Critical Space®

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

Editors

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

CRITICAL SPACE

CSJ

International Refereed Journal in English

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Space*: A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal in English Language and Literature' aims at to publish unpublished, original research articles and make available a new platform to the scholars of Language, Literature and Culture.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

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EDITORIAL

The June Issue of *Critical Space* showers the intellectual and logically sound articles on different subjects. The issue exemplifies how an Indian academicians, scholars, teachers and learners are responding to the new changes happening in the age of digitalization and at the same time also attempting to pass judgmental arguments on the age-old literary explorations.

Dr.Sujata Bamane's 'Comprehension in a Graphic Style: A Study of Fumi Yoshinaga's *All My Darling Daughters*' deals with the interpretation of the multi-layered realities reflected in the graphic novel. The article comprehensively explores how the contemporary scenario can be projected in the interesting style of narration which is more popular with the contemporary generation. Sangita T. Ghodake's article 'Transcending Life through Romance: Mumbai Tiffinwalas and the Lunch Box' deals with the optimistic romantic feelings of the period reflected in the movies. The article is also a good demonstration of the film interpretations with all the potential meanings created out of the audio-visual space of the film.

Dr. Babu Nampalli's article 'Raja Rao and the Image of Indian in Indian English Novel' gives a quick review of the early attempts of the Indian English Novelists in order to establish an indigenous identity of India. Dilshad Kaur's article 'Breaking New Grounds: Listening to the Silent Echoes of Draupadi in *The Palace of Illusions*' redefines the Indian stereotype of women in the patriarchal social structure of an ancient India.

However, in the ELT segment we have three articles written on the significant and relevant issues. It has been observed that the articles published in the Critical Space have opened the new avenues in the academic research which have also motivated other

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researchers to contribute in the field. Dr. Santosh Kumar J. Mishra writes about the changes happening in the teaching-learning discourse due to the rapidly increasing Digitalization. Dr. Preeti Tushar Joshi denotes the peculiarities added to the English language due to the contemporary phenomena of Globality, Locality and Hybridity. Mohini Savedkar's article 'Naïve Chimney-Sweepers Tarred with the Brush of Ideology: The Religious Ideology in Blake's 'The Chimney –Sweeper' from the 'Songs of Innocence' deals with the entanglement of religious ideology and the melodious poetry of Blake.   Satyawan Suresh Mane reveals the problems and prospects of Learning and Teaching of English in India.

Thus, we hope that you will find the volume worth reading as it addresses many significant issues of the contemporary relevance.

- **Professor P. A. Attar**

- **Dr H. B. Patil**

Contents

Comprehension in a Graphic Style: A Study of Fumi Yoshinaga's *All My Darling Daughters*

Dr.Sujata Bamane[*]

Abstract:

The postmodern authors writing in the age of digitalization are exploring the every possibility of narrative technique that may encompass the multi-layered realities of the age as they cannot be expressed with the traditional style of the writing. It requires a complexly crafted narrative style with the technically sound digital media. The computer savvy generation of the period is no longer believe in the reading of a text but is enjoying the virtual world created by the computer technology. The graphic novel is also one of the most popular sub-genres of the novel. The traditional tools and methods of interpretations are also found inadequate to understand these literary enterprises. The present paper is an attempt to reflect these new facts in the light of Fumi Yoshinaga's *All My Darling Daughters*.

Key words - Graphic novels, Postmodern Narrative Style, Digitalization of Printing

The aim of learning any language is communication. And word is the major asset through which language is flourished. However, the comprehension of textual context can be made possible and easy with the help of the coherence between the word and its usage. Along with the language of words, the language of colours, pictures, images, strokes of lines causes the effective and smooth communication between the conveyer and the recipient. The reader's purpose of reading for reading's sake gets withered once the reader encounters with the words displayed along with pictures and images.

The paper aims at studying the scope of discovering contextual meaning of the text by interpreting different aspects of novel written in traditional and as

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well as in graphic style with reference to Fumi Yoshinaga's graphic novel, **All My Darling Daughters.**

'Graphic Novel' earlier known as 'comics' written in most diagrammatic and decorative with words combined with different colour-combinations, funny pictures and mesmerizing images. Graphic novels are of different types reflecting upon various moods ranging from fierce, funny, romantic, adventurous, melancholic, emotional etc. Hence it has a blooming future for the revival of 'reading culture'.

The aim of learning any language is communication. And word is the major asset through which language is flourished. However, the comprehension of textual context can be made possible and easy with the help of the coherence between the word and its usage. Further, it is not only the language of words that makes the communication possible but along with them, the language of colours, pictures, images, strokes of lines causes the effective and easy communication between the conveyer and the recipient.

Though it is said that, 'words are a form of action capable of influencing change', it is not only the usage of words that makes the reader grapple with content but the creative weaving of words that keeps him/her engaged and enjoy reading with comprehension.

The reader's purpose of reading for reading's sake gets withered once the reader encounters with the words displayed along with pictures and images. The frequency of reading helps reader to use left-brain to process language and further read more. In this process a reader collects information and records it and thinks analytically. The storage of analyzed information in the left side of the brain promotes reader to make use of right side of the brain, which is gifted with imaginative power. It is best at expressive and creative tasks and more visual-

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aided. Hence the creativity takes birth here in this sphere of imaginative frame of mind. However, reader's original creative ability needs to be benefitted with some challenging creative art for instance, the 'Graphic Novel' earlier known as 'comics'.It is written in most diagrammatic and decorative manner. The written expression is combined with words, different colour-combinations, funny pictures and mesmerizing images. Reader's desire of learning language gets fulfilled as his journey of learning language becomes intensively pleasurable. Such a written draft presented in a graphic format appeals to reader's curious mind. Thus, the fascinating delivery of content enhances reader's reading capacity with observation and visualization.

What is Creative Writing? :-

The word, 'creative' denotes something innovative, original and different. **Wikipedia** defines the concept, 'Creative Writing',

'Creative Writing is any writing that goes outside the bounds of normal professional, journalistic, academic or technical forms of literature, typically identified by an emphasis on narrative craft, character-development and the use of literary tropes.'

Forms of 'Creative Writing':-

Autobiography/Memoir
Collaborative Writing
Creative non-fiction
Play Writing/Dramatic Writing
Screen Writing
Song Writing
Electronic Literature
Expository Writing

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Creative Writing uses the usual aspects of conventional writing like characters, setting and rich graphic language to create an image or to narrate a story. Through small but pertinent details like words, sounds, gestures, signs and so on, the creative writing brings about a much larger story and allows reader to draw a larger and deeper message. In short, the story constructed with the help of equipment mentioned above does not tell a tale but shows. Thus, the use of graphic signs enhances an element of creativity of the written draft.

The word,'graph' means 'a planned drawing, consisting of line or lines' and 'graphic' is something i.e. easy to imagine that makes one enjoy a clear lively picture with an explicit idea of the content. It is of photographic, of visual art pertaining to visible efficacy. Hence it is more fit for readers (children) raising in today's visual world.

The 'Graphic Novel' may be a new format/genre in today's literary circle. But not for today's teens as it is known to them as 'comics'. The term 'Graphic Novel' was first popularized by Will Eisner to distinguish his book, 'A Contact with God' (1978) from collections of newspaper comic strips. It is of consisting 'Sequential Art'- a series of illustrations, which when viewed in order, tell a story. The genre, 'Sequential Art' refers to the art form of using a train of images organized in sequence to tell a story or convey information. The best-known e.g. of 'Sequential Art' are Comics, Graphic Novels and Manga.

What is 'Graphic Novel'? -

Wikipedia defines,

"A Graphic Novel is a narrative work in which story is conveyed to the reader using sequential art in either an experimental design or in a traditional comic's format. The term is employed in a broad manner, encompassing non-fiction

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works and thematically linked short-stories as well as fictional stories across a number of genres."

Types of Graphic Novels: -

Graphic novels are of different types reflecting upon various moods ranging from fierce, funny, romantic, adventurous, melancholic, emotional etc.

Thus, graphic writings are for kids, young adults as well as for adults. There are a few wordless graphic novels too. For instance, **The Arrival** (2007) by Shaun Tan. Graphic novels written in Japanese style and language are called as 'Manga'.TejasModak, one of the young freelancers says,

"Graphic novels have more international recognition as they follow a graphic tradition. Indians lack appreciation for visual tradition. Graphics have been misinterpreted as a child's tool in our country. On the other hand, international consciousness agrees to vivid standardization of graphic books with age no bar value."

What is 'Manga'? :

Manga are comics created by Japanese creators in the Japanese language conforming to a style developed in Japan in late 19th cent. Japaneseor Japanese-influenced comics and graphic novels usually printed in black and white. There are many genres inside Manga, the most distinct being 'Sojo' (for girls) and 'Shonen' (for boys). Since, the 1950, Manga has steadily become a major part of the Japanese publishing industry.

The paper aims at studying the scope of learning language by interpreting different aspects of the novel written in traditional and as well as in graphic style.In order to illustrate the topic, the present paper refers to a Japanese Graphic Novel, **All My Darling Daughters** by Japanese writer, Fumi

Yoshinaga.Its major focus is on the certain structural aspects of the graphic novel under study which contribute to the reorientation of the reading habit of children which is missing these days with traditional writings.

Yoshinaga is a Tokyo-born manga creator who debuted in 1994 with Tsuki to Sandaru. In 2006, she was named one of the top 20 creators who have contributed to the world of 'shojo' manga by Prof. Masami Toka in her touring exhibit Shojo Manga: Girl Power! Yoshinaga has won numerous awards, including the 2002 Kodansha Manga Award for her series Antique Bakery and the 2006 Japan Media Arts Festival Excellence Award for Ooku.

Structure of the novel, *All My Darling Daughters*: Except the colourful pictures on the cover page, all the pictures in the book are printed in black and white. The cover page is also counted while numbering the pages, which is a striking contrast between Manga and the conventional novel. The pages are numbered from right to left unlike the conventional style of numbering from left to right.

Dialogues: Since it is written in a dialogue form it falls under the genre, 'drama'. But written format is graphic so it is called as 'graphic novel'. Manga books are read from back to front. In case of this type of novel, reader's job of reading dialogues is challenging, because reader is forced to read them from right to left exactly opposite to the traditional way of reading i.e. from left to right. Dialogues are brief, short and are not structured in the form of long sentences in the horizontal manner. But they occur in the form of '**word balloons'**. The speech-content is encircled or filled in ovals with a small tail that leads to the mouth of speaker-character.

Reader Friendly:- Story is conveyed in sequential **panels** i.e. the boxes. The task of reading is made convenient for a reader as he/she has to focus only on

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that particular box. Words integrated with pictures and images appeal to reader's capacity of observation, imagination and ultimately make his understanding of contextual scenario possible. Consequently, reader can move to the next panel with full satisfaction as in some cases reader's inadequacy of language is overcome by the meaningful gestures of the characters.

In Graphic Novel, '**gesture'** plays a vital role. It is the spectacular instrument of communication. Hence, hopefully the journey of inadequate readers is made trouble-free with a strong visual impact of gestures, facial expressions etc. In his 'Graph Theory Application', **L.R. Foulds (1992:43)** quotes R.L. Stevenson,

"To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive."

In this way, 'travers ability' in the words of **L.R. Foulds** can be one of the important elements of Graphic Novel.

Importance of Unspoken Acts:- Importance of unspoken acts to the spoken ones are highlighted through the technique of '**thought balloon'**. It is a cloud shaped circle through which the inner state of character is revealed. This 'thought balloon' is connected with the concerned character with the means of small-shaped circles that form a small tail. The '**thought balloon'** reflects the words, pictures and images from the imaginative world of character. In fact it is the reflection of the inner state of mind of character.

For Instance: In the story under study the news of the remarriage of her mother keeps in numb and shocking state of mind which is being shown through a 'thought balloon'.

Non-Verbal Messages:- The non-verbal messages in the Graphic Novel are visible and audible as well. It is like hearing the message in words. E.g.

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Loudness, a sudden change in pitch, angry look, tightly raised eyebrows, open mouth etc.

In his book, 'Language, The Loaded Weapon' **Dwight Bolinger** (1980) says,

> "Language, a marvelous instrument of communication if put together with printed signs,   facial expressions in picture."

e.g. 'Out of control' signal is shown in the beginning of the novel, when Yukiko's mother gets irritated with her daughter's messy room.

Connectivity: L.R. Foulds (1992:17) says, "One of the most important graph theoretic concepts is that of *'connectivity'.* The juxtaposition of pictures, images with words in deliberate sequence maintains the connectivity between two panels. It causes the progress of story. Thus Graphic novel achieves fine blend of visual element with the conventional aspect of novel form. The eye-catching images cause the contextual connections with the written matter and makes reader's reading meaningful.

Conclusion:

Graphic Novel, a non-traditional literary art emerges to be an excellent means for overall learning language for a new learner. It increases language acquisition, removes confidence blockage, can spark the interest of slow-learner, leaves scope for inventiveness of children as a reader feels anxiety-free atmosphere to achieve a status of 'autonomous reader'. Hence it has a blooming future for the revival of 'reading culture'.

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Transcending Life through Romance: Mumbai Tiffinwalas and *the Lunch Box*

Sangita T. Ghodake[*]

Abstract:

In a metropolitan city like Mumbai,a city that moves on wheels, a city that gives pan local and pan global experience, often gives feeling of isolation and alienation to her citizens. The absurdity of fast moving life in a metro often leads to universal question, 'why do we exist?' The answer lies in optimistic attitude of Mumbai Dabbawalas/ Tiffinwalas whose coping mechanism teaches us how to live and enjoy every single moment of life. They flow with the flow of life by maintaining self respect and dignity. The city plays a role of a protagonist whosteers us to 'never say die'. The Dabbawala or Tiffinwallas have crossed the boundaries of publicity. Right from Prince Charles of Wales, England to a case study of Harward management students have shown their keen interest in the management skills of the semi-literate and non-technical dabbawalas. The present paper is a humble attempt of describing Mumbai city in brief. Life of Mumbai dabbawalas would be described through socio-cultural and financial aspects. Being a teacher of literature, I would like to describe Mumbai and dabbawalas through a Bollywood movie *The Lunch Box* that has won accolades in national and international film festivals. The movie is a bittersweet romantic comedy in which Mumbai city life is portrayed with her special attribute 'dabbawala'. The movie depicts a story of two unknown people who get connected through misplacement of tiffin and their romantic letter friendship finally helps them to transcend life in the search of the 'self'. Their journey started from absurdity and boredom of cactus land that gradually turn into lands of roses and finally transcends them to spiritual quest for 'know thyself'.

Key Words: *Mumbai, alienation and isolation, dabbawalas, the lunch box, spiritual quest, transcendentalism*

A journey of all rational and sensible human beings starts from ignorance to knowledge. Romanticism and transcendentalism are the steps that one has to come across in his/her life. Transcendentalism is closely associatedwith an

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individual's identity, temperament, philosophy and spirituality whereas romanticism was an intellectual and artistic movement of eighteenth century that deals with emotional upheavals. Every individual's journey of life moves from romanticism to transcendentalism. Immanuel Kant's transcendental philosophy shows strong faith in power of divinity and individuality.Ralph Waldo Emerson's philosophy of transcendentalism deals with wisdom and self realization. The present paper is a humble attempt to describe a life in metropolitan cities in general and Mumbai city in particular. Mumbai Dabbawalas/ Tiffinwallasare management Gurus (masters) of the hi-tech world of today. The researcher would like to describe socio-cultural aspect of Dabbawalas. The life of Mumbai inhabitants and the Dabbawalas will be described through a Bollywood movie *The Lunch Box.* The protagonists' romantic association led them to find their real self that transcends their present and future. Let us describe the world's densely populated metropolitan city Mumbai in brief.

Mumbai, a primate city of gold and dreams, a city of all worldly pleasures and evils, commercial capital of India, is located on Salsette Island that consists of a group of seven islands and twenty-two hills on the western Arabian coast of India. These islands later on merged into one large island in eighteenth century. The name of the city is driven from Mumba Devi, the Goddess of local Koli fishing community. There are evidences of human habitation since Stone Age. It was ruled by several dynasties till the entry of Portuguese and Mughals. King Ashoka of Maurya dynasty made the city a Hindu and Buddhist religious center. According to 2011 census the population of Mumbai was 12, 479, 608. Among them nine million people are slum-dwellers. Dharawi is recorded as the biggest slum in Asia. The city is known for her architecture like Gateway of India, Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Naval Dockyard, Mumbai Stock Exchange, Mount

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Mery's Church, Prince of Wales Museum, Jahangir Art Gallery, Asiatic Society of Mumbai and so on. The city is approachable from all sides and offers all options of transportation. The city's deep water harbor is the largest port of the nation. One can get maximum education and research options in Mumbai. People of all religions, castes and creeds are living happily for years together. Mumbaites celebrate all festivals with great enthusiasm. Ganapati festival, Holi, Dahihandi and King Shivaji's birthday 'Shivjayanti' are some of the well-known festivals celebrated by masses as social festivals. Wada-Pav and Zunka Bhakar are the local Marathi dishes available in cheaper rates. Islamic terrorist groups selected Mumbai for terrorist attacks due to her financial and commercial prosperity and multiple transportation options. In spite of several terrorist attacks Mumbaites never give hope. They are the role models of never say die. Dabbawalas are the integral part and oxygen of the city without which the city will become breathless.

This innovative practice of 'Dabba' started with a British official in pre-independent India who wanted homemade lunch. The initial service to the British official later on became hardcore business of Mumbaiteas. Dabbawalas represent innovative practice of Mumbai city dwellers. School syllabi have included lessons on the functioning of Dabbawalas. It can be considered as the best six sigma rating organization. In the English textbook of std. eleven, MSBSHSE, a lesson *Mumbai Dabbawala*sstarts with following lines:

> "Hungry? Would you like to have a fresh, hot meal from home? Most managers don't have that choice. It's either a sandwich, a pizza or a restaurant, unless you live in Mumbai, that is, where a small army of 'dabbawalas' picks up 300000 lunches from homes and delivers them to students, managers, and workers every working day at their desks, 12.30

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pm on the dot. Served hot, of course. And now you can order over the internet." (Yuvakbharati: A Coursebook in English, p.72)

Who are these Dabbawalas? 'Dabba' is a Marathi word which means tiffin and 'Walla' is a person who delivers tiffin. The world is resting on the pillars like information technology and communication skills but our Dabbawalas are running business of millions without using technology and communication skills. Now they have their website through which one can order tiffin. Isn't it interesting and appealing? It is a large service supply chain of the local semi-literate people who supply hot food without having corporate training like for instance institutes like CII, IIM and IITs have.

Mumbai Dabbawala or Tiffinwallas have crossed the boundaries of publicity. Right from Prince Charles of Wales, England to a case study of Harward management students it has been proven that management skills of the semi-literate and non-technical dabbawalas have caught attention and accolades from the rest of the world. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has nominated dabbawalas with great pride and honour in 'Clean India Mission' because of their popularity as social reformers. Lot of research has been going on the logistics of Dabbawalas. Prakash Bachche, a dabbawala has entered in Guinese book of world record for carrying three tiffin crates at a time on his head. Almost all prestigious newspapers have written columns on Mumbai Dabbawalas. The dabbawala collects hot homemade food lunch box from the residences of workers and employees and delivers it to their working places by using bicycles or railway trains and returns it to residences before the workers reach their homes. Although the city has suffered due to severalsocio-economic calamities Dabbawalas survived for one and half century and will survive due to their dedication and honesty.

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The Tiffin box system is based on three tire structure namely executive committee, Mukadam, and Dabbawalas. They are known for their reliability and ethics. The Nutan Mumbai Tiffin Box Supplier Association, NMTBSA, is 120-year-old logistics system that consists of 5000 members. The system is based on a colour-coded notation on the lid that helps to identify its owner, destination and Dabbawala. Once the Dabbawala picks up the tiffin he moves fast with either bicycle, local trains and sometimes on feet. They can be called as disciples of Mahatma Gandhi in walking speed because they found uncatchable to team of BBC crew:

> " Following our dabbawala wasn't easy, our film crew quickly lost him in the congestion of the train station. At ChhatrapatiShivaji Terminus we found other fast moving dabbawalas, but not our subject... and at Mr. Bapat'sayurvedic Pharmacy, the lunch had arrived long before the film crew." (Yuvakbharati: A Coursebook in English, p. 72)

The statistical data provides recruitment details that in 2003 there were 5000 recruits, 175,000 clients, 350,000 deliveries with the turnover of 380 million per annum. The Dabbawalas cover an area of 75 km of Mumbai suburbs that runs of suburban railway network. Most important aspect of the system is that it is governed by, for and of the dabbawalas. Coding system covers abbreviations for collecting points, colour code for starting station, number for destination center, and markings for handling Dabbawalas at destination, building and floor. The collection and distribution take place in an interesting way. Firstly the dabbawala takes the tiffin for residence and brings it to a sorting place, where he and other collecting dabbawalas sort the lunch boxes into groups. Secondly the grouped boxes are put in the coaches of trains, with markings to identify the destination of the box. The markings include the railway station to unload the boxes and the destination building delivery address.At each

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station, boxes are handed over to a local dabbawala, who delivers them. The empty boxes are collected after lunch or the next day and sent back to the respective houses.

Mumbai dabbawalas started an innovative social service called *Share My Dabba.* Mumbai dabbawalas with the help of NGOs decided to feed street children with homemade fresh nutritious dabba food. One of the drawbacks of fast growing metro cities is increasing number of slum dwellers. Mumbaites often quote that no one remains jobless and hungry in this city due to which a huge number of migration takes place. Children of slum dwellers don't get proper food. They Dabbawala foundation and *the Happy Life Welfare Society* decided to collect leftover food and distribute it among hungry street children. The Stickers of 'share my dabba' are sent to the customer's mail ID by *the Happy Welfare Society*. The lunch box owner sticks it on the lid and fresh 'leftover' food gets distributed to poor and needy. The dabbawalas separate the boxes on which the sticker is placed. The food is separated and immediately distributed to hungry street children. The owner gets satisfaction of not wasting food and empty stomachs quench their hunger as well. Dabbawalas are next to God for these growing children because *Service to Man is a service to God.*

The dabbawalas maintain their identity by following native Marath culture. They call themselves the Mawalas/soldiersand successors of King Shivaji the Great. They have to follow dress code or otherwise they have to pay fine. The dress code includes white shirt and pyjama/ trousers and a Gandhi cap. They put Gandh or Tilak on their forehead which is a sign of a Warkaree. Warkaree is a person who is a devotee of local God named Vittal. Varkaree Sampraday is a social organization of the devotees of Lord Vittal from Pandharpur.Turning to audio-visual presentation of life in a metro like Mumbai with her Dabbawalas the researcher is supporting her statement with a movie

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The Lunch Box. It starts as well as ends with the dabbawala with various shades of life in a cosmopolitan metro city.

The Lunch Box, written and directed by Ritesh Batra, located in and around Mumbai city, is a bittersweet romantic comedy. It has been produced by Anurag Kashyap, and released on 19th May 2013 in Cannes International Film Festival and journeyed through all film festivals. The movie is nominated for BAFTA Film award in 2013, won best screenplay award and Jury Grand Prize in Asia Pacific Screen awards, Ritesh Batra, the director won the Film Fare award for best debu director and best film award, canvas audience award in Ghent International Film Festival, best film in London film festival, the church of Iceland award in Reykjavik International film festival, best first feature film in Toronto Film Critics Association Award, best screenwriter in Asian Films award, won grand golden Rail award in Cannes Film Award, got Muhar Asia-Africa Special mention in Dubai International Film Festival, got best film award in Amazonas award and so on. 'Dabba' was the title that was decided initially but was replaced by *The Lunch Box.* It is a short art film of one hour fourty-four minutes. The cast and crew of the movie is as follows. The main character Saajan Fernandis is enacted by *Irfan Khan. Nirmat Kaur* is playing Ila, a female lead role. Her husband Rajeev is portrayed by *Nakul Vaid* as one of the minor characters. *Nawaziddin* is playing a supporting role of Mr Sheikh and his wife Meherunnisa is enacted by *Shruti Bapna.* Mrs Deshpande Aunti, enacted by *Bharati Acharekar*, though physically absent, is audible through her dialogues. Dabbawala who frequently comes and goes is enacted by *Sadashiv Pokarker.* Dabbawala at Saajan's office is enacted by *Baburao Sankpal.*

It is a story of mundane bourgeois life in metropolitan city like Mumbai. The plot is centered around a middle class house wife named Ila, her husband and her daughter living in a small one BHK flat with minimum amenities. On the other

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side a man named Saajan, chief accountant in a government office lives lonely life of a widower. Ila and Saajan get connected through a Tiffinwalla who delivers Ila's husband's tiffin on wrong address. Saajan gives 'a letter complement' for homemade hot food prepared by Ila by saying 'thank you'. Ila is forced to answer to Saajan's letter by her neighbor Mrs Deshpande. It gives birth to a letter friendship that develops into a strong bond of girlfriend and boyfriend kind of indirect relationship. The common thread for friendship is isolated and alienated life in cosmopolitan city. She being a bored and deceived wife due to her husband's extra marital affair and he, being a widower start to share each-other's worries through letters. Initial negative tone for 'why do we exist', gets changed into positive attitude such as 'life is meaningful'. Romance through letters lead them to search their identity.

The script moves around two characters who stand in contrast with Ila and Saajan. Mr. Sheikh, portrayed in contrast to Saajan, is a young and enthusiastic junior assistant accountant who enters into the life of Saajan as a trainee and Saajan as his trainer.Sheikh knows nothing about accounting and Saajan is very competent accountant. He has been to Saudi and some other nations whereas Saajan has spent his life in Mumbai so far. Saajan believes in 'speak less and act more' whereas Mr Sheikh speaks more and acts less. Mr Sheikh gets things done by hook or crook. On the other hand Saajan believes in sincerity and hard work. Practicality of Mr Sheikh wins in the end and idealism of Saajan is defeated in the point of view of materialistic world.

Mrs Deshpande, Ila's upstairs neighbor, is portrayed as a well-wisher and strong supporter of Ila. Mrs Deshpande is a middle aged lady who devotes and sacrifices her life for her husband who is in coma for last fifteen years. In spite of age difference Ila and Mrs Deshpande develop friendship due to absence of loving and caring partners in their lives. Mrs Deshpande is a typical house wife

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who believes that husband is next to God. Ila, though represent young generation, doesn't dare to go against patriarchal framework of the Indian society. Her mother is the third meek and mild Indian woman portrayal who surrenders herself to her cancer patient husband's service. All women are the victims of male dominated patriarchal society.

The indirect love relationship of Saajan and Ila finally comes to a dead stop when they decide to meet. Their intimacy increases with a search for 'why do we exist?' Ila asks Saajan to meet in person in a hotel near Matunga. Saajan gets ready by clean shave but notices that he has become old with grey beard. He reaches to the hotel in time where Ila is waiting for him. He finds Ila very young and beautiful. He doesn't find himself as a suitable match for her. Hence he doesn't want to disclose his identity. Ila feels insulted and disappointed. Saajan answers about his decision to Ila,

> I don't know when I became old… may be it was morning… may be it was many many mornings ago. May be I had forgotten something in the bathroom before I would have found out sooner. Life kept on going and left me in this emotion. I kept on rocking back and forth as through left and through right. But then before I knew it, no one buys yesterday's buttermilk Ila. (movie script)

Their plansthat they revealed through letters of starting new life in Bhutan meet bubble end. She gives her final try to catch him in his office but in vain. He also tries to catch her in her house with the help of dabbawala but in vain. She decides to go as per her plans and he decides to spend his aftetr retirement life in Nasik. Misplacement Of tiffin finally places their lives in order. Both decide to lead a life of their own choice. They got the answer of 'why do they exist'. They decide to live life for their own sake and as per their own terms and conditions.

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Boredom of life is actually a way of living. Letters are not mere piece of sharing emotions but they also contain philosophy of life in metros. Saajan, means a lover in Hindi, that suggests irony of situation. He is fifty-five but wants to be loved by someone. Ila, being young neglected house wife and mother tries to find solace from her boredom through lunch box. The lunch box is playing a role of God who knows everything but remains silent. Two unknown souls living at extreme ends of the city get connected through lunch box and fall in love. The wrong delivery finally allows them follow the longing of their souls.

Mumbai city is shown with local colours like KhimaPav, a glass of tea, parathas, local dress of saree and Punjabi suit, cricket fever of children who play on roads, traffic jam, crowded local trains, life in small congested flats, sharing and helping nature of the neighbours, flat's window is a window to the world for MrsDeshpande, Coma patient MrDeshpande, mechanical boring routine of house wives, monotonus government jobs without comforts, metro city with crimes and blasts, venders and peddlers on roads and her special feature "Mumbai Dabbawals", and so on. Saajan answers to Ila's letter that contains Mr Deshpande's sad story of a coma patient about changing lives in a metro,

Life is very busy these days. There are too many people and everyone wants what the other else is. Years ago you could find a place to sit every now and then. But these days it is difficult. If MrDeshpandewakes up now he will see the difference and probably go in his original sense… . When my wife died she got a horizontal bread bar. I tried to buy a bread bar for myself what they offered me is a vertical bar. I travelled whole my life by sitting in trains and buses but now I'll have to stand…(movie script)

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The Lunch Box is a story of every one of us. We dream something else and we get something else like 'man proposes and god disposes'. It uncovers the spice of life by showing different types of lives. They have to live life by adjusting and compromising on every single step. Lunch metaphorically is a plate full of variety of dishes likewise life of every one of us is full of different passers-by. Box stands for Mumbai that assimilates and acculturates cosmopolitan multicultural variety with encoded messages on its lead and gives birth to a new human being who is experiencing pan-local and pan-global life.Life's journey is like catching a train. Sometimes you catch up wrong train and feel that everything is messed up but the train reaches to right destination with a pleasant surprise.Ila and Saajan's love go beyond physical union as they decide to search their true self and real identity. They transcend their lives through romance. Spiritual poverty and material affluence of common human being gets defeated in the end as both of them decide uncommon way. Their spiritual quest for 'knowing thyself' finally transcends them into happy and contented souls.

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Breaking New Grounds: Listening to the Silent Echoes of Draupadi in *The Palace of Illusions*

Dilshad Kaur[*]

Abstract:

The experiences of women have often been considered too trivial to secure any strong depiction in literature. But Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's re-imagining of Draupadi's life in her ground-breaking work *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) counters this notion by showing women's inner experience to be a storehouse not only of humane emotions but also of self assertion and self respect. It is Panchali's story told by none other than the epic's heroine herself. She redefines the whole world of Kauravas and Pandavas and the power tussle which culminated in the great war of *Mahabharata* at Kurukshetra. The grand canvas of *Mahabharata* with its heroes and gods is laid bare before us and this time Draupadi is not staggering on the margins; she is at the centre, voicing her anguish and disgust against the unjust society which crushes the aspirations and dreams of a promising woman with impunity. Divakaruni's Draupadi prods the reader to interrogate some of the notions and institutions which the society holds in high esteem. Concepts of marriage, valour, masculine ambition and sense of honour are all made to pass the litmus test.
Key words: *discourse, representation, woman's experience, fantasy, stories, masculinity*. etc.

It is hard to challenge the prevailing stories- you will be thought implausible. Powerful stories- those useful to powerful groups- tend to drive out others. (Sinfield 25)

In her groundbreaking work *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni takes up the magnum opus *Mahabharata* for the purposes of both critical scrutiny and reinterpretation. Like other epics, *Mahabharata* eulogizes the valour, honour and gallantry of its heroes while the women protagonists are relegated to the background. A critical analysis of the world

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epics will show that the thoughts, emotions and motives of women never come to the forefront except when they are associated with the lives of male heroes. Their lives are presented as an un-heroic saga which is subservient to the lives of their fathers or husbands. Women in these epics are shown to have the capacity to motivate, instigate or trigger off a chain of incidents which generally culminate in a war and their role is never promoted to the status of a gallant warrior. They are mere instigators who are 'incompetent' to carry out the onerous call of duty. To protect or salvage the 'honour' is men's task and their privilege too. Woman's individuality is considered to be too weak to inspire any epical treatment. Women have a shadowy presence in such tales which has often led to a blurred perception and warped understanding of both their lives and their sense of individuality.

Divakaruni through her novel attempts to understand the character of Draupadi- the female protagonist of the great epic *Mahabharata* - from a new perspective. Divakaruni's effort is aimed at rectifying some of the wrongs which the historical and the mythological representations have done to the individuality and identity of women in general and Drauapdi in particular.

The novelist is well aware of the politics of representation. She is acutely conscious of the misrepresentation which women have been subjected to in literature as well as in culture. Discursive constructions have bracketed masculinity with strength, reason, assertion, domination and action and femininity with weakness, emotion, passivity, subservience, obedience and self negation. David Glover and Cora Kaplan in their book *Genders* (2007) put forward this contention in the following words:

> These negative associations of inferiority and worse, which so stubbornly cling to the subjective and objective representations

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of women, have been one of feminism's strongest raisons d'eˆtre...(5)

In league with the feminist agenda, Divakaruni seeks to disassociate the term woman from its negative connotations; connotative meanings which have resulted from the arbitrary pronouncements and representations of women by patriarchy. In other words, the novelist has attempted to re-present the character of Draupadi from a new stand point. In doing so, Divakaruni is grappling with the tricky concept of representation. Judith Butler in her seminal work *Gender Trouble* (1990) dwells upon the issue of representation of women in literature. She elucidates:

> On one hand, *representation* serves as the operative term within a political process that seeks to extend visibility and legitimacy to women as political subjects; on the other hand, representation is the normative function of a language which is said either to reveal or distort what is assumed to be true about the category of woman. (3-4)

While dealing with the issue of representation, one must not lose sight of the social, political, religious and cultural locus standi of the writer. One must also be conscious of the privilege which a writer's position affords in the matters pertaining to representation. Realities at times get entangled with distortions in the complex web of representation. A writer's selective sifting of the material from the available sources determines the structure of representation. One must also be alert to the indelible impact which these representations leave on the political and cultural fabric of the society.

Draupadi has always been seen from the perspective of men. This perspective certainly involves gender politics. This politics very shrewdly pronounces Draupadi as the chief culprit behind the disastrous war and chooses

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not to take into cognizance the hatred which was brewing between the Kauravas and Pandavas much before Drauapdi's entry into their lives.

Divakaruni sets out to re-tell the story of the great epic *Mahabharata* in order to re-direct the societal emotions and interpretations on a broader platform; a platform where Draupadi's discourse has also been ensured a sensitive and sensible hearing. When told from a woman's point of view, the epic acquires entirely new contours. Unlike the grand narratives where the glorification of war and valour relegate the human concerns and motivations to the background, this narrative brings to fore the human as well as the human element.

In this woman's epic saga, the novelist culls Draupadi out of the morass of patriarchal verdicts and makes her stand on a new podium wherein we see her through the prism of feminist understanding. Here is a Draupadi who asserts:

> The more people dissuaded me, the more determined I became. Perhaps that has always been my problem, to rebel against the boundaries society has prescribed for women. (TPOI 343)

Divakaruni re-imagines and re-constructs the life story of Draupadi. She takes the aid of fantasy to re-structure the life pattern of her heroine. She deliberately moves away from the actual narrative and visualizes Draupadi's birth and life from a new perspective. In order to challenge and subvert the hegemonic influence of grand stories which inform and influence the very fabric of society, it becomes quintessential to take a detour to fantasy. Alan Sinfield's opinion as expressed in *Literature, Politics and Culture in Post War Britain* (1989) is pertinent in this regard. He opines, "The wish of women for power over their lives cannot be expressed plausibly within dominant discourses, only

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in fantasy." (25) Divakaruni deliberately swerves away from the actual story of the epic and introduces some new elements into the storyline. Panchali's friendship with enigmatic yet dependable Krishna, her unconditional love for her brother Dhristadyumna and her attraction towards Karana are some of its examples.

The protagonist of *The Palace of Illusions* is ill at ease with her very name i.e. Draupadi. She thinks it to be below her rank and stature to be named simply after her father- Dhrupad. She finds it very unimaginative to be named thus especially when she has been prophesied to have been born to change the course of history of Bharata. She likes to be called Panchali instead, thus rejecting the egoistic name which was given by her father and at the same time refusing to believe that her identity is bound by men in her life.

Divakaruni's heroine refuses to carry the stigma of a *kritya*, a woman brought forth into the world to destroy, the one responsible for the destruction of a whole clan. Rather she persuades the reader to revisit the whole scene and to observe the silent, muted agony of womenfolk. Instead of focusing on the action which takes place in the battlefield, this tale takes us deep into the world of women. Dealing with a woman's heart, her emotions, priorities, thoughts, concerns, aspirations, dilemmas and relations, the novel is an explicit statement on the price which women pay in the clash of masculine egos or honour.

The imaginative re-visitation of Draupadi's life makes many crucial observations on the life of a woman trapped in a 'men's world'. Draupadi's dreams, her insatiable curiosity, emotional as well as intellectual aspirations, her seething anger and defiance, her love and friendship, her revenge, her helplessness are all presented in a manner which is not only engrossing but also thought provoking. The novelist has tried to free the image of Draupadi from the

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erstwhile symbolic meanings which has placed her on a terrain where revenge rules the roost. The novel in other words is an attempt on Divakaruni's part,

> To expose and question that complex of ideas and mythologies about women and men which exist in our society and are confirmed in our literature is to make the system of power embodied in the literature open not only to discussion but even to change. Such questioning and exposure can, of course, be carried on only by a consciousness radically different from the one that informs the literature. (Fetterley 566)

The novel in question no doubt interrogates and even topples down many common- place perceptions surrounding the great epic, *Mahabharata*. The novelist however does not lay claim to her version being the final one. She has in fact proved with example that stories when heard from different people can surprise us with the variety of meanings and observations. Draupadi at one point in the novel says, "There were things Arjun kept to himself. (Isn't it thus with all stories, even this one I'm telling?)" (219) Locus standi of the narrator, his/her religious, political, regional, cultural and social affiliations strongly impact their stories. Besides many other factors, one learns to make sense of his/her existence and the society through the knowledge contained within these stories. "Were the stories we told each other true?" thinks Draupadi while contemplating over the fantastical stories surrounding her and her brother Dhristadyumna's birth. "Who knows? At the best of times, a story is a slippery thing….it was the tale we most needed to know. It was after all, the reason for our existence. It changed with each telling. Or is that the nature of all stories, the reason for their power?" (TPOI 15) Since Knowledge is never innocent, its political alignment and nexus with Power have serious ramifications for the society at large and individuals in particular.

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Alan Sinfield in his seminal work *Literature, Politics and Culture in Post War Britain* (1989) contemplates upon the issue of identity and representation vis -a- vis stories. He contends that the stories which ideology of the power wielding authorities circulate within a particular society shape and maneuver the prevalent attitudes and create a miasma of stereotypical notions about both the people and events. These attitudes function as veritable blinders which very conveniently reveal the half picture and conceal the other half and thus connive in the process of giving validity to the faulty notions about identity of a certain class/group. He writes:

> ...stories are lived...They make sense for us- of us – because we have been and are in them. They are already proceeding when we arrive in the world, and we come to consciousness in their terms. As the world shapes itself around and through us, certain interpretations of experiences strike us plausible because they fit with what we have experienced already. They become common sense, they 'go without saying'." (24-25)

Critical minds always remain alert to the sedative influence of such politics latent within the stories because they are well aware of its implications which manifest themselves in the societal attitudes and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one such instance of the critical and conscious writers.

Annals of history do not chronicle the experience of women because they did not go to the war nor did they clash head on with the enemy. The role of women remains cleverly understated. The bitter battle of life which they are forced to fight almost every day gets at most a slight and at worst a slighting mention. Strictly denied the basic right of education of political, military, administrative or economic affairs, these women were ordained to confine themselves in their chambers "gossiping and complaining, chewing on mashed

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betel leaves" (TPOI 343) Inquisitiveness and intelligence on a woman's part was at best ignored or at worst snubbed and crushed. By blocking all the channels of opportunity, what excellence or brilliance of acts can we expect from an individual? Draupadi from her childhood showed a spark and a knack for learning. Her fond desire to learn all that which was being taught to her dear brother Dhri by esteemed tutors made her to eavesdrop on the lessons. Her act was considered improper for a woman of genteel birth and invited chagrin of elders. But she was adamant. Growing up with the illusions of grandeur, as the one who was prophesized to change the course of history, Draupadi craved for more than that was miserly granted. Her Dhai Ma thought that her lessons were making her "too headstrong and argumentative, too manlike in my speech." (TPOI 23). Draupadi's obstinacy to acquire knowledge met with disapproval.

> Dhri, too, sometimes wondered if I wasn't learning the wrong things, ideas that would only confuse me as I took up a woman's life with its prescribed, restrictive laws. But I hungered to know about the amazing, mysterious world that extended past what I could imagine, the world of senses and of that which lay beyond them. (TPOI 23-24)

Draupadi's ambition mirrors the aspirations of those common women who are denied access to education. The disapproval of society and the restrictions which they impose upon women is symptomatic of a deep seated insecurity. Proper education enlightens an individual about the rights, stimulates thought process and generates questions which in turn can spell anarchy for the preservers of status quo. Knowledge empowers an individual and patriarchy can never afford to designate women at the seats of power. In a very subtle and sly manner they allocate the domain of ignorance, passivity, sentimentalism and weakness to women by denying them education. Seeing

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their male counterparts swallowing the variety of knowledge, these women like Draupadi feel "These were the lessons I most envied him, the lessons that conferred power." (TPOI 27)

The original *Mahabharata* glorifies the gallant feats of warriors and inspires awe by its description of heroism shown by the princes and army in the war. Exhibition of heroic feats by the gallant men warriors in the battlefield is a common trait of all epics. Men in the epics are portrayed as the saviours who carry upon their shoulders the glorious responsibility of safeguarding the lives and rights of those who are under their protection. Women's role is restricted to the realm of encouragement only. Mothers and wives of these heroes take pride in sending the latter to battlefield. Simone Brodbeck and Brian Black throw light on this aspect with reference to *Mahabharata* in their introduction to the book entitled *Gender and Narrative in the Mahabharata* (2007). They contend:

> There is a strong connection between masculinity and fighting, and many characters are repeatedly obliged to demonstrate their manhood through their participation in battle. Most of the prominent female characters act in ways that reinforce this model of masculine, actively encouraging their husbands and/ or sons to fight. (17)

These epics maintain a stubborn silence on the gory repercussions of a war. They choose to play down the agony which mothers and wives undergo when their loved ones head off for the war, perhaps never to return. The grand narratives of 'unparalleled heroism' conveniently brush aside the goriness, death, decay and misery which a war quintessentially entails.

This novel, however, builds an alternative discourse. Within it is depicted not only the misery which the wars bring about but it also ushers forth an outlook

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which is inclined towards a harmonious existence. As Drapaudi says in the novel, "I'd teach them instead to be survivours. And why was a battle necessary at all? Surely there were other ways to glory, even for men?" (26) Playing down upon the mockery and slight which women are subjected to because of their reliance on emotions, the novelist stresses that the world must acknowledge the worth of finer sensibilities. The propensity towards nurturing, loving, caring or peace-making should not be construed as weakness. The war torn and conflict ridden societies are in dire need of such fine emotions. Drapaudi punctures the notions of glory and heroism associated with war and paints a nude picture of war to show its stark, gory and grim realities which are often clothed in the shimmering robes of heroism. She comes to a shocking realization that the men in their army are not propelled by any fine cause rather for these soldiers "it was merely a job, an alternative to poverty and starvation. Or maybe they'd been forcibly conscripted by their overlords." (TPOI 257) Shoulders of such poverty stricken soldiers are too frail to carry the baggage of honour. Fighting the daily battle of survival, these soldiers and their families are not even distantly concerned with the reasons which engineer a war. Grappling with their fate, they cannot afford to grieve at the exalted miseries of those ensconced at the seats of power and prosperity. Draupadi realizes that wives of these soldiers are unable to empathize with her because poverty has browbeaten them "...for their wives, I was a harbinger of ill luck, the woman who had torn their husbands from the safety of their homes, the witch who might...transform them into widows."(TPOI 257-258)

A warrior's death spells doom on the family. Beneath the veneer of glory lies a horrendous reality. *Mahabharata* is silent on the fate of those who survived the war. Predators like disease, deprivation, stigma, starvation were gnawing at the innocent victims. Widows with their children were groping in the

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dark. No saga of bravery could have embalmed their hearts. Glorified concepts of gallantry, martyrdom and heroic fall were beyond their grasp because they were bound in the thorny shackles of a dark present and a bleak future. Draupadi muses in the novel:

> Hastinapur after the war was largely a city of women, widows who had never dreamed that the survival of their families would depend on them....they found themselves exploited...I'd see them on the roadside, often with children in their arms, begging. There were others that I didn't see...selling the only thing left to them (323)

Divakaruni's protagonist also brings the institution of marriage into dock and voices her angst at her *swayamvar*, five husbands and the insult poured upon her in the Kuru court. S*wayamvar* was a mere eyewash as far as the girl was concerned. It was a contest where the winner would take away his prize. Instead of having the liberty to choose her life partner, the woman was rather made to accept the winner of the contest as her husband. She was merely a thing to be won over; a coveted possession that would exalt the status of the winner. Besides this, women were also given in marriages to pacify the enemy. Draupadi on coming to this realization voices her disgust, "My mouth filled with ashes. How foolish I'd been, dreaming of love when I was nothing but a worm dangled at the end of a fishing pole." (TPOI 57)

Draupadi questions the double standards of society which "seems to have no problem when men sleep with a different woman each day of the week" (TPOI 42) but the society pours choicest of slurs upon a woman who has liaisons with more than one man. Married against her will to five *Pandavas*, she refuses to accept the consolation of being the only woman having five husbands in a

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society where only men can have more than one wife. Dismayed and disgusted thus she says, "Unlike them, I had no choice as to whom I slept with, and when. Like a communal drinking cup, I would be passed from hand to hand whether I wanted or not" (TPOI 120) The glorified virginity boon given to Draupadi and boon of sons given to Kunti recorded in the original tale is also put under critical scanner which to Draupadi seemed:

> ...designed more for my husband's benefit than mine. That seemed to be the nature of boons given to women- they were handed to us like presents we hadn't quite wanted. (Had Kunti felt the same way when she was told that the gods would be happy to impregnate her? (TPOI 120)

During her insult in the court of Duryodhana, she comes to the shocking and crude realization that for her husbands, their pride, honour and reputation are more important than their wife's honour. They could bear to see their wife getting naked in front of all rather than breaking the rules of the game. Their pride no doubt was hurt but why their love was not hurt. They were agonized to see the *Pandava* queen getting humiliated; a husband's pride was offended but the pain of a woman simply remained unnoticed. Draupadi mocks that, "They would avenge me later, yes, but only when they felt the circumstances would bring them heroic fame." (TPOI 195) and this occasion came in the shape of the great battle fought between *Kauravas* and *Pandavas*. Draupadi was made the accused, a *kritya*, whose deadly vow to avenge her insult culminated in the war. But why did not any one bother to peep inside the helpless, humiliated and wounded heart of a woman. Stigma stalks only the woman, whatever the circumstances be and who so ever the perpetrator be. A woman is made to carry the burdensome load of honour. Shame, slurs, mock sympathy trails a woman who has been subjected to physical and sexual abuse. Draupadi's rebuttal of

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these societal norms is an eye opener. "Let them stare at my nakedness, I thought. Why should I care? They and not I should be ashamed for shattering the bounds of decency."(193)

The reimagining of Mahabharata from a woman's viewpoint shatters many lofty conceptions and generates questions about the status of woman in society and her position in marital relationship. The glorified concepts of honour, war, duty when seen from the eyes of Divakaruni's Draupadi, certainly lose much of their sheen. The protagonist or the novelist however does not make any boisterous claims about their version being the final one. Such a reading of the novel concurs with what Alan Sinfield says:

> It is through stories, or representations, that we develop understanding of the world and how to live in it. The contest between rival stories produces our notions of reality and hence our beliefs about what we can and cannot do" (23)

The novel stimulates the reader to approach the given stories from different angles so as to achieve a more balanced and impartial understanding. It awakens the reader to the multi- layered structures of literary or cultural texts which hide within themselves a multiplicity of meanings. These meanings lay dormant there for the conscious reader to unearth them and to usher forth a new understanding and consciousness in the society.

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Raja Rao and the Image of Indian in Indian English Novel

Dr. Babu Nampalli**

Abstract:

In the postcolonial period, it has been observed that the nations that get the freedom from the foreign clutches and are attempting to achieve their unique identity from the commonwealth, start producing an indigenous literature. the fact can be illustrated in the context of post-independent Indian English writing. The deceased image of India transcended in the colonial literature was substituted with new and original identity. The literature produced in this period reflects the rural culture of India and delineates an Indian common man as its protagonist. The present paper is an attempt to focus this attempt to create a new identity in the light of the novels of Raja Rao.

Key words - *Postcolonial, Commonwealth, Search for Identity* etc.

Raja Rao's literary inspiration is derived from several sources which he inherits and implicates on an extensive scale in his fictional work. Raja Rao mentions the possible sources of his inspiration in an article entitled "Books which have influenced me." Of the Indian influences, he mentions the classics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* which, according to him, are the summations of the Indian tradition and wisdom. They gave him an insight into Indian culture and spirituality apart from the formal and technical ingenuities which Raja Rao attempts to implicate in his fictional work. Raja Rao calls the *Ramayana* 'the book of books' and' adds "It has filled my imagination and came to me for years at crucial point of my life, to interpret and help." The

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Mahabharata is, likewise, the epitome of the Indian tradition. Its epic immensities, the legends and episodes, and the various digressional techniques apart from its moral and religious tone compelled Raja Rao to adapt them.

Of the Western influences Raja Rao refers to the French writers like Andre Gide, Malraux, Romain Rolland and Heidegger who seem to have provided a steady impetus. The influence of Paul Valery and Rainer Maria Rilke is no less significant. As Raja Rao remarks:

> In my maturer years two authors, both French, have influenced me: Paul Valery and Andre Gide. Valery's not only one of the major poets of our century if not its only great poet, but is also a prose writer of classical integrity […] Andre Gide brought, alongside Valery, a great humanity and a more precise sense of the play of ethics on poetical sensibility.

In fact, the influence of these writers did not end there; he even learnt from them the grace and discipline of the French language 'to mould it into the flexibility of English.' Raja Rao has skilfully adapted the complexity of the French rhetoric and poetry to suit his artistic needs. Nevertheless, Raja Rao chose to writing English and not in French for the latter's rigorous discipline and precision did not allow him a kind of experimentation which he felt he had to do with the Indian sensibility. English with its resilience and decorum was better suited to this task.

Raja Rao acknowledges the influence of a number of other Western writers as different as the English Shakespeare, the Russian Dostoevsky, the German Kafka and the Italian Ignazio Silone. Of Shakespeare, Raja Rao writes "He is almost an Indian of my India- so he too has influenced me fundamentally. *Hamlet,* first and foremost, then *King Lear,* and finally *The Tempest."*

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It is significant that Raja Rao has adopted Shakespeare's name for his novel *The Cat and Shakespeare.* Similarly, Ignazio Silone's *Fontamara* was an unconscious model for his first novel *Kanthapura.* Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamzov,* Gorky's *Mother* and Kafka's *The Castle* and *The Tribal* also whetted his sensibility and gave him an insight into the human predicament. Raja Rao is conscious of his orientation and his long stay in the West has not diminished his commitment for India, and the Indian values. He is aware of his ancient moorings, the hoary wisdom and undying Indian cultural tradition. "India for me is not a country, but an idea, a metaphysic[…]" says his hero in *The Serpent and the Rope.* Raja Rao is caustical about the Indians who ape the West and who are totally oblivious of their cultural moorings and heritage. He feels that the West has nothing significant or unique to offer to the Indians. His fables and characters, his philosophy, narrative technique are so deeply rooted in the Indian view of life that this emerges as a single continuum and the central source of his creative work.

Raja Rao's predilection for the vernacular experience is once again revealed in the manner in which he draws from the classical legends and myths, and incorporates them in his stories. He dwells mainly on the mythological sources whether in dealing with the localised myth or that which is embedded in the classical legends. The result is a reconstruction of the myth which retains its essential core to contrast with the fetishes of the modern situation. This enables Raja Rao to dramatize the attitudes and values of the traditional Indian life.

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* presents India in microcosm. The novel traces the impact of Gandhian ideas in a remote South Indian village called Kanthapura. The wave of revolution around this little village, and the villagers under their impeccable leader Moorthy launch the passive resistance in response to the call of Gandhi. They had to go through the most anxious period of terrorism as a

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result of their opposition to the "Red man's" government. The fighting proves unequal and the chief leaders of the movement are incarcerated. The whole village is demolished, and at the end of the novel, there is the suggestion. of a new village being built on the broken debris, thus symbolizing the unbroken continuity of Indian tradition.

Kanthapura is India, but Moorthy is a modern Indian struggling to be an individual in the historical situation, and taking plunge into the struggle for freedom and moving, as it were, into the eternal crux of life. In the larger sense, the novel is a metaphor for human life: life continues unabatedly although the individual experience might undergo alterations.

The Cat and Shakespeare, as a sequential work, takes up the same theme of the metaphysical quest but with an altogether different perspective. "Reverence and irreverence, fantasy and reality, mysticism and Mammonism, the past with age-old philosophy and the present of the global war,"4 are all mixed together with this fable. The characters are not mere characters, but allegorical projections, the modes of novelist's philosophizings. The 'Cat' and 'Shakespeare' are the pivotal symbols around which its theme of philosophical quest moves. *The Cat and Shakespeare* is a vedantic allegory for our times. As M.K.Naik observes:

> *The Cat and Shakespeare* is the most mature of Raja Rao's novels; in it he has found the most concrete equivalent of a profound vision of life which has its validity not only for the contemporary Indian situation, but for our entire fragmentary civilization.

In handling his themes Raja Rao employs several techniques and adapts them skilfully to suit the narrative purposes at hand. The form and style of *Kanthapura* belong to the living Indian tradition. It is cast in the tradition of

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sthalapurana. The narrator is an old grandmother, who tells the story of the Indian Purana or the Harikatha, mixing freely narration, description, reflection, religious discourse, folk-lore etc. Like Anand, Raja Rao also boldly translates Indian words, expletives and idioms - in this case from his native Kannada- into English and uniformly brings a touch of poet to his style. Not only the sensibility but the form and narrative technique of *Kanthapura* belong to the idiom and vocabulary of traditional art. Raja Rao presents the ancient Indian wisdom as well as the narrative art revealed in Indian classics with considerable artistry.

The form of *The Cat and Shakespeare* is composite; a blend of the beast fable, the rogue story and the parable, and the dialogue frequently has an upanishadic flavour. Raja Rao's attempts to catch the rhythm and speech of .the rustic Kannada dialect in the English expressions showing a closer affinity with the folk tradition make his fiction important and relevant. The turns of Kannada speech, the translations of idioms and phrases, are all stylistic features which give them an authentic local colour.

Raja Rao's philosophy, as it emerges from his fictional works, in fact is a reassertion and restatement of quintessential philosophy of the Upanishads. Never overstepping the boundaries of the molecular view of life inherited from the Indian tradition, Raja Rao discovers and explores the modern existential approach to human predicament. Raja Rao reaffirms the philosophy of complete self-surrender and acceptance of the world as a necessary step towards metaphysical identification. Accepting the philosophy of *'Visistadvaita'*, Raja Rao concludes that mere devotion to the Divine is not enough. As K.R.S.Iyengar observes:

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The ego being dead, the self is forever. And when the Grace is above and the soul within, nothing can really touch us. For the best, one must play the game as best as one can. Faith and surrender - or surrender born of faith- is enough, it would bring about *"atma-nivritti"*- Freedom and Felicity in the self."

Raja Rao has received the attention of eminent critics of Indian English Literature ever since the publication of his *The Serpent and the Rope.* Although there is a large body of criticism on his works. Raja Rao is often misinterpreted by two prejudices - the one that his novels are burdened with an unbalanced load of ideas and the other arisen out of a partial understanding or total negligence of his consistent metaphysical perspectives. However, a good deal of criticism on Raja Rao has helped in creating a receptive sensibility ready to forbear the rigour of ideas for the sake of the vision evoked by the novelist. Meenakshi Mukherjee has made comprehensive and perceptive study of Raja Rao's treatment of certain themes common to most of the novelists in her *The Twice Born Fiction.* She was the first critic to make an objective assessment of Raja Rao's experiments with the language. She remarks:

It should be emphasised that creating an 'Indian English' is by no means the primary duty of the Indo Anglian writer. His success or failure will be judged not by the amount of Indian imagery he has used in his novels, not by his capacity to capture the rhythm of the vernacular in English. These images and rhythm become important only if they serve some purpose in the context, become integral with the   total pattern and if they perceptually enhance the scope of the language.

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C.D.Narsimhaiah analyses Raja Rao's method of handling themes in the first three volumes and their chief aspects of style which made creative use of English for the expression of a truly Indian sensibility.

It is obvious from this short assessment of the criticism of Raja Rao's works that the critics of Raja Rao have concentrated more on the themes rather than on the patterns. As such, there still remains ample scope for a detailed assessment of Raja Rao as an innovator of fictional forms. Raja Rao's sympathetic attitude to the Indian cultural tradition acts as a unifying pattern of all his novels. It is either presented subtly in *Kanthapura* or overtly in *The Cat and Shakespeare.* In consonance with image of India as a theme goes Raja Rao's innovative technique. A proper assessment of Raja Rao as a fictional writer depends on this significant aspect, viz., image of India. There have been only stray references to it by the critics. Hence the present study. What follows is the study of Raja Rao's *Kanthapura, The Cat and Shakespeare* with reference to the projection of the image of India.

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English Language Teaching: A Shift from Chalk to Digitalization

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Abstract:

In the age of rapid digitalization the traditional methods of teaching and learning are outdated as they cannot encompass the explosion of knowledge produced by the computer technology. The knowledge based audio-video corpus available on a single click has changed the academic scene of the world. Newly developed softwares not only help to learn the 'usage' of the language but it can be utilized to learn the actual 'use'. The software also has a potential to develop a strong link between 'usage' and 'use' that also help to reduce the common errors of the learners. The present paper is an attempt to understand these new changes happening in the contemporary teaching-learning discourse.

Language has been closely associated with the process of communication widely used not only for academic purpose but also in general. Importance of English language for the students from vernacular medium is in extreme need to enable the students for future challenges emerging in educational sector. The importance of English learning as a language for academic instruction and communication has very rapidly increased in Indian education scenario as education system has been experiencing new trend and transition. It has been strengthening the students with the modern techniques and teaching methodologies to cope up with the new changes and challenges of education sector in global technical scenario. Education sector has adapted information communication technology as a tool to enhance the learning capacity of the vernacular medium students of the country. This has created a progressive learning environment among students of urban areas to grab the better job opportunities. But it is felt that somehow villages of Indian rural area have been

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missing the infrastructural development of ICT which has adversely affected the skill development of the students and the potential of grabbing the job opportunities for rural students.   Lacking of learning materials, trained manpower, teachers, well equipped tech- labs and other basic facilities have created a kind of disparity between the students of vernacular medium and English medium and between the students of urban and rural area of the state and the nation as well.

Those were the days when teaching of English as a second language was practiced in a very traditional manner using the blackboard and slates to improve and empower the young generation with the linguistic knowledge. Change is inevitable and law of nature. Therefore Indian education system too has witnessed technological transformation in a very innovative manner which has changed the face of English language teaching in classrooms. Education is not limited up to classrooms. Instead it has widened the access of the content to maximum of the public which satisfies the queries and doubts of the students' community. So the scenario is created in a different manner where teachers find them in a strange environment-hovering between the old and new orders where interests of the students always incline towards the new one. Therefore this modern age of technology has promoted and attracted the keen interests of the young generation. In order to be appealing and convincing to this generation, a teacher needs to be updated and aware of the nuances of this tech-savvy generation to make the teaching English language more relevant and learning oriented.

What as a professor of language, I have been observing is that modern age is under a shift from chalk to digits and black board to white screens. Therefore as a teacher we need to digitalize the content of teaching to make it more appealing and interesting. Insertion and adaption of information technology enhances the teaching capacity and makes it more effective as compared to traditional teaching. It helps in yielding better output and feedback of the students' community and introduces them new horizon of tech text enabling them academically in better manner. The habit of reading books has gradually disappeared as students are turned more hooked to the internet. They are in the age of e-age which has great pool of knowledge that appears within one click. There are various tools and apps which can be referred and adapted by the teaching faculties to update him/ her in modern ICT scenario. Various

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web tools are also worthwhile in teaching English as a second language in the classrooms. Web tools such as dictionaries, thesauruses, flashcard creators and virtual classrooms are few noteworthy for teaching the language to enhance the potential of a teacher to become efficient and perfect as per the expectation of the students' community in the context of modern age of technology . Following are some tips for enhancing the effectiveness of teaching using the technology in classrooms.

A Weekly Lecture on the Screen/Projector:

Using projector or white screen for teaching English language can be a very effective tool to the English learner as it provides latest updates they need to know in current tech scenario. Area of language research and new technologies must be introduced to the students to make them familiar with the innovative teaching- learning methodologies. Use of power point presentation enhances their participation and understanding in teaching learning process in very effective manner. The understanding capacity of the students increases to great extent compared to the lecture- talk method of teaching. Important points and assignment can be assigned at the moment to improve their understanding and feedback. Debate and discussion, reading of text, reading of image, presentation of any data, picture, clips and many more things can be presented in a very simple and effective manner on screen or projector that definitely helps students to understand the text and context in better manner.

Digital Dictionaries:

Digital Dictionaries can be of great help to the students as they are very easy to find on the mobiles. Only loading of the app enables the user to browse the dictionary. It removes obstacles and lethargy of the learners as they can clarify their doubts immediately by browsing the dictionary in both the manners- online and off line.

Lexipedia:

It is also an online dictionary that crates a web of related words. Different parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) are color coded. Synonyms, antonyms and fuzzynyms (words that have strong relationship but not the same meaning as synonyms) also appear side by side with the parts of speech they are slightly related to. The searched words are revealed as a part of

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grater web of language, which can be useful for the study of words and writing instructions. Most of these words are recorded so they also can be useful for mastering the pronunciation.

Quizlet:

Quizlet is a flash card creator incorporated with a lot of learning games which in fact includes memorization of selected words. Learners and users can make their personal sets, share them with their friends. It's an excellent tool to memorize the often repeated words that enables the learner to improve their spellings too. In the **speller** section students have to type the spellings of those words they listen on the screen whereas on **test mode** they find variety of questions-multiple type and true-false questions. Even in game section they too develop a type of competition within themselves that enhances their level of understanding better.

Word Bucket:

By downloading this app students are introduced with some selected 50 words to practice with option to move them from white to orange and then after to green. All new words students save in white and after correcting them (in test) they save them in orange (words you are learning) and then finally to green (words you have learned). If they get any wrong word at any stage it goes to red to start again. Therefore they need to be very careful and alert regarding the proper spelling of the words. New words can be added to the game by using Home screen and Add Translation Option which help the students to learn many more words as much they incline to learn them.

Ninja Words:

It's a superfast dictionary which is proved very beneficial for students as they find meaning and definitions of the terms and words quickly. It is a type of phone app that may is useful even off line to the users. There are three basic principles of Ninja Words-smart, accurate and fast. They are very simple to use within one click of the button with accuracy.

Forming Reading Club:

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Learning English language for second language learners appears a challenging job which can be obtained by promoting their interest and enhancing and polishing their skills of communication. Learning English involves listening, speaking, reading and writing activities which most of our students learn through their mother tongue. Formation of Reading Club can involve students' all these four skills of English which is polished through the regular participation in it. Students are asked to read aloud to some unknown text/passage and rests of them have to listen carefully. Each student is given 5-7 minutes to analyze and comprehend it. Reading and listening comprehension can be tested by asking some questions based on the listening of the text. In the end students can be asked to write down their own comments and share it with others. In this manner they improve all four skills in a very integrated manner to promote learning English language as second language learner.

Digital Story Teller:

Digital story telling allows the teachers to narrate the story electronically by preparing their presentation with the combination of audio, video, music, background sound, photos etc. through the use of information communication technology. Digital story telling is easy to use for teaching writing and speaking skills in a very effective manner. It also promotes the interests of the learners and enables them to develop a good understanding of a composition. The story can be demonstrated through the P. P. T. slides or even in MS words file on the screen. Inclusion of Audio /video effect enhances the effectiveness of the presentation and promotes the learning interests of the second language learners.

Therefore use of technology can make the learning more interesting, attractive, attentive and challenging for the students. Use of technology would gear up with fast pace of technical practices and remove the hesitant glitches of those teachers and professors who are scared of using the computers. It's the need of time to set the steps as per the demand and keep growing not only in term of academic excellence but also in term technical knowledge and practical presentations. A well computer versed teacher can bridge the gap between the conventional and modern contemporary teaching learning era. But before we start teaching English digitally, we must be aware with the nuances and benefits of the electronic teaching. We teachers also must be aware with the latest

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updates in technological applications, web pages, software, apps etc. if proper training is provided to the teachers of English digital teaching, it would be better. But in case untrained teachers prefer to use the information communication technology, they have to learn by themselves at their own to let them aware with the apps, web pages and application that one can learn easily. Using computers, browsing the pages, referring internet as source of learning, using the apps and software make a teacher capable to teach digitally effectively in Indian class rooms for second language learners of English.

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English Language in Postcolonial Era: Globality, Locality and Hybridity

Dr. Preeti Tushar Joshi[*]

Abstract:

During last few years, the world has changed rapidly due to Information and Technology revolution. No one can deny the role of English language in accelerating the process of globalization. At the same time IT revolution and Globalization too have helped in speeding up the growth and expansion of English as global language. In multilingual country like India, English plays the role of lingua franca: a link language. Therefore, hybrididity is an inevitable feature of English used in India. Firstly, hybridity in linguistic form is easily legible. With respect to English used in India, use of undifferentiated tag is the outcome of the influence of the cultural grammar of politeness. Secondly, hybridity is observed in terms of sociolinguistic language use. This emerges from intermixing-- code-mixing and code switching—of English with indigenous languages of India. Such hybridization disreputes colonial claims to its cultural- linguistic authority with the help of code mixing and switching. It successfully decolonizes and democratizes English language use. Third and the most visible expression of hybridity is observed in literary forms, especially in the works of post colonial writers. Here hybridity is observed at three levels: idiomatic transfer ("Go, go, eat air."), pragmatic transfer ("What bugging you *ma*? Relax *na*."), and syntactic transfer ("Go and drink Coke- shoke in your AC vehicle and leave us yatris in peace."). To sum up, it can be said that hybridity validates the local cultural voices in a global norm. English in India points out that it is an amalgam of the East and the West.
Key Words: *hybridity, globality, lingua franca, etc.*

A language is generally associated with a particular community, geographical area, country, ethnic group, population, or a religious group as we see in cases of most of the languages of the world. However, English is the only language in the world that has successfully been able to transcend geographical,

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national, regional and religious and such other types of restricted identities and boundaries and has, therefore, been regarded as global language. The geographical, functional, educational, academic, literary expansion of the English language at the international and intranational levels has truly made it a global language. It has not only been used as a mother tongue by a vast population that is more than the users of mother tongue. Due to its expansion to business, services and ICT sector, it has now become a language of prospects and opportunities and at the same time a tool of power, mobility and prestige.

English has become a global commodity like oil and the microchip; without petrol (i.e. gas), computers and the English language, the world will come to a halt. It is no longer language of one or two nations (Krishnaswamy et al. 2006:153). English is now regarded rather claimed as a Global Language as it 'evokes mother tongue like sentiments among the people of diverse linguistic backgrounds for whom it is not their natural mother tongue' (Nadkarni 2003: 38).

Although English (like the language of Aryans) was an alien language in India, it has blended itself with the cultural and social complex of the subcontinent over the years. Thus it has become indianized through a long process of acculturation "(Parasher 1990:50). In recent decades socio-linguistic studies have been developed by the linguists all over the world. The observation and description of the results caused by contacts between languages in various circumstances and indifferent parts of the world has become the main target of these studies. The scholars' attention has been chiefly paid to English meeting local vernaculars used by different Asian or African peoples. Such interests of Western scholars are probably caused by a long colonial past of Asian and African countries and result from their "sense of responsibility" for the hybrid features that appeared in the post-colonial societies as well as in their languages

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and cultures. The case of India, however, is unique, for – what is often stressed – its multiculturalism and syncretism, are not a recent (i.e. postcolonial) phenomenon:

> Hybridity is not a new condition of the postmodern era and is most definitely not a result of British postcoloniality. It is "authentic Indianness" India, divided by many languages and many religious sub-sects, readily gives mean-ing to the concept of hybridity. The vast number of 'cultures' that gives India its diversity blends together to give India its unity and oneness. (F. Jussawalla 1998: 200)

The term hybrid derives from the Latin word, hybrida denoting 'offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar, mongrel', and also 'one born of a Roman father and a foreign mother or of a freeman and slave'. Later, for the needs of biological sciences it acquired a wider meaning of:

> Offspring of parents that differ in genetically determined traits [and] may be of different species, genera or (rarely) families. The term 'hybrid', therefore, has a wider application than the terms 'mongrel' or 'crossbreed', which usually refer to animals or plants resulting from a cross between two races, breeds, strains, or varieties of the same species. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica1990: 183)

Hybridiy is capable of tangibly dealing with a wide spectrum of issues national and international. Use of a common language reduces the encumbrances of translation (prevents misunderstandings that could otherwise lead to soured relations between nations) and engenders multiple areas of

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cultural contact (for a culture or a cultural text to reach another there must be a common platform for dialogue and interaction).

An eclectic Indian English, then becomes an interesting juncture of connect in employing such soft power. While the Indian film Industry's lingua franca – the widely prevalent Bollywood-isms pervade the country's pan-national linguistic ecology, there are several unique regional examples of loan terms from the English language that suffuse our work-a-day world as well as our formal and informal discourses. Code switchings, borrpwings and hybridity between Hindi and English formulate a thriving Hinglish in most of India. Schneider dates the explosion of Hinglish, a local term to describe a hybridized Hindi and English concocted as a single language, to the mid-1990's, in conjunction with the introduction of cable TV and youth channels (Schneider2007:170-1)

During last few years, the world has changed rapidly due to Information and Technology revolution. No one can deny the role of English language in accelerating the process of globalization. At the same time IT revolution and Globalization too has helped in speeding up the growth and expansion of English as global language.

The power of English, through its hybridity, draws on both global and local resources allowing language consumers to glide effortlessly among global, local and international identities. The hybridity manifests itself through a complex of language behaviors that produce and reproduce identity "positioning" (a la Davies and Harre, 1990) that link the global that is, the transnational English culture – to the local- that is the urbanized vernacular Indian English culture. This hybridity- and its linguistic, sociolinguistic, and literary expressions – negates the Standard English ideology which implies that

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clarity, logic and loyalty depend on the adoption of a monoglot standard variety in public discourse (Bhatt 2002a; Labov 1972; Lippi Green, 1997; Silverstein 1996). Indian Englishes I argue later, allow their consumers to (re)position themselves with regard to new community- practices of speaking and writing, creating counter-discloses to the ideology of a monoglot standard. There are at least three dimensions of hybridity along which global and local identities are negotiated: hybridity in linguistic forms, hybridity in sociolinguistic forms and hybridity in literary forms.

In multilingual country like India, English plays the role of lingua franca: a link language. Therefore, hybrididity is an inevitable feature of English used in India. Firstly, hybridity in linguistic form is easily legible. With respect to English used in India, use of undifferentiated tag is the outcome of the influence of the cultural grammar of politeness. Secondly, hybridity is observed in terms of sociolinguistic language use. This emerges from intermixing-- code-mixing and code switching—of English with indigenous languages of India. Such hybridization disreputes colonial claims to its cultural- linguistic authority with the help of code mixing and switching. It successfully decolonizes and democratizes English language use. Third and the most visible expression of hybridity is observed in literary forms, especially in the works of post colonial writers. Here hybridity is observed at three levels: idiomatic transfer ("Go, go, eat air."), pragmatic transfer ("What bugging you *ma*? Relax *na.*"), and syntactic transfer ("Go and drink Coke- shoke in your AC vehicle and leave us yatris in peace."). To sum up, it can be said that hybridity validates the local cultural voices in a global norm. English in India points out that it is an amalgam of the East and the West.

Several hybrid words such as Hinglish engenders, may be markers of a cult or region that serve only to enhance the vigour of the patina of Indian

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English. In Mumbai, for example, 'off ho gaya' is a common expression for someone having passed away, that a non-Mumbaikar might find rather puzzling or even repulsive. Another unique Mumbai expression is wife, among several other Hinglish terms like ishtyle for style, herogiri (made up of the English word hero and a Mumbai coinage giri, the whole word as such means someone who is street smart, either admirably or derogatorily so with little relations as such to the pure English sense of valour or bravura associated with hero), scholarbhai, stylebhai (made up of the English words scholar and style respectively and a Hindi word bhai), filmi (made up of the English noun film and the Hindi derivational suffix used as slang)

The phenomenon of re-establishing a culture by means of literature considers negotiating cultural hybridity while establishing selfhood. Native peoples must maintain those aspects of a colonized culture vital to their existence while manipulating them to serve as the building blocks of an independent society. They must also choose aspects to relinquish -- which is a way of preventing cultural hegemony.

In the 'hybrid moment' what the native rewrites is not a copy of the colonialist original, but a qualitatively different thing-in-itself, where misreading and incongruities expose the uncertainties and ambivalences of the colonialist text and deny it an authorizing presence. Thus a textual insurrection against the discourse of cultural authority is located in the natives' interrogation of the English book within the terms of their own system of cultural meanings.

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Naïve Chimney-Sweepers Tarred with the Brush of Ideology: The Religious Ideology in Blake's 'The Chimney –Sweeper' from the 'Songs of Innocence'

Mohini Savedkar[*]

Abstract:

William Blake's The Chimney- sweeper from the volume ' Songs of Innocence' is a poem that vividly brings out the exploitation of cherubic chimney-sweepers by the religious system in particular and social system in general. An angel in the poem instills the value of dutiful obedience in the chimney-sweepers by promising them happy afterlife. The religious system in the poem acts as an opiate that intoxicates the chimney-sweepers to accept the status-quo and submit to the system rather than revolt against it. In the light of these facts the present paper studies the Ideological State Apparatus functional in the poem and its deep impact on the chimney sweepers.

Key Words: *Ideology, Ideological State Apparatus, False Consciousness, Interpellaton, Wish-fulfilment, Foregrounding.*

William Blake's 'The Chimney-Sweeper' from the volume 'Songs of Innocence' is a stark revelation of the horrendous life of the chimney-sweepers who are sold and compelled to take up the hazardous occupation of chimney sweeping at a tender age. William Blake in the poem subtly presents the religious ideological state apparatus as a system that moulds and brain-washes the sweepers to accept the system and give in to the injustice that is meted out to them without an iota of outrage. Taking into account the fact, the present paper analyses the ideology embedded in the poem, to study its mechanism of instilling 'willingness to work' in the chimney-sweepers thereby converting them into 'subjects' rather than 'individuals'. At the outset, it must be stated that

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the poem occurs under the same title with variation in content in the volume 'Songs of Experience' too, which can be considered a companion piece of the version that appears in 'Songs of Innocence'. Both these poems bearing the same title, present the contrary states of innocence and experience and can be profitably compared and contrasted for a richer understanding of their texts. However, due to the limitations of space, the paper focuses only on the piece that occurs in the volume 'Songs of Innocence' without juxtaposing it with the version that appears in the volume 'Songs of Experience'. The paper is divided into two parts. The initial part of the paper expounds on the term 'ideology' as it is used in critical theory, while the latter part analyses the ideology in the version that appears in the volume 'Songs of Innocence'.

As the Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory puts it, the French term 'ideologie' was coined in 1796 and immediately entered the English language. Originally meaning 'a study of ideas', it evolved into meaning "...a distorted or illusory form of thought which departs from a criterion of objectivity"(Mackey 198). Later, Marxists imported the term to describe the "world-view or collective beliefs and attitudes of a class or social group"(Mackey 198). As David Macey puts it, " ...in a society divided into antagonistic classes, ideology both derives from and masks real social relations and thus legitimizes class domination by making it appear natural and ahistorical...(it is) a form of false consciousness as opposed to the true class consciousness of the proletariat."(Mackey 198-99) Gunther Kress and Robert Hodge define ideology as "a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view. Ideology is thus a subsuming category which includes sciences and metaphysics, as well as political ideologies of various kinds without implying anything about their status and reliability as guides to reality." (Kress 6) Jeremy Hawthorn in her Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory points out that ideology is "a way

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of looking at and interpreting the living" and "that ideologies are *collectively held*; a purely personal system of ideas would not normally be called an ideology."(Hawthorn 163)

In his renowned book 'Ideology: An Introduction,' Terry Eagleton (28-30) posits varied interpretations of the nebulous term ideology. He points out that it might mean:

a. the general material process of production of values, ideas, beliefs in social life

b. ideas and beliefs (both true and false) which symbolize the conditions and life experiences of a specific socially significant group

c. the promotion of the interests of such social groups in the face of opposing interests.

d. such promotion especially carried out by a dominant social power

e. ideas and beliefs which help to legitimate the interests of a ruling group or class especially by distortion and dissimulation

f. fallacious beliefs emanating from the material structure of society at large.

Thus, by common consensus, ideology mirrors the ideas, world-views, interests of a particular social class. As Hawthorn makes clear- "those in the grip of ideology are not aware of this, but think that their ideas are correct because they seem to accord with reality" (Hawthorn 164). Hawthorn also asserts that the present-day usage of the term varies significantly and therefore whether an ideology is false consciousness or whether it can give a true insight into reality remain moot questions. Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh point out that, for a Marxist critic Althusser, "ideology is not a matter of conscious beliefs, attitudes and values, nor is it a matter of false consciousness... it is, rather a matter of the representation of imaginary

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versions of the real social relations that people live."(Rice 52). In the words of Althusser himself: "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence...these 'world outlooks' are largely imaginary, i.e. do not correspond to reality. However, while admitting that they do not correspond to reality i.e. that they constitute an illusion, we admit that they make an allusion to reality."(Rice 56). Althusser uses the French term 'interpellation' (hailing or interrogation by the police) to refer to the mechanism by which ideology converts individuals into subjects. The result of interpellation, in Althusser's words is that: "... the vast majority of (good) subjects work all right 'all by themselves', i.e. by ideology...They recognize the existing state of affairs (das Bestehende), that 'it really is true that it is so and not otherwise', and that they must be obedient to God, to their conscience, to the priest, to de Gaulle, to the boss, to the engineer, that thou shalt ' love thy neighbor as thyself' etc. Their concrete, material behavior is simply the inscription in life of the admirable words of the prayer: 'Amen- So be it'..." (Rice 61).

The above quote from Althusser is quite applicable to William Blake's 'The Chimney Sweeper' from the 'Songs of Innocence'. In the opening lines of the poem, it is apparent that the child chimney-sweeper, who is the narrator of the poem, is abhorrent of the work of chimney- sweeping. He is sold by his father to undertake the work in a tender age. The inversion in the line, "So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep" is quite telling, in this context. The normal subject-verb-object word-order 'I sweep your chimneys' is inverted placing the object 'your chimneys' in the initial place of the poetic line thereby foregrounding it. In the words of Nicholas Marsh, "This would be something like a fourteen-year-old factory worker on starvation wages and an eighty-hour-week somewhere in Korea, Thailand or Taiwan

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addressing us directly: ' So your walkman I assemble.'...". (Marsh 111). The contrast between 'your chimneys' and 'I sweep' is quite highlighted and the oppression of the chimney-sweeper is brought out vividly and starkly. That Tom, a chimney-sweeper detests his work is evident as he,

"...cried when his head,

That curl'd like a lamb's back, was shav'd."

However, naïve as he is, he is slyly reassured that the reason for the shaving of his head is that,

"...when your head's bare

You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

As a result, he is cajoled into working in wretched conditions. When Tom sleeps after his head being shaved, in a dream he sees all workers locked up in coffins of black. In the dream an angel comes:

"... an angel who had a bright key,

And he open'd the coffins and set them all free".

For the first time in their life, in the dream the wish of the chimney-sweepers gets fulfilled 'of being free':

"Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run,

And wash in a river and shine in the sun. "

They leave their bags behind and "rise upon clouds". Then the

 "Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,

He'd have God for his father and never want joy."

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These words of the Angel in his dream console Tom. He gets up from his dream and goes back to his routine work-

"rose in the dark,

And got with our bags and our brushes to work".

The entire poem can be viewed as play of ideology and manipulation through religious creed, which Marx aptly terms as opium that lulls the intellectual faculty asleep. The poem effectively brings out the functioning of the religious ideological state apparatus. It is noteworthy that ideology functions unconsciously and therefore the Angel talks to Tom in a dream and not directly. Here, the dream is not only a mode of Freudian wish- fulfilment of "leaping" and "laughing" or to "wash in the river and shine in the sun". It also signals the humongous extent of ideology that Tom has internalized. He must have been receiving regular and high doses of religious ideology so that it penetrates and trickles down into his unconscious thereby finding an outlet in his dreams. Rather than bolstering him, the religious ideology paralyses Tom. Instead of taking up cudgels against the system and revolting against it, Tom relies on religion- an opiate-to find a release from his grim life. It needs to be underlined, that the release that religion offers him is merely a temporary one so as to persuade him to take up his loathsome job with more vigour. The consequence is that:

"Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm."

In this line the antonyms 'cold' and 'warm' are foregrounded. Tom continues to remain smug ("happy and warm") in the critical conditions of work. The ideology hammers into him the notions that "...if he'd be a good boy, he'd have God for his father and never want Joy" and " ...if all do their duty, they need not fear harm." Here, the word 'all' gets foregrounded and receives maximum

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emphasis. The line brings out the irony that 'all' do not do their duty. It is only a handful of vulnerable chimney-sweepers who without a word of complaint undertake their duty so that "they need not fear harm." The vague dream that cajoles Tom into doing his duty" indirectly suggests Tom to adapt to his miserable conditions of work and sweep chimneys without a sound of moan or grumble thereby adjusting to the system. The Angel in the poem supports the cruel establishment of chimney sweeping. Harmless and happy afterlife is offered by religion in return of meek, docile obedience. The religion in the poem, thus converts Tom and his ilk into happy victims. The angel in the poem is not effectual in altering the brutal life-condition of Tom and other sweepers. Religious ideology thus perpetuates injustice. The phrase ' God for his father' in the poem does not merely refer to ' Christian God as Father' (with its connotation as a protective figure) but also looks back anaphorically to the reference of Tom's biological father who sold him. The promise "never want joy" seems glibly spurious. Linguistically the phrase "never want joy" is ambiguous with the word 'want' meaning both 'lack/miss' as well as 'desire'. Thus, though the line superficially means the 'chimney-sweeper would not lack joy; it also hints that due to the ideology that Tom has ingrained he would resign to his life conditions and 'never desire joy'- however natural and normal this desire for joy be!

In the words of Nicholas Marsh, "When we consider the content of ' The Chimney Sweeper', it falls into these two contrasting perceptions: on the one hand a factual depiction of the sweep's lives that is clear and shocking; on the other hand an intoxicating picture of the promised afterlife in Tom's dream of an angel...The angel's and speaker's message is that you should 'be a good boy' and 'all do their duty'; in other words, submit to misery and poverty without complaint. Then in return, you will be given an optimistic dream." (Marsh 112)

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The religious ideology in this poem thus, converts chimney-sweepers into willing workers. This becomes possible primarily as Althusser points out, due to their "imaginary relationship...to their real conditions of existence."(Rice 56) Under the sway of their ideology, they are unable to see through the unjust conditions enforced on them by the social system. The poem, in this fashion, can be analyzed in the light of the Marxist term 'ideology' revealing how the chimney-sweepers get unconsciously tarred and coloured with the brush of ideology which leads to their manipulation by the social structure.

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Problems and Status of Learning and Teaching English in India

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Abstract:

India is a multicultural place or space accommodating people of different religions, castes, languages and cultures. Indian classroom are not the exceptions for it. Indian classroom is also made up of the learners of different religions, castes and languages and Teachers in India plays an important role in teaching-learning activity to shape the learners where he is regarded as a 'Guru'. Teacher has the divine task to mentor student in case of learning activity. Teachers in Indian classroom have been trying to penetrate English culture as a second language or the language of opportunities. They find somehow more difficult to teach English culture, history, language to non-native learners of English language.

The present paper is the study of the problems of learning and teaching English in India where the classrooms are full of learners' of different religion, caste whose first language is not English.

Key Words:

We all know well that *language* is the passion of the quality to acquire and use complex systems of communication, particularly the human ability to do so, and a language is any specific example of such a system. The English word '***language***' is derived from Latin '***lingua***'. It is used to refer to codes, ciphers. A language in this sense is a system of signs for encoding and decoding information. Human language is unique in comparison to other forms of communication, such as those used by non-human animals. Communication systems used by other animals such as bees or apes are closed systems that consist of a finite, usually very limited, number of possible ideas that can be

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expressed. Language is an integral part of our existence where we cannot imagine our life without it. It helps to fulfill our needs. Learners learn language for existence. Globalization concept gave the vast scope to the learning of language and English enjoys the highest status of demands. So the learning of mother tongue is not enough in 21st century. English opened the doors of opportunities as to keep in touch with many of the branches of knowledge in science, commerce, engineering and technology.

English plays an important role in India today. Judging from certain trends it appears that the influence of English is on the increase rather than on the decrease in India. The English newspaper yield great power. The number of books published in English is far more than those published in any other Indian language. English is still used in offices, High Courts, state Legislative Assemblies and the Parliament. More and more public schools where the study of English starts right from the first class are being opened. It has become a matter of prestige to get admission to such institutions.

English serves as a link language in the country. An educated person from one state is able to converse with his counterpart in another State only through the medium of English. It is also the language of trade and industry in the country. Learning and speaking English as a second language in multilingual and multicultural country like India where English is not a mother tongue is a challenge. Learners learn English mostly with translation method. As the learners don't get the suitable environment at home and school, it has created many of the problems where learners don't find comfortable with English or don't command over English language. Problems of learning from the point of view of the learners and teaching point of the view of teachers can be discussed as below.

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1) Lack of Objectives of Learning

The education system in India follows the traditional pattern still. The policy or syllabus framers consider the importance of English language from the exam point of view. Syllabus framers still have not upgraded the syllabus commercially and practical oriented. There is lacking of Course Outcomes (COs) of every course in English. Not only students but teachers teaching English language lack the objectives of teaching and learning English language in the class. The learners don't know the programs outcomes they are appearing for. They are unaware of Program Educational Outcomes (PEOs). They just complete education sometimes blindly or imitating the traditional education system. They don't go for learning English for their professional development but to secure marks or somewhere in rural areas learners consider English as a language or discipline of prestige.

2) Large Number of Students in classroom

Considering the population of India, the number of students attending the class is a challenge to Indian education system. As the parents of learners do think about English language as a matter of prestige in society, many of the parents admit their children in English medium school despite of their financial condition or learners' understanding level or interest. Due to this classrooms are overcrowded that consist of around 100 to 110 students. Teachers who do teach in classrooms don't pay personal attention to every learner. They do also not expect maximum participation of the students so the learners are not so much serious in activities rather than scoring or getting more marks in exam.

3) Lack of Competent Teachers

Teachers always play the most significant role in the teaching of English in bilingual patterns of contemporary in India. Teachers of English are not fully

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competent to give full justice to their work and assignments. There is a shortage of teachers. Those available have just passed the school final examination.

It is ironical to find that many teachers who didn't offer teaching of English in their training and school education teach English at their workplace. The real teachers concentrate on degree rather than knowledge. Teachers are unaware of current knowledge and usage of English. They themselves require training of commercial or business English.

4) Shortage of Time or Insufficient contact hours

The number of contact hours (lectures) of teachers on teaching English has been drastically reduced. The syllabus framers included some new subjects in the syllabus and reduced importance given to English. Learners don't get sufficient practice of speaking of English due to shortage of lecture duration. In 21st century, teachers have changed their attitudes towards teaching profession. They now think in a professional way except the sacred duty of knowledge imparting so they also behave in a professional way and hence they hardly think about learners' development rather than their wages or salaries. They don't give extra time apart from their contact hours fixed by university or board of study.

5) Traditional Teaching Method

Teaching method used in Indian classroom is somehow faulty. Teachers teaching the lesson pick up the passages, give or write the difficult words on writing board with the meanings and translate the lines or passages in first language then finally give the assignments to the learners. Learners imitate the same method that results most of the time in funny situation. Teachers are still making the use of traditional use of teaching in class.

6) Examination Centered Education System

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Learners of English language in India are usually the puppets of examination and marks. The education system is fully examination centered and score based. Learners do not have positive attitude towards the learning outcomes. They learn the English language not to acquire it but to score good in the exam so the attitude towards English language is not interest based but exam based.

7) Insufficient Provision of Electronic Medias

The success of language learning process depends on a pillar of education i.e. teacher. Teacher is expected to bring changes in his teaching methods as per the level of learner's understanding & changing demands of education system. However, it has been discovered that many teachers are yet to upgrade themselves with technological developments in education system. They can make the use of OHP, LCD projector, Computer and mobile too. But it is observed many of the teachers still are unaware of using Smartphone or latest technologies.

8) Wrong Method of Teaching

A majority of teachers in Indian classroom still make the use of translation method of teaching English. Learning speech in English is neglected. The students don't get the suitable environment and much time to practice in speaking the language. They are unable to converse in English. Learners before presenting the text in English think in their native language so they literally do word to word translation that may create confusion in the mind of listeners or changes the actual meaning of the paragraph or text A majority of teachers are themselves are unaware with the new techniques of teaching the language.

CONCLUSION

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If Indian education system considers such challenges in teaching and learning English in Indian context and tries to overcome the same by using techniques in their day today teaching, then we can develop learning competence among Indian students and make our education system more effective.

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