut; he unknowingly enters the half-constructed hotel of Romen Haldar where he locates the same person wearing T-shirt and a missing tooth. It creates an element of suspense and uncertainty in the mind of Murugan. As the narrative advances, the reader is informed that Sonali lives in a flat with a male servant to look after. The servant is a boy who resembles the boy with a gaped tooth who chases Murugan. Then Sonali and Urmila come to Rabinson street hotel. Urmila wants to know more about Phulboni. She asks Sonali whether phulboni has ever talked about Laakhan. Hence, one feels that there all those whom Murugan encounters are all mysterious beings that were in one way or other connected to counter culture. Then Urmila is informed that Phulboni told a story to her mother after getting a promise from her that she will keep it a secret. But, she did not keep her promise and as a consequence he never visited her again till her death. Sonali is told the story by her mother before she died. What surprises the reader is that almost all the important characters are connected with the counter science movement.

On his return, Murugan meets Mrs. Aratounian. The television was screening Phulboni’s award ceremony. Both Mrs. Aratounian and Murugan show their acquaintance with Sonali and Urmila, who are standing near the entrance of the Rabindra Sadan auditorium. But, Mrs. Aratounian is rather annoyed with phulboni for he had connection with

and herself, because she is supposed to be the reincarnation of Mangala. The reader is gradually exposed to the incidents in which Urmila happens to be instrumental in the story of Romen Haldar and the fish seller. The Wrapper in which the fish is supplied to Urmila is the piece of document which reveals the missing links of the Mangala Lutchman story.

Sonali's visit to Robinson street hotel is an important event for the proceedings of the novel. Sonali finds a lot people in the room. The way to reach the room is quite difficult to climb. There is also a middle aged woman, about whom Sonali has a feeling of having met her earlier. The lady takes out a small clay figure and touches it to her forehead. Then, raising her voice, she speaks out in archaic Bengali, "The time is here; pray that all goes well for our Laakhan once again"<sup>7</sup>. Soon, Sonali happens to see the body and loses consciousness. The clay figure is the same which Murugan had broken from the hand of a boy wearing a printed T-shirt. Sonali is surprised to find that the lady resembles Mrs. Aratounian and the body which is addressed as Laakhan is that of Romen Haldar, one can easily conclude that it must have been a pre-planned activity. The co existence of the characteres from 19th and 20th centuries is magic realism at its best.

According to Murugan, their presence is simply a hint to make the story mutated. He believes that their roles can be too small. The mysterious people may assign further role to some other people because what he thinks is.

Amitav Ghosh offers a lot of improvisations during the course of the novel. He employs many devices. As a new device, the role of a speaker and listener gets exchanged. Now, Urmila tells the story once told by Phulboni to Sonali, to Murugan. He is surprised because the image of woman in the story resembles the image in the mind of Murugan. Even Phulboni is surprised when he knew that the same incident had occurred at Kalighat. The real woman existed which resembled with the story of Phulboni, "The Bather's Discovery". He himself was puzzled which came first. His fantasy turns into horrified reality. When Murugan and Urmila go to Kalighat, they see to their dismay, there are plenty of images like that to offer homage to the woman. A small girl conveys to them the thrilling news that this is made for Puja. She says : "Today is the last day for Puja of



Mangalabibi. Baba says that tonight Mangalabibi is going to enter a new body’’<sup>8</sup>. The fact makes Urmila convinced that Murugan’s theory of Counter Science works very well. Murugan has also a feeling that his hypothesis was ultimately coming true. The reader even feels that Murugan would definitely be able to complete the quest one day. Such incidents in the novel emphasize the presence of supernatural power, which strengthens the belief in Counter Science.

In answer to Urmila’s queries, Murugan discloses to her that Lutchman is an assistance of D.D. Cunningham, working under the instruction of Mangala. By the mentioning Mangala, Murugan relates that Mangala to Mangalabibi, mentioned by the six year old girl, who is about to change the body in a Puja. Here also the element of reincarnation is highlighted. According to the letter of Farley, Mangala is found at the Sealdah Station by Cunningham, that she is dirt poor and probably suffering from her syphilis. Farley even believes that she is a way ahead of Cunningham in her intuitive understanding of the fundamentals of the problems caused by malaria parasite. She takes a whole lab like “a duck to water”. She was bigger things in her mind than the malaria bug. Murugan names it as: “The Calcutta Chromosome’’<sup>9</sup>.

The quest of Murugan is to find out the persons concerned. Murugan even stresses that only a person like Mangala, completely out of loop, scientifically speaking, would be able to find out. For conventional scientists, she wants to prove herself to be a god rather than a scientist.

In order to know more about Lutchman or Laakhan, we have to listen to the story of the station master. In the story, Laakhan kills the station master when the station master tried to kill him. From that time onwards, there is no station master at Renupur. The station master who meets Phulboni is none other than the ghost who attempts to kill Phulboni. There, Phulboni comes to know about Laakhan and writes a collection of stories names ‘Laakhan’s Stories’.

After finishing the story, Urmila suddenly remembers Sonali Das. Murugan tells Urmila that he has seen Sonali at Robinson Street Hotel. On the way to Robinson Street, Urmila asks why he is so much towards knowing about Mangala and Laakhan. In reply to that he says

that his undertaking such a hazardous task is an outcome of the fact that he himself had been a patient of syphilis. Now he has got rid of it entirely. But what he feels that he is involved in this process. Having reached the Robinson street hotel, they find Sonali in a subconscious state. When she regains consciousness, she tells them that she has seen Romen Halder's body, but the people around the body addressed it as Laakhan's body. And the lady near the body is Mrs. Aratounian. This clue provides the evidence that the Murugan's theory of 'The Calcutta Chromosome' has worked. The spirits of Mangala and Laakhan are reincarnated in Mrs. Aratounian and women Halder respectively. Here, Murugan's quest is almost completed. His presumed theory has worked efficiently and his mission to Calcutta is satisfactorily over. This entire quest of Murugan is full of mysteries. The Calcutta chromosome which makes possible the transformation of the soul from one body to another.

One more mystery is added to the bundle of mysteries that even Murugan's furniture is a part of the list prepared at Mrs. Aratounian's place a year ago. From the clerk, they come to know that Mrs. Aratounian has gone to Renupur from Sealdah which confirms the accomplishment of Murugan's mission. They also happen to know that she has told even Phulboni to join her. Therefore, it is explicit that Phulboni is the integral part of the whole setup. Sonali, in the end, admits that Phulboni is her father and joins to meet Mrs. Aratounian and Phulboni at Sealdah station. Hence, all the threads are brought together to create a cohesive whole. On the way to Renupur, Murugan comments on his role in the mission: "My part was to tie some threads together that they could band the whole package over in a neat little bundle some time in the future; to whomever it is they are waiting for". By telling this, Murugan suggests that Urmila is one who is chosen for it. He touches his forehead to her feet and begs not to forget him: "Don't forget me, he begged her. If you have it in your power to change the script, write me in. Don't leave me behind, please". By promising them to take wherever she will go, Urmila is identified with Mangala.

Amitav Ghosh concludes the novel by showing gain, getting in touch with Antar's screen. When he moves the headgear, Murugan appears near the auditorium along with two women in saree like Urmila and Sonali but they are Tara and Maria. Yet another mysterious element is added that Tara and Maria have taken over the role of Urmila and

Sonali. When Antar tries to change the headgear, a restraining hand stops him. At the back, Tara utters : “Keep watching, we are here, we are all with you”. There are voices everywhere telling the same thing. It means that the role of Murugan is now shifted to Antar. Hence, the novel ends with Antar who completes the teleology of good beginning, middle and an end. The most important thing is that the indigenous national spirit surpasses all the scientific disciplines and theory and establishes the supremacy of power over them.

The East and West are nicely reflected in the novel, Ghosh, here has attempted to inscribe a simple scientific thriller on the ‘fever’, ‘delirium’, and ‘discovery’ of the malaria parasite. He has contrived to introduce a maze of ideas crisscrossing each other to project the profound meaning and mystery of life. The author has succeeded in dealing with the theme of the novel in the most impressive way.

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