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Editors

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

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EDITORIAL

It is great pleasure to bring out the present issue of *Critical Space* on the occasion of Deepavali which lights our houses and enlightens our souls. Critical Space team wish you and your family a happy Deepavali as this journal is also, in one sense, an attempt to lighten the lamp of knowledge and evade the darkness of ignorance. Ariful Islam in his research paper "Rereading Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka: A Critical Analysis of African Postcolonial Literatureligion" reread certain texts in order to bring out the socio-cultural facts of Africans that are diminished in the darkness of colonial prejudices. The analysis of religious rituals in the light of the postcolonial perspective, helps to question the colonial reading of them and opens a new gateway to another cultural world that has its own system of signification. In the history of academics the modern man has witnessed the transition from the invention of script printing to the digital age of virtual reality. Two significant discourses noting this kind of transition are *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) and *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society* (2001). But as the topic is open ended it can be explored to bring out the minute changes that are taking place in the academic business that is moving from pure human intelligentsia to the artificial intellect. Dr Sudhir Nikam in his article "*The Symbiotic Prospects of Artilligence and Contemporary Linguistics"* writes in this direction and lets us know the new advancements in the linguistic research.

In the next article we have a pleasant memory of Rabindranath Tagore's muse that sooths our mind and gives a divine pleasure through the symmetry of countryside images and human emotions Dr. Venkatesh Puttaiah in his article "Romantic Love as Mystical Experience in Rabindranath Tagore's *The Gardener*" unfolds how these poems give the mystic experience to the reader. I feel it is necessary for our generation to turn to these evergreen artefacts to emphasise the difference between the oriental philosophy of hope and the western philosophy of nihilism which we read in the modern English Poetry. Dr. Humera Sultana in her article "*American Transcendentalism: Review and Critique of Emerson and Thoreau*", throws light on the philosophy of Transcendentalism in the light of the contribution given by

Emerson and Thoreau. The article becomes more interesting as it gives a proper platform to perception of the Transcendental thought.

However the postmodern techniques of contemporary literature have been remained a hot topic for the researchers and in every issue at least one submission has been contributed in this direction. Dr. Rohit Phutela in his article *"Magical Realism, the Catharsis for Latin Postcoloniality: Gabriel Garcia Marquez's Strange Pilgrims as Prototype"* deals with the narrative technique of magical realism and explores that how authors reveal the reality while blending two opposite phenomena of reality and magic. One more research avenue that always succeeds in acquiring the space in the journal is the explorations of marginality. Dr Neeti Mahajan *"The Repressed and the Silenced Self of Desdemona and Ophelia"* very interestingly divulges how Shakespearian heroines though they belong to the aristocracy face the common predicament in every social strata of the world. The reading of this article is in fact rediscovering the feminist facts that could have skipped from the traditional reading method developed by the male domination.

In language component we have an intelligently drafted article by Dr. Sumer Singh *"Global Use of English for a Variety of Purposes"* in which he reveals how speaking about the role of English in a context of specific nation is an out-dated phenomenon and is being placed by the English for global purposes. This change in the academics revels how the use of English is not just essential but mandatory to survive in the global scenario. In the component of cultural studies Dr. Shahida writes "*A Philosophical Inquiry into Select Poems of Early Kashmiri Sufi Poets*" in which she exposes us with the philosophical preaching of Early Kashmiri Sufi Poets and reveals how Sufism is not just limited to Islam but it is universal in appreciation.

Suma Priyadarshini. B. K in her article *Children's Literature: Need for its Emergence in Today's World of English Literature* emphasises how the genre of Children's Literature is important today for the cultivation of certain philosophical and moral values in the youth. Dr Madhavi Nikam *"The Human World of Gordimer in My Son's Story*" opens us a panorama of South African life and reveals the multicultural heritage of South Africa. The article writer's knowledge of South African social and Political movement and its use in the actual textual analysis make the article multidisciplinary that not only reveals

the literary facts but more importantly speaks on the sociological, cultural and political issues of contemporary significance.

Dr. N. G. Wale, in his article *Caste Consciousness in Girish Karnad's Tale-Danda* explores how an artistic creation is influenced by social facts. The caste consciousness reflected in *Tale-Danda* explores a dark side of caste system of India. Another article in the component of culture studies is Dr. N.K. Shinde's *Culture in Arun Koltkar's Jejuri Poems* that deals with how the cultural entities are reflected in the poem Jejuri.

Fahmeeda. P in her article "*The New Woman in the Short Stories of Cornelia Sorabji"* reveals the status of women in the colonial India by analyzing Cornelia Sorabji's *Love and Life Behind the Purdah* (1901) and focuses the history of how the conception of New Woman emerged. It depicts the reasons that motivate the substitution of an Indian stereotype of submissive with rebellious women. The issue is concluded with the poems of Dr. N. G. Wale who maintains a corner delight in the hot academic discourse. Thus, the present issue of *Critical Space* is quite inclusive and diversified in terms of the submissions fused on sound theoretical framework.

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

Contents

Rereading Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka: A Critical Analysis of African Postcolonial Literatureligion

Ariful Islam*

Abstract

Behind the backdrop of today's Africa and its history of struggle against colonial discourses that have mythologized Africa as 'dark' and 'savage' set against Western 'civilization,' the readers of African postcolonial literary works shall always find religion in different forms and modes of operation. Far from being naïve, religions have always been the door to get out of and/or get into another world with different values, beliefs and practices. Cultural, historical, and theoretical readings of African postcolonial literature are good to explore and identify what and how of Africa and the Africans. This paper argues that the study of religion, a kind of study which is often overlooked, in African postcolonial literatures may answer to many whys as it deconstructs Enlightenment-influenced reasoning because, the Gods of Africa are always there to confront the other God(s) for power, authority and knowledge. Developed through a library research, the present paper reads representation of religion in some select postcolonial novels including Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Petals of Blood and Wole Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero. The paper shows that postcolonial writers treat religion not simply as a spiritual gateway to and thus an agent to revive indigenous belief system but also as a geopolitical force to strengthen or withstand cultural and political aggression.

Key-words: *Post-colonialism/ postcolonialism, religiosity, power, politics, hegemony, and colonial discourses.*

What is *Literatureligion*?

In fact I have formed this word – for the first time in English – to refer to: the literary works that include religion and/or religious aspects implicitly and/or explicitly; the study of the politics of different religions in the context of different literatures in regard of different times, places and individuals; the representation of religion/s in literature/s; and the harmony as well as the conflict between religion and literature. Basically, I used the term first in my M.A. Dissertation entitled "Representation of Religion in African Postcolonial Literature".

* Lecturer, Department of English, East West University, Aftabnagar, Jahurul Islam City, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Introduction

This paper intends to throw light on the reasons that have reasoned its focus on the representation of religion in African postcolonial literature. Cultural, historical, and theoretical readings of African postcolonial literature are good to explore and identify what and *how* of Africa and the Africans. This paper argues that the study of religion, a kind of study which is often overlooked, in African postcolonial literatures may answer to many *whys* as it deconstructs Enlightenment-influenced reasoning because, the Gods of Africa are always there to confront the *other* God(s) for power, authority and knowledge. Developed through a library research, the present paper reads representation of religion in some select postcolonial novels including Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*. The paper shows that postcolonial writers treat religion not simply as a spiritual gateway to and thus an agent to revive indigenous belief system but also as a geopolitical force to strengthen or withstand cultural and political aggression.

The Whys and Wherefores

The whys and wherefores behind such disturbing step of exploring the critical study of religion in African postcolonial literature echo with the primary functions of literature, i.e., presentation, representation, suggestions and approaches, that is to say, the way a piece of literature communicates with the readers indeed.

Regarding the "Whys and Wherefores", Achebe has defined his role as a writer "to help [his] society regain belief in itself" (O'Reilly 32) through voicing the experience of Africans whereas Wole Soyinka makes his choice to glorify and idealize traditional African culture and experiences, and to explore fundamental spiritual and historical issues with/through the use of elements of religious rituals.[1] On the other hand, Ngugi's exertion is for a new world under the rule of true gods, where all will be equally served and taken care of along with the equal distribution of money, wealth and land. The representation of religion in his writings helps himself to depict African traditional customs along with the analysis of colonial impact after the independence to reflect the experiences of Kenyans. His approach stays between literature and politics.

The critical study of religion in African postcolonial literature created a meeting place for the past with pagan belief and the present with zealous Christian belief in order to defend the attack and to offend the misrepresentation about their essence of existence, everyday life and experiences.

The second significant reason is the necessity of creating a space for the readers who are targeted for the observation, analysis, evaluation and justification of the uneven impact of religion in the world of black people and that of the rest: who is comparatively better and/or more correct/moral position, and to what extent? In order to give a wider range to think on the part of the readers, Achebe, in his *Things Fall Apart*, mentions the prophecy of Oracle about the locust-like white people that "the elders consulted their Oracle and it told them that the strange man [riding an iron horse] would break their clan and spread destruction among them" (97). The possible responses to this statement may range from 'simple and easy assumption' to 'foreseeing with divine aid'. Similarly what happens between Agbala and Ekwefi in the moonless night also throws light on the way the African writers deal with supernatural and religion. The people outside Africa may call it a kind of telepathy or – which is questioning as well – the fear of the very priestess of other supernatural or human being(s) and/or their sudden attack: Agbala says "Somebody is walking behind me! […] whether you are spirit or man, may Agbala shave your head with a blunt razor! May he twist your neck until you see your heels" (Achebe 74) whereas one mind of Ekwefi said to her, "Woman, go home before Agbala does you harm" (Achebe 74).

In case of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood,* the readers get a space to think whether Professor Munira – who rejects the passivity and practices the active obedience to the will of God – was right to step forward with the plan to burn the whorehouse of a prostitute called Wanja. At the same time, whether Karega was wrong believe in individual's effort instead of religious rituals and practices like sacrifice to get rid of problems.

Similarly, from the reading of Wole Soyinka's *The Trials of Brother Jero*, we must acknowledge the fact that religion has lost, in the context of the text, its religiosity and *metareality*, and received a very material approach. Jeroboam has chosen the career of a Prophet as his calling which is highly competitive.

So, what comes accordingly is the uneven impact of religion – both indigenous and Christian – on Africans including the authors and their characters representing the entire Africa. For example: what it stands for Munira (his active obedience to God to clean the earth by burning a whorehouse), in *Petals of Blood*, is not similar to that of Karega (his thought of individual effort instead of hoping for divine aid for public sufferings). Similarly, in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, regarding the killing of Ikemefuna, Okonkwo opposes Obierika's passive approach. If we rewrite the conversation in the style of a play, it will be as follows:

> Okonkwo: You sound as if you question the authority and the decision of the Oracle, who said he should die.
> Obierika: But the Oracle [has] not [asked] me to carry out its decision.
> Okonkwo: […] but someone [has] to do it […] and what do you think the Oracle [will] do then?
> Obierika: But if the Oracle [says] that my son should be killed I [will] neither dispute it nor be the one to do it. (Achebe 46)

The Hows

The "Hows" apropos of the representation of religion in African postcolonial religion throw light actually on the tone or the very way of authors' speaking, presenting, representing, suggesting and doing their other businesses.

The arrival of new religion in African lands, in most cases, has been considered as a great cause of disappointment. That is why, African postcolonial literature seems to be attacking, mocking and criticizing as response to the discourses accomplished by the virtue of Christianity.

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* reveals that the new religion took the effeminate men, twins bearing women, men without title under its shelter in the name of universal brotherhood, the will of god. Thus this new abominable and lunatic religion shakes the bond of kinship and one voice, and gives birth to the final disorientation mainly because it was too late and their own people started to echo Nowye's "I am one of them" (101).

But the paradox is that James Smith, the second white priest, "condemned openly Mr. Brown's, the first one, policy of compromise and accommodation. He saw things as black and white" (Achebe 130).

Prepared for massacre, Smith prays to Lord to save the people in the "holy war" (Achebe 132) which is "war of blame" (Achebe 141) or something worse according to the Igbo people since "it is not [their] custom to fight for [their] gods" (Achebe 113). O'Reilly identifies that the arrival of Christianity, a double-edged sword, is not simply religious but political, cultural and, most significantly, economic.

Mockery is apparent in all works of African postcolonial writers. In *Things Fall Apart*, Igbo people want to know about the father of the Son of God. In *Petals of Blood*, Rev. Jerrod Brown, a man of God, seems to be very busy with praying to God and preparing his lectures for Sundays indeed. Instead of satisfying the hunger of masses of people coming from drought-ridden Ilmorog, he opens the Bible and tries his heart and soul with all his knowledge and

wisdom to soothe them. Wole Soyinka has mocked at the practice of the Prophets in his *The Trials of Brother Jero* just as he has done the same thing in his *The Road* where removes the road signs both to feed his *AKSIDENT STORE* and to feed his soul for the search of the meaning and essence of life.

To counter the colonialist discourse that Africa is having an absence of order, this *representation* challenges the colonialist myth about Africa that it is inhabited by uncivilized and savage cannibals and "its inability to create order out of chaos" (Parker and Starkey 165). It depicts that the indigenous and traditional beliefs and values kept them in a balanced order which was rather disturbed and disoriented due to the arrival of Christianity. A quotation from Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* is essential to depict that Africans were civilized before the historical civilizing mission that the white people consider as to *save* and *redeem* the "exotic Other" (Barry 77):

> *Arrow of God* opens with Ezeulu performing one of the lunar rituals for taming chaos and responding to history. At every new moon, he eats one of the thirteen sacred yams selected from new yam offerings made by every adult male after the yam harvest, and then offers a sacrifice to Ulu. This is a calendar system through which the clan regulates its collectivized life. The yam offering itself ensures an accurate annual census, since each man offers just one yam to Ulu. Through this ritual, Achebe employs the symbolism of numbering and measuring to develop an argument about the clan's development of a civilization without any help from Europe's civilizing mission. (Parker and Starkey 86)

Even, the rules and regulations of the African indigenous religion is so strict that a titled man like Okonkwo has also to confront the "justice of the earth goddess" (Achebe 88) when he commits a crime against the earth goddess. But the strictness of the status of religious and social values falls apart radically with the arrival of Christianity.

Besides, the readers meet another term called re-interpretation of myths and/or religious beliefs and values. They re-interpreted myths or even Christianity as much as W. B. Yeats re-interpreted Greek myth. Achebe knocks on the door of Christian colonialists by declaring that things fall apart and "there is no story that is not true" (Achebe 97) whereas Ngugi re-interprets Trinity as "Bible, Coin and Gun" (Ngugi 106).

Most significantly and interestingly, African postcolonial writers have used Christian belief(s) in African context. As for instance, Achebe's *Things Fall*

Apart has got its title along with its introductory four lines from W.B. Yeats' "The Second Coming"; Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* has taken its first three of four "paradoxically symbolic" (Parker and Starkey 128) as such subtitles from the Bible as "Walking", "Towards Bethlehem" and "To Be Born Again" and so on.

The use of irony, satire and paradoxes is another element of the section, "Hows". The ultimate irony of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is that Okonkwo, one of the greatest men of the clan, is going to be buried like a dog, that is to say, *the god* becomes *a dog*. Through this irony, Achebe has satirized Igbo religious and social values as well. Professor, in Wole Soyinka's *The Road*, removes the road signs both to feed his *AKSIDENT STORE* and to feed his soul for the search of the meaning and essence of life. Priests, in *Petals of Blood*, try to satisfy the drought-ridden community with their biblical feasts. Wole Soyinka's *The Trials of Brother Jero* is full of ironies, satires and paradoxes as well.

Questioning the religious beliefs, sometimes considered as superstitions by many writers, has also been placed with proper notification in the writings. For example, Okonkwo questions the war of blame[2] in *Things Fall Apart*. In Ngugi's *Petals of Blood*, Karega having a touching faith in people and individual attempt opposes the sole dependence on rituals like sacrifice.[3]

Finally, what can be said as conclusion of the second chapter is that the objective of this chapter is to include the reasons behind the exertion of the African postcolonial writers for the critical study of religion with enough exemplification. The next chapter, "Postcolonial *Literatureligion*", has been designed to focus on different literary works of African postcolonial literature in detail with masses of examples indeed.

Postcolonial Literatureligion

The indigenous belief system is having masses of weakness in terms of logic, rationality and validity whereas the arrival of Christian faith is accompanied by similar number of paradoxes. The white people came with the Bible in one hand and magic power (deadly weapons to destroy individuals, community etc. if necessary) in the other.

Religion is intimately related to the demonstration of knowledge and exercise of power. Neil Ten Kortenaar, in his "How the Centre is Made to Hold in *Things Fall Apart*", says that Achebe believes that "West's knowledge of the world is as culture-based and time-bound as any other mode of knowledge." (Parker and Starkey 34)

Similarly, Don C. Ohadike, in his "Igbo Culture and History", has vindicated Achebe's stance about the African own age-old history of defined

authority and organized (secret) society to throw light on the enlightened Africa having its own language to speak with, own culture to define itself and own way of life to challenge the colonialist myths about order, disorder, peace, savagery and many more illusions and oversimplification.

Achebe has depicted Africa as it is indeed. While dealing with religion, he has developed some particular issues in his *Things Fall Apart*: Africa is not what colonialist myths and discourses say about it. History says that Igbo people also believe in mysterious nature of one God, Chukwu the Supreme. Their religion talks about the first human being, Eze Nri, and his wife. As Ohadike says that "[l]ike some other belief systems, the religious system of the Igbo people revolved around the idea of birth, death and reincarnation" (Achebe xxxv).

The weaknesses found in the Igbo religious belief system further the achievement of Christianity with chances to be close to the Igbo people with new doors with new hopes. God is to be feared, not to be known but to be adored – these are the Igbo phenomenon indeed. The weakness of Igbo religion starts with defining the characters and their role in the society. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, religion creates shadow lines between the social status and role of men and women:

> These women never saw the inside of the hut. No women ever did. They scrubbed and painted the outside walls under the supervision of men. If they imagined what was inside, they kept their imagination to themselves. No women ever asked questions about the most powerful and the secret cult in the clan. (Achebe 63)

Achebe's characters, sometimes, question the authority by their thoughts (what Nowye does, Igbo women do etc.), words (what Obierika and Nowye does) and/or actions (homicide by Okonkwo, Okonkwo's breach during the Feast of the New Yam, killing of python etc.) of course, in that they have the scope to follow.

The role of the Oracle has been developed in the novel through two major pronouncements – death sentence of Ikemefuna and warning about the strange white man with iron horse. It may mean their unending fear of the outsiders, their lack of power of resistance, or their ignorance.

Alongside the strictness of social, political and religious values, Igbo lacks something which is rather more significant; and, it is their ignorant eyes that avoid looking at what they think is harmful for them.

Religious attack, more or less, is also one of the elements that help it find its mark indeed. The white people say that the Igbo people worship the false gods of woods and stone that result in derisive laughter of the men of Mbanta. As usual, religion at its advent seems to follow the tastes and interests of people to a great extent although it wants people to look at its own tastes and interests later. In the guise of universal brotherhood, it embraces the outcasts, twins' mothers, untitled and effeminate men and so on although it, again paradoxically, creates another new world of outcasts in the guise of *holy war* to save and convert human being.

The stay of the missionary for a few days in a portion of the Evil Forest, the real battlefield as Igbo considers, gives them a handful of converts not long after. To get deep inside into what Christianity is, the young Christians get school to learn reading and writing which are next to further the ideological orientation of individuals. Christian O'Reilly, in *Post-colonial Literature*, identifies Christian churches as the allies of (British) empire. It also proves that the arrival of the white Christians was not simply religious but political and cultural as well.

Every single move of Igbo people is determined, dedicated, maintained, observed and evaluated by the indistinct eyes of religion. Attributing gods with adjectives related to power and authority seems to be another phenomenon of Igbo people. Thus, god Agbala has got him in a multitude of names like the owner of the future, the messenger of earth etc. Even the naming of Igbo children shows their beliefs as well. For example: Amaogechukwu (God's time is the best), Chukwukelu (God is the creator), Chukwunyelu (God gave me this wonderful gift), Nnamdi or Nnadi (Father is back) and so on.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* is written in a religious framework with the matrix of socialism and religion[1]. When Munira is a man of God with Christian orthodox family background, Karega questions the way we attribute God with multitude of power instead of trying ourselves. Besides, more importantly and significantly, Ngugi has established a relationship in between religion and Marxism. Money constructs everything in the way of the world as if it were the Second God in that it can manage holiness, heaven etc. Karega has a poignant confidence in people and their exertion – "The voice of the people is truly the voice of God." [4] When everyone else thinks of the sacrifice and other rituals around Abdulla's donkey and their hunger and thirst, Karega insists on their own efforts instead of great expectations like divine aid to get rid of disaster(s) that await(s) them.

Ngugi talks about the God of Africa and Gods of other lands who are engaged in wrestling with one another to survive. Most significantly, Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* is one of the unique works because of its re-interpretation of

Christian religious issues and incidents in African context. Ngugian Trinity is sure to be first example in this case: "Christianity, Commerce, Civilization: the Bible, the Coin, the Gun: Holy Trinity" (Ngugi 106). The law of God, the law of the state, and the socialist goals belong to the thematic principles of the novel.[5]In course of the story, Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* says that "[p]overty is sin" (337), and "[w]e are all prostitutes […] we are all prostituted" (286) in new Kenya with less happy circumstances inasmuch as nothing is free here anymore except some experiences like "it's a game… of money…You eat or you are eaten" (348) that one can have freely.

Similarly, Ngugi makes a comparison among money, history and religion. The Coin of the Trinity reshapes the ideological orientation of the individuals, the Bible shows that the arrival of the newcomer is not harmful for humankind, and the Gun is to ensure the cessation of resistance and other possible difficulties to reach the goal. And so, Abdulla thinks that "history was a dance in a huge arena of God" (Ngugi 404).

In Wole Soyinka's *The Trials of Brother Jero*, the writer has presented the practice of a Prophet as a profession to earn his livelihood. In the text, the prophets fight for their converts and customers. The social status along with the identity and role women has been distorted in the guise of religious beliefs and values. Women have been named as the Daughters of Discord who cause the divine transformation of the male-bodied persons for their fickleness of women. Religion has been used as a weapon here in the play. Jeroboam, a man of God, is having a pseudo-face with his velvet cape and dress. The paradox that has made the text really enjoyable to the audience is its treatment of women. Jeroboam the Prophet tells Chume, an unhappy husband who always wants to beat his wife to teach her a good lesson, that the "Lord says that you may not beta the good woman whom he has chosen to be your wife, to be your cross in your period of trial […]" (Soyinka 8). But no sooner has he heard that Chume's wife is the person to whom he owes a particular amount of money, and for which the woman is disturbing him than he suggests Chume to beat her. He says, "Remember, it must be done in your own house. Never show the discord within your family to the world. Take her home and beat her." (Soyinka 12) The play ends with an irony of 'the miraculous disappearance of a Prophet'. Similarly, in *The Road*, the mysterious and mystic character, Professor becomes the parasite, on the users of the road, just like a spider. Getting out of the church with lots of complaints against it, he chooses the *AKSIDENT STORE*, and finally he furthers his step by opening a bar. Besides his many other actions characterize him as a mad individual. Soyinka has taken him "as a parody of the academic and learned professional"[6] who is in quest of the spiritual and mysterious Word.

Conclusion

Starting with the whys and wherefores and the tone of the authors, narrators, the paper has developed the concept of African "Postcolonial *Literatureligion*". The sole focus is religion. This paper shows whether a religion has any chance to act on its own, it is strongly geopolitical, and the weapon/shelter with certain purposes or notions, or NOT. Alongside the controversial facets, religious beliefs, values and practices get a significant touch of re-interpretation which not only questions them but also mocks at them with satirical impulse. Policy of compromise and accommodation in case of the 'good riddance' becomes paradoxical for the Africans and the white newcomers with the Bible in one hand and the Gun in the other to reach the Coin, the true secret of the white men's power. The religious framework of the literary works of Achebe, Ngugi and Soyinka has included masses of weakness in terms of logic, rationality and validity whereas the arrival of Christian faith is accompanied by, at least, similar number of paradoxes.

Finally, we can say that religion is never a purposeless world, and it is very simple to understand. It is political, cultural and economic. Again, purposeless action is absent in the world of religion where one must kiss one's reward – no matter whether it is heaven(ly) or hell(ish). Religion is weapon to rule through a proper combination of knowledge and power whereas it is the shelter to not only save oneself but to be united as well. The arrival of Christianity in Africa is cultural, political and economic, wherein religion is the shelter for the colonizers to label them as harmless although the very religion do the most remarkable harm for the African, that is to say, their ultimate disorientation.

Last but not least, a space is always fixed and reserved for the readers to consider everything otherwise under the shadow of "NOT", maybe, the great expectations, to satisfy the hunger and thirst for further and deeper findings regarding the critical analysis of African postcolonial literatureligion.

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The Symbiotic Prospects of Artilligence and Contemporary Linguistics

Dr Sudhir Nikam*

Abstract

'Artilligence' is a blend of two terms- Artificial Intelligence- a branch of Language Engineering. It is an interdisciplinary area of study interfacing the several branches of knowledge-Linguistics, Computer Science, Logic, Philosophy and Natural Language Processing etc. Natural Language Processing is mainly concerned with Linguistics. But there has never been a special Linguistics for this. The theories and principles of general Linguistics are usually applied to computational Linguistics. Some of the challenging applications of NLP include –natural language interfaces to databases, question answering systems, story understanding and machine translation. "Given that language is so useful, so uniquely human, and so difficult, it is hardly surprising that it has attracted an enormous amount of interest from AI researchers. Any program capable of generating and understanding unconstrained, fluent English speech or text will have to solve a large number of difficult problems which any mature English speaker appears to find easy. To write such a program, we will have to find out how these problems can be solved. Once we have done it, we will have a computer system which is far easier and more comfortable to use than anything which is currently available, at least for some tasks and domains."(Yazdani: 70)

Key Words: *Artilligence, Computational Linguistics, Symbiosis, NLP, AI etc.*

Perception and communication are essential components of intelligent behavior. They offer the ability to successfully interact with our environment. Humans perceive and communicate through their five basic senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste, and their ability to generate meaningful utterances. Two of the senses, sight and hearing are especially complex. Developing programs that understand natural language and that comprehend

* PG Department of English, B N N College, Bhiwandi (University of Mumbai, Maharashtra)

visual senses are two of the most difficult tasks facing AI researchers. Artilligence researchers looked at the problem of language as that of communication. The role of world knowledge and domain knowledge in natural language understanding and communication was recognized and given great importance.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this field of study, there is a need of integration of AI/NLP and Linguistics- a symbiosis! "Natural Language Processing is a branch of computational linguistics which deals with the computational processing of textual materials in natural languages through human manipulation."(Sin-wai 155) Generative linguistics has concentrated on recognizing the universals among all natural languages, but has not written the perfect grammars for any particular language. Our theories of language are incomplete. Artilligence/NLP has much to learn from linguistics. But, the theories developed in contemporary Linguistics must be adapted or re-written to suit the needs of NLP. AI researchers often neglect the work of linguists and some linguists think that their work is directly suitable for computation. This must change- change into the symbiosis of NLP and linguistics.

"Though the five thousand languages spoken in the world differ greatly in sounds and symbols, they sufficiently resemble each other in syntax to suggest that there is a scheme of universal grammar determined by deep structures or innate presetting in the human mind itself. These presettings, which have their basis in the brain, set the pattern for all experience, fix the rules for the formation of meaningful sentences, and explain why languages are readily translatable into one another."(Kurhade 10)Developing programs that understand a natural language is difficult problem. Natural languages are large. They contain infinity of different sentences. No matter how many sentences a person has heard or seen, new ones can always be produced. Also, there is much ambiguity in a natural language. Many words have several meanings such as- can, bear, fly, and orange, and sentences can have different meanings in different contexts. This makes the creation of programs that "understand" a natural language, one of the most challenging tasks in AI. It requires that a program transform sentences occurring as part of a dialogue into data structures which convey the intended meaning of the sentences to a reasoning program. In general, this means that the reasoning programme must know a lot about the structure of the language, the possible semantics, the beliefs and goals of the user, and a great deal of general world knowledge.

"Computational Linguistics is an interdisciplinary field dealing with the statistical or rule based modeling of natural languages from a computational perspective This modeling is not limited to any particular field of linguistics.

Computational linguistics often work as members of interdisciplinary teams, including linguists, language experts and computer scientists." (TOI 221)Developing programs to understand natural language is important in AI because a natural form of communication with systems is essential for user acceptance. Furthermore, one of the most critical tests for intelligent behavior is the ability to communicate effectively. Indeed, this was the purpose of the test proposed by Alan Turing. AI programs must be able to communicate with their human counterparts that purpose. "We learn a language by learning its structure and not by memorizing all of the sentences we have ever heard and we are able to use the language in a variety of ways because of this familiarity. Therefore, a useful model of language is one which characterizes the permissible structures through the generating grammars. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to formally characterize natural languages with a simple grammar. In other words, it has not been possible to classify natural languages in a mathematical sense."(Patterson 232)

Before proceeding further, a definition of understanding as used here should be given. We say a program understands a natural language if it behaves by taking a predictably correct or acceptable action in response to the input. For example, we say a child demonstrates understanding if it responds with the correct answer to a question. The action taken need not be an external response. It may simply be the creation of some internal data structures as would occur in learning some new facts. But in any case, the structures created should be meaningful and correctly interact with the world model representation held by the program. In this article, many of the important issues related to natural language understanding and language generation have been explored.

A language understanding program must have considerable knowledge about the structure of the language including what the words are and how they combine into phrases and sentences. It must also know the meanings of the words and how they contribute to the meanings of a sentence and to the context within which they are being used. Finally, a program must have some general world knowledge as well as knowledge of what humans know and how they reason. To carry on a conversation with someone requires that a person (or programme) know about the world in general, know setting, this all presumes a familiarity with the language structure and a minimal vocabulary.

The component forms of knowledge needed for an understanding of natural language are sometimes classified according to the following levels.

Phonological. This is knowledge which relates sounds to the words we recognize. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound. Phones are aggregated into word sounds.

Morphological. This is lexical knowledge which relates to word constructions from basic units called morphemes. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning: for example, the construction of 'friendly' from the root 'friend'.

Syntactic. This knowledge relates to how words are put together or structured to form grammatically correct sentences in the language.

Semantic. This knowledge is concerned with the meanings of words and phrases and how they combine to form sentence meanings.

Pragmatic. This is high-level knowledge which relates to the use of sentences in different contexts and how the context affects the meaning of the sentences.

World knowledge relates to the language a user must have in order to understand and carry on a conversation. It must include an understanding of the other person's beliefs and goals.

The approaches taken in developing language understanding programs generally follow the above levels or stages.

Four extended grammars can be useful- One is the transformational grammars, an extension of generative grammars. Transformational grammars include tree manipulation rules that permit the construction of deeper semantic structures than the generative grammars. Case, semantic, and systemic grammars are examples of grammars that are also more semantic oriented than the generative grammars.

Lexicons and the role they play in NL systems is equally important... Basic parsing techniques should be examined. There are simple transition networks, recursive transition networks, and the versatile ATN. The ATN includes tests tend actions as part of their components and special registers to help in building syntactic structures. With an ATN, extensive semantic analysis is even possible. We should take help of top-down, bottom-up, deterministic, and nondeterministic parsing methods and a PROLOG parser.

We next must look at the semantic interpretation process and consider two broad approaches, namely the lexical and compositional semantic approaches. The approaches are also identified with the type of target knowledge structures generated. In the compositional semantics approach, logical forms are generated, whereas in the lexical semantics approach, conceptual dependency or similar network structures are created.

Language generation is approximately the opposite of the understanding analysis process, although more difficult. Not only must a system decide what to say but how to say it. Generation falls naturally into three areas, content

determination, text planning, and text realization. Two general approaches are presented. They are like the inverses of the lexical and compositional semantic analysis processes. The KAMP system uses an elaborate planning process to determine what, when, and how to state some concepts. The system simulates a robot giving advice to a human helper in the repair of air compressors. At the other extreme, the BABEL system generates output text from conceptual dependency and script structures. These systems typify the state-of-the-art in natural language processing systems. "From the 1990's onwards, a statistical approach to MT has become popular. This is based on the computers analysis of statistical data from a large body of existing bilingual parallel text collections to determine the probability of matching given SL and TL expressions. The most statistically probable match is then chosen by the computer as the translation of the expression in a new document." (Hatim 118)

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Romantic Love as Mystical Experience in Rabindranath Tagore's *The Gardener*

Dr. Venkatesh Puttaiah*

Abstract:

Sincere acts, irrespective of the result, reach a mystical point in Rabindranath Tagore's writing. It is more so in The Gardener*, where, in the domain of romantic love, the lover steers clear of material ambitions that are obstacles to mystical experience. This paper aims to explore the nature of romantic love and the kind of mystical experience it realizes in* The Gardener *as it recognizes the nuances of the speaker's voice. Reading the slow-paced lyrics of* The Gardener *is rewarding, now perhaps more in the East than in the West, for they would make us stop and think and smile; it would restore us what we have lost in our mad, material rush. A unique thing about these lyrics is their dynamic nature. The love poems do not just remain love poems, they enter the mystical realm. The reader is in the presence of beauty. The paper aims to establish this by interpreting who the gardener is and what the garden. It goes on to unfold the idea of tending, which encompasses searching, waiting, finding, pursuing and, all the while, loving.*

Key words: gardener, interpretation, romantic, mystical, East, West.

There have been many debates with reference to Tagore's poetry on his spiritualism, romanticism, nationalism; his borrowing from and offering to the West; his individuality and universality. The debates continue because often Tagore's poems are at once clear and subtle, simple and complex, sensual and spiritual, of yesterday and forever, of the earth and the heaven. There are ways one can approach Tagore's poetry, and one of the ways is to discover the simplicity and the depth of the poems. This paper on *The Gardener* aims explores Tagore's sense of romantic love, the value he attaches to it and its importance to us today by locating the poems historically, culturally and literarily.

Rabindranath Tagore refers to the poems in *The Gardener* as "lyrics of love and life" and those in *Gitanjali* as a "series of religious poems" (*The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore* 80). It is important to note Tagore's view of his poems because both works are contemplative, aspiring, and mystical. *Gitanjali*, published in 1913, has been discussed amply by critics all over the world, owing partly to Tagore winning the Nobel Prize in Literature in1913, partly to W. B.

* Assistant Professor and Head, Department of English, Yuvaraja College, University of Mysore, Mysore – 570005, INDIA.

Yeats' engaging Introduction, but mainly to the spiritual insight in the poems. Published two years later in 1915, *The Gardener*, however, has not received the kind of attention it should have. What could be the reason for this? Is it that spirituality and religion are more plausible than love in Tagore, an Indian poet writing in the early 20th century which is notorious in the West for the Great War? Two elaborate and insightful articles on Tagore's romanticism, by V. A. Shahane and by Ellen Goldberg, cite many examples from *Gitanjali* but there is just one reference to a poem from *The Gardener* in Shahane and none in Goldberg. It is a bit surprising, nevertheless, one cannot complain for it is the prerogative of the authors to choose their examples. The spiritual songs of *Gitanjali* that aspire for the union with the divine and the romantic lyrics of *The Gardener* that stretch out to the beloved can be seen as tributaries of the same river. While it is right to argue that spirituality is the uniting force in a disintegrating world, especially the West at that time, and hence the need for the songs of *Gitanjali*, it is love, on the other hand, that is antithesis of war or strife, whether it is the East or the West, then or now, and there lies the importance of the lyrics of The *Gardener.* Reviewing Abu Sayeed Ayyub's work *Adhunikata o Rabindranath*, Sisirkumar Ghose draws our attention to and warns us against straitjacketing Tagore as a devotional poet: "The trouble, as Ayyub sees it, is that Tagore readers, even now, look upon *Gitanjali-Naivedya-Gitali*, etc., as the whole of the Tagore canon. No wonder Tagore appears as a soft poet of easy devotion. This popular image deserves destruction" (14).

The 85 short prose poems in the collection are not a lyric sequence as they do not attempt a linear development of a story or an idea, yet the have a pattern that holds together the general mood and atmosphere. Not all poems in the collection are on romantic love: poem 76, for instance, contrasts the world of children with the world of grownups and poem 79 captures the bond between man and beast. These are songs of life. The focus of this paper, however, is on lyrics that address romantic love and mystical experience.

In the first poem, the speaker is a servant who wishes to be a gardener. He is addressing the queen and pleading her to make him the gardener of her flower garden. The poem is in the form of a dialogue. It is a defining lyric of the romantic principles that the collection upholds:

> SERVANT. Have mercy upon your servant, my queen!
> QUEEN. The assembly is over and my servants are all gone. Why do you come at this late hour?
> SERVANT. When you have finished with others, that is my time. I come to ask what remains for your last servant to do.
> QUEEN. What can you expect when it is too late?

SERVANT. Make me the gardener of your flower garden.
QUEEN. What folly is this?
SERVANT. I will give up my other work.
I will throw my swords and lances down in the dust. Do not send me to distant courts; do not bid me undertake new conquests.
But make me the gardener of your flower garden.
QUEEN. What will your duties be?
SERVANT. The service of your idle days.
I will keep fresh the grassy path where you walk in the morning, where your feet will be greeted with praise at every step by the flowers eager for death.
I will swing you in a swing among the branches of the *saptaparna*, where the early evening moon will struggle to kiss your skirt through the leaves.
I will replenish with scented oil the lamp that burns by your bedside, and decorate your footstool with sandal and saffron paste in wondrous designs.
QUEEN. What will you have for your reward?
SERVANT. To be allowed to hold your little fists like tender lotus-buds and slip flower chains over your wrists; to tinge the soles of your feet with the red juice of *ashoka* petals and kiss away the speck of dust that may chance to linger there.
QUEEN. Your prayers are granted, my servant, you will be the gardener of my flower garden. (Poem 1)

Whether it is indeed the servant pleading the queen to make him the gardener or the lover in a make-believe dialogue coaxing his beloved to allow him to be close to her is debatable; however, what is unmistakable is the hint of intimacy in description and earnestness in prayer. To find a man at the bottom rung in the patriarchal India is refreshing and the poem is in the tradition of chivalrous love lyrics. The lines "to hold your little fists like tender/lotus-buds and slip flower chains over your wrists" are personal and playful, suggestive of lovers in privacy whereas "to tinge the soles of your feet with the red juice of *ashoka* petals" bring to mind a devotee decorating a goddess. There is a tradition of a devotee addressing the god/goddess as her/his lover in Indian poetry as we have examples of the *Vachanas* of Akka Mahadevi and the songs of Meera. On the other hand, the speaker elevating the beloved to the status of king/queen, god/goddess is not uncommon in love poetry of any era anywhere. In addition to Indian thought and philosophy, Tagore was profoundly influenced by poets such as William Wordsworth and Walt Whitman. Shahane draws our attention to this:

> He [Tagore] surely draws sustenance from the tradition of Bengali and Sanskrit poetry. Romanticism in his work, therefore, is related to his Vaishnava faith; his adherence to the doctrine of Bhakti; his intuitional awareness of the Divine, his mysticism, his idealism, and his intense love of liberty. His romanticism is, in part, the result of the impact upon his mind of English poetry and Western thought. (60)

Tagore crosses effortlessly from secular to spiritual and vice-versa. He draws plentifully from the Indian tradition and expresses in astonishing simplicity. It is never beyond the grasp of the Indian reader. It is never beyond the grasp of the western reader either. As Victoria Ocampo records in her tribute to Tagore, "God of Tagore, thought I, is there anyone who does not know, sometimes without being able to name it, the anguish of separation! And that longing for oneness whose name – in the East as in the West – is love!" (29). Tagore's influence on his western readers is massive. As Webb points out, "…to Western audiences in translation, he became something of a purveyor of Oriental mysticism. For Tagore, Hinduism had an unmatched sensitivity to a metaphysical oneness in the world, a quasi-mystical reconciliation with the cosmos rather than an egoistical urge to master it" (205). Tagore understood true freedom as love, even while the Indian freedom struggle was gaining momentum under the leadership of Gandhi. In one of his letters inspired by Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement (of which Tagore was not a votary), he wrote:

> The idea of freedom which prevails in modern civilisation is superficial and materialistic. Our revolution in India will be a true one when its forces will be directed against this crude idea of liberty. The sunlight of love has the freedom that ripens the wisdom of immortal life, but passions' fire can only forge fetters for ourselves. (Bhattacharya 60)

Tagore's ideal, at any cost, was union: and the means to it, he was never in doubt, was purity of love.

Interestingly, there are hardy any poems in *The Gardener* that address social issues in detail. It actually helps supply the romantic feeling the much desired intensity. Goldberg remarks:

> As a poet, Tagore does not see himself obligated by … the institutional doctrines or creeds that bind the social dimension of religious communities. Instead, as he relays, his inspiration derives directly from nature, a symbol which for Tagore not only exceeds himself, but with which he feels both ultimately and

> universally one. Accordingly, the source of all creativity, and the inspiration of his poetic abilities, emanate from the self or the God in man as revealed through nature. (175)

Hence, Tagore's universal man, as we commonly understand, is not merely a synthesis of the best of the East and the West, but a child of nature; we can say, in the Wordsworthian sense. The backdrop of Tagore's poems, however, is unambiguously Indian. While it makes the poems rooted and authentic, it is fundamental in locating them culturally. In the poem discussed above, it is the branches of the *saptaparna*, lotus-buds and *ashoka* petals; in other poems of *The Gardener* we see mango trees, koels, musk deer, Shiva's temple, brass vessels, ferry boats, mustard fields and rice fields among other distinctly Indian sights, scents and shades.

Tagore's poems are not known to be sensual. They are mostly sublime. This sublimity lends clarity to the lyrics of longing and separation. It takes them to the sphere of mysticism. Lyric after lyric, the reader takes the journey through hues and fragrances of the romantic world, the world of the speaker. During the journey the reader quite experiences what the speaker has, something that is subjective, often beyond the five senses, nearly mystical. On top of this, some of the poems in *The Gardener* are sensual. Expressions like "wine of pain" in poem 16 and "wine of wild poppy" in poem 25, death wish in poems 81 and 82 and lines like "Free me from the bonds of your sweetness, my love! No more of / this wine of kisses. / This mist of heavy incense stifles my heart" in poem 48 and "I hold her hands and press her to my breast. / I try to fill my arms with her loveliness, to plunder her sweet / smile with kisses, to drink her dark glances with my eyes" in poem 49 are reminiscent of the drowsy numbness of Keats' odes.

If the speaker of the first poem was a servant/gardener, in the second poem he is a poet telling the listener/reader the poet's role and his need for the world:

> "If some wanderer, leaving home, come here to watch the night and with bowed head listen to the murmur of the darkness, who is there to whisper the secrets of life into his ears if I, shutting my doors, should try to free myself from mortal bonds? "
> It is a trifle that my hair is turning grey.
> "I am ever as young or as old as the youngest and the oldest of this village." (Poem 2)

The poem is in a way metapoetic. Going by what the poet-speaker of this particular poem tells us and what Tagore told us in his oeuvre (and also Tagore's flowing grey hair and beard by 1915, the year these poems were published), it is

not a mistake to confuse one poet with the other. Then the speaker in other poems appears in varied guises: fisherman, boatman, traveler, wanderer, guest, host, young girl, flower girl, bride. But whoever it is, it is the lover. Further, the many guises of the lover only indicate the secular spread of love across professions and genders, and its cultural milieu.

There is one role, however, the poet (we can read Tagore) is averse to assume, and that is the role of an ascetic:

> No, my friends, I shall never be an ascetic, whatever you may say. I shall never be an ascetic if she does not take the vow with me. It is my firm resolve that if I cannot find a shady shelter and a companion for my penance, I shall never turn ascetic. (Poem 43)

The poet's rejection to don the role of an ascetic is his assertion to remain in the secular world; "Tagore rejects the ascetic ideal as the static dogma of institutional religion, and proclaims instead, the poet's religion. That is to say, a personal faith in the divinity of man realized through creativity and love" (Goldberg 192). Tagore sang the songs of the shepherds and he did not care much for the incantations of the ascetics: the former was rich with love and the latter poor without it.

Tagore the poet has been discussed variously: as a lyricist, spiritualist, romanticist, modernist, even post-modernist. In an essay titled "Rabindranath Tagore and the Aesthetics of Postmodernism," Kenneth R. Stunkel makes an interesting point:

> For Tagore, aesthetic experience requires that objects experienced have a measure of autonomy, a condition for relating to them aesthetically in art and literature. A poem that is solely grist for the critic's mill ceases to be a poem. It can be a poem only if rooted in something other than itself, so that rhythm and metaphor arouse tangible feeling and recognition in another mind. (251)

While the locale of his poems is Indian, the emotion is universal, and this sets the poems as autonomous. The poems are postmodernist in one important sense: they are not grand narratives. Then again, they are uncomplicated unlike the layered postmodernist narratives. Their strength is their depth.

The simplicity of expression is clearly the beauty of the poems, especially in *The Gardener*. Tagore's rhythms are easy and metaphors are homely. Let us look at this seemingly commonplace poem:

The yellow bird sings in their tree and makes my heart dance with gladness.
We both live in the same village, and that is our one piece of joy.
Her pair of pet lambs come to graze in the shade of our garden trees.
If they stray into our barley field, I take them up in my arms.
The name of our village is Khanjan, and Anjan they call our river.
My name is known to all the village, and her name is Ranjan.
Only one field lies between us.
Bees that have hived in our grove go to seek honey in theirs.
Flowers launched from their landing-stairs come floating by the stream where we bathe.
Baskets of dried 'kusm' flowers come from their fields to our market.
The name of our village is Khanjan, and Anjan they call our river.
My name is known to all the village, and her name is Ranjan.
The lane that winds to their house is fragrant in the spring with mango flowers.
When their linseed is ripe for harvest the hemp is in bloom in our field.
The stars that smile on their cottage send us the same twinkling look.
The rain that floods their tank makes glad our 'kadam' forest.
The name of our village is Khanjan, and Anjan they call our river.
My name is known to all the village, and her name is Ranjan. (Poem 17)

The lyric is soft and light, the setting is idyllic, and there is no trace of discord in this love song of three stanzas that speaks of borderless love. It is also a folk song in that it appeals to the shared imagination. It opens before us a way of life. The three stanzas with six lines each have the common last two lines where the words Khanjan, Anjan and Ranjan form a bubbly rhythm. The rhyming words form the songlike refrain. One can sense in his tone, when he repeats the names of his beloved, their village and their river, that the lover is happy, proud and thrilled. Remarkably, he does not tell us his name; just says, "My name is known to all the village." He is known to everyone but anonymous to us. A trace of mystery that is almost mystical in the romantic backdrop. The lover boy is indeed every lover. The backdrop, with 'kusm' flowers and 'kadam' forest transports the setting to another era. It is simple yet exotic; now tangible, now magical.

As we know him through his writing and life, Rabindranath Tagore, above all, was a poet and a teacher. The last poem, a reminder to the reader to stay close to his/her heart and Nature, carries the poet's philosophy and message:

> Who are you, reader, reading my poems an hundred years hence?
> I cannot send you one single flower from this wealth of the
> spring, one single streak of gold from yonder clouds.
> Open your doors and look abroad.
> From your blossoming garden gather fragrant memories of the
> vanished flowers of an hundred years before.
> In the joy of your heart may you feel the living joy that sang one spring morning, sending its glad voice across an hundred years. (Poem 85)

It is indeed hundred years since the poems are published. And they are spreading their fragrance. The anti-materialistic and nonviolent lyrics of *The Gardener* are romantic and sublime. In this, they are mystical.

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American Transcendentalism: Review and Critique of Emerson and Thoreau

Dr. Humera Sultana*

Abstract

This paper looks into the rise of social and intellectual movement that came in the 1830s and remained vibrant till the end of the 19th century, which later came to be known as 'transcendentalism'. In America, although the Transcendentalist never claimed high number of people to become a religious movement, they did leave a legacy behind with strong thinkers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and David Thoreau. They were known for emphasizing on 'Over-soul' philosophy, which is at the center of transcendentalism, where they try to build connection between nature and physical existence. Experiencing nature was considered by Transcendentalists, especially Thoreau and Emerson as extremely important, since they considered nature as the face and essence of God. Although many critiqued the philosophy as being too idealistic, their philosophy did meet the social, intellectual, and political needs of the time and of the contemporary world, and has helped the idealistic thoughts in creating new ideas and thoughts, literature, religion, culture, and philosophy.

Key words: *transcendentalism, Thoreau, Emerson,* philosophy,

1. Background of Research

Interchangeable terms like 'Transcendentalism' or 'American Transcendentalism' or 'New England Transcendentalism', is a designation given to the rise of social and intellectual movement that came up in the 1830s and remained vibrant till the end of the 19th century (Serafin and Bendixen; Wilson). The philosophy of transcendentalism flourished at the time when literary and aesthetic romanticism in Europe and America was at its peak in the 19th century. There were many reasons why the philosophy of transcendentalism came up. For a start, the movement found a fertile soil to grow in the early 19th century when people were getting dissatisfied with established religion and their philosophy. This ideology initiated as a movement against traditional set up of Christianity in England, and eventually came out of the Unitarian Church in New England in the 1830s (Argento and Endris; Wilson). The transcendental

* Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

philosophy which was also based on humanistic philosophy, putting individual rights and respect for human capabilities at the center for universe was seen as a movement against the dehumanization created by industrialization. Incidentally, the philosophy grew to maturity when the laborers were undergoing various hardships caused by industrialization (Wilson). Most importantly, there was a growth of availability of foreign literature and philosophy in the 19th century, conditioning the transcendental philosophy to grow at a rapid rate (Wilson).

Transcendentalism is a complex religious and philosophical idea that is not simple to define and explain. The tenets of transcendentalism are filled with mysticism that defies concise explanation. In addition to this, different Transcendentalists have their own interpretation, and focus on what the philosophy stands for, making it more difficult to come up with generalized definition and explanation of transcendentalism. The movement as a whole was amorphous in its aims and methods, and many critiques point out to it as being a misnomer than a term (to be called transcendentalism) that can be used with accuracy to describe a group of people or movement with shared interests, ideas and philosophy (Serafin and Bendixen). However, the popularization of the concept of transcendentalism and its movement has been particularly traced to Ralph Waldo Emerson (May 25, 1803 – April 27, 1882) and his fellow intellectual and moral circle David Thoreau (July 12, 1817 – May 6, 1862). Keeping their thoughts into perspectives, Charles Mayo Ellis defined transcendentalism as a philosophy "*which maintains that man has ideas, that come not through the five senses or the powers of reasoning; but are either the result of direct revelation from God, his immediate inspiration, or his immanent presence in the spiritual world…*" (Ellis, pp. 10, 11). In short, Transcendentalists believed in monistic universe or the existence of one God which is immanent in nature. The creation is believed to be the emanation of the creator. Experiencing nature was considered by Transcendentalists, especially Thoreau and Emerson as extremely important, since they considered nature as the face and essence of God. Therefore, Transcendentalist needs to be physically closer to nature by contemplating and understand it, in order to bring themselves closer to the creator.

2. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aims and objectives of this paper are:

i. To study and explore the concept of 'American Transcendentalism' with special reference to Thoreau and Emerson's views on transcendentalism.

ii. To look into ideals behind transcendentalism philosophy like emphasizing on 'Over-soul' philosophy, which is at the center of transcendentalism, where they try to build connection between the nature and the physical existence.

iii. To look into how the Transcendentalists manage to establish their idealistic thoughts in creating new ideas and thoughts, literature, religion, culture, and philosophy.

3. Literature review

3.1. Rise of Transcendentalism in America

In America, the transcendental philosophy found popularity in the hands of Emerson, and Thoreau. Apart from them, there were other important transcendentalists like Margaret Fuller, Amos Bronson Alcott, Frederic Henry Hedge, and Theodore Parker (Peck; Goodman and Lewis). These transcendentalists were critiques of their time, especially with regard to society's nature of unthinking conformity. During its nascent stage in the United States, transcendentalism flourished in intellectual centers like Boston, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Concord. Concord was especially thriving in transcendentalism philosophy since Emerson himself moved to live there in 1834, and Thoreau was born and lived in Concord his entire life (Wilson). In America, although the Transcendentalist never claimed strong numbers of people to become a religious movement, they did leave valuable legacy behind. The earlier vibrant thinkers disintegrated after the civil war (1861-1865), and by the close the 19th century thinkers such as Emerson passed away (1882). What remained of the thinkers were some writers and thinkers who wrestled with the thoughts and philosophy passed down to them by the Transcendentalist forebears.

The American transcendentalism promotes free thinking religion, and also romanticism and individualism in intellectual thoughts. However, in essence, the American transcendentalist were concerned with the 'organic metaphor' that finds relationship among reality, human existence, and nature (Argento and Endris). Among the Transcendentalists, Emerson and Thoreau in particular were known for strongly seeking relationship with nature. An understanding of the relationship between Thoreau and the American Transcendentalist movement can be understood easily from his thoughts and ideas that emanates when he was in Walden (Thoreau, Broderick, and Sattelmeyer; Peck). Together, Thoreau and Emerson strongly advocated for "*the divinity of nature, the glory of human aspiration and freedom, the power of*

intuition as opposed to reason, [and] the creative energy of the poetic imagination" (Argento and Endris, p. 45).

3.2. Emerson's Philosophy of Transcendentalism

In contemporary world, transcendentalism is remembered more for initiating "new consciousness" that Emerson fondly called (Emerson, "The Transcendentalist: A Lecture Read at the Masonic Temple, Boston"). This phrase captured the essence of the movement, and Ralph Waldo Emerson (May 25, 1803 – April 27) has been regarded as the leader and more or the founder of the transcendental movement and thoughts. Emerson was a high-prolific writer, thinker, lecturer, and editor of the transcendental periodical *The Dial*, which was one of the most prominent periodical among Transcendentalists (Moliken). Emerson's grandfather and father were both Unitarian ministers, and the influence in thoughts and the call to preach were not far away from him. Despite such influences, the outcome was that he broke off from the traditional Unitarian teachings. He went to the extent of advocating that the 'Divinity of Jesus Christ' has been grossly misinterpreted and that the Church has done harm in worshipping 'Jesus' as God. Instead, Emerson advocated that people should perceive truth and follow it like Jesus did (Moliken). Emerson credits his thinking to the German idealist, Immanuel Kant whose thoughts are known as the transcendental idealism. He was also seen as being influenced by the philosophical writings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle (Serafin and Bendixen).

The 'Over-soul' philosophy, which Thoreau centered his philosophy was also supported by Emerson. In fact, Emerson himself wrote in his *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*, "*that Unity, that over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other...We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One*" (Emerson, *Self-Reliance and Other Essays,* p. 52). He looks for thoughts which do not fall in the stream of science and philosophy, but something which is much higher in stage (Harvey), and to this Emerson views nature as the physical means to get the spiritual end, and to reach the higher end. In the end, through his insight, transcendentalism has helped in creating new ideas and thoughts, literature, religion, culture, and finally philosophy.

3.3. Thoreau's Philosophy of Transcendentalism

David Thoreau (July 12, 1817 – May 6, 1862) was born in Concord, Massachusetts, and eventually graduated from Harvard in 1887, the same year that he started writing his lifelong journal. He was influenced in his thoughts by

Emerson and was a key member of Transcendentalist Movement in America, which included other prominent members like Margaret Fuller and Bronson Alcott (Peck). He lived in Concord his entire life. He remarkably tested the Transcendentalists' faith in nature from 1845 to 1847, when he lived in the homemade hut at Walden Pond (Emerson, *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*; Peck). The fact that he lived at Walden Pond in 1845 was to have direct experience with nature, and to test his transcendental ideas when it comes to direct contact with physical world.

Following his experiment, he published two books during his lifetime called *Walden* (1854) and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) (Refer, Thoreau, *Walden, Volume 1*; Thoreau, *Walden, Volume 2*; Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*). The rest of his important works were posthumously published, which *include The Maine Woods, Cape Cod*, *and Excursions* (Peck). During his stay in Walden, he engaged himself in daily walks and meditating as part of his greater strategy in understanding nature, while collecting natural history data and results they emanate at the same time. He finds answers in bringing together the body and mind and the health and spirit through daily interaction with nature, completely free from worldly engagements (Robinson). His experience in Walden Pond made him to build connection with nature, and he expresses his ideas of 'oneness' between the physical existence and thoughts with that of nature. This underlying concept of oneness is responsible for Thoreau's 'Over-soul' philosophy, which is at the center of transcendentalism (Wilson; Emerson, *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*).

3.4. Critical analysis of the two philosophies

As noted in the previous section, Transcendentalism has been known for its complexity, and for being amorphous in its aims and methods. Many critiques points out to it as being a misnomer than a term (to be called transcendentalism) that can be used with accuracy to describe a group of people or movement with shared interests, ideas and philosophy. Henry David Thoreau himself admitted in his journal entry of 5th March, 1853 that when he was asked as to which branch of his science his thoughts belong to, he was not quite sure that it even comes under any branch. In Thoreau's own words, "*though I could state to a select few that department of human inquiry which engages me-& should be rejoiced at an opportunity so to do-I felt that it would be to make myself the laughing stock of the scientific community-to describe or attempt to describe to them that branch of science which specially interests me-in as much as they do not believe in a science which deals with the higher law*" (Thoreau, Broderick, and Sattelmeyer, p. 469). While in the case of Emerson, he himself never applied the title "transcendentalism" to his thoughts, but rather viewed it as "idealism as it

appears in 1842" in his lecture, while addressing 'the Transcendentalist' (Serafin and Bendixen, p. 1154).

Scholars such as Andrews Norton, Transcendentalists in many ways were trying to establish religion based on ancient ideas and philosophy. Norton was known for being a strong reactionary critic to this transcendental philosophy and to Emerson in particular. In his *Discourse on the Latest Form of Infidelity*, Norton referred to transcendentalism as infidelity (Norton). Habich in his "Emerson's Reluctant Foe: Andrews Norton and the Transcendental Controversy" also discussed the extent to which Norton critiqued Emerson's philosophy on transcendentalism and how the transcendentalist tried to establish their own religion with infidelity (Habich). In the end, it can also be noted that transcendentalism being highly idealistic also does not trust in experiment and even rejects the aid of observation. In fact, Emerson himself regards the Baconian method of discovery as obsolete, since he considers induction as slow and tedious as well as giving uncertain result (Wilson). Such rejection of positive scientific experiment however garners questionable critique, although the thoughts did meet the social, intellectual, and political needs.

4. Conclusions

Amidst popularity and critique, transcendentalism no doubt has been able to establish their idealistic thoughts and their "new consciousness" that Emerson fondly propagated. Through Emerson, and through his devoted disciple like Thoreau, the new consciousness has captured the essence of the movement, and today it is has been widely discussed and accepted as a genre of thought among intellectuals. In regard to Emerson and Thoreau's 'Over-soul' philosophy, which is at the center of transcendentalism, they try to build connection between the nature and the physical existence. But if one is to take Emerson and Thoreau individually, it can be stated that the former can be said to view nature as the physical means to get the spiritual end, while for the latter, the differences that exist between nature (or spiritual) and the physical, as well as body and mind can be bridged when people finds the connection. Their philosophy did meet the social, intellectual, and political needs of the time and of the contemporary world, and has helped the idealistic thoughts in creating new ideas and thoughts, literature, religion, culture, and finally philosophy.

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Magical Realism, the Catharsis for Latin Postcoloniality: Gabriel Garcia Marquez's Strange Pilgrims as Prototype

Dr. Rohit Phutela*

Abstract:

In the contemporary literary tradition the literary narratives surpass from mere social reality to the complex webbing of the social, political, historical and most significantly psychological realities. This emerging need also underlines the limitations of the traditional narrative systems that are generally aimed to follow the realistic time sequence and the linear socio-historical events. Therefore the creative minds starts bending the reality with the magical fantasy that eventually allow them to make their narrative moves like pendulum from the present to the remote past. In the present paper an attempt is made to explore how Marquez use this technique and uncover the colonial past and postcolonial present.

Key Words: *Postcolonialism, Magical Realism, Imperialism, etc.*

The negotiation between the two literary practices of Magical Realism and Postcolonialism is certainly an exercise of revisiting the history with all its tyrannical weight and juxtaposing it with the contemporary reality which is effected by the same history. Magical Realism has been closely linked with postcolonialism since its most competent practitioners hail from the nations with Imperialism background and attempt the narratives which reflect the aftermath of such an encounter [and shake-up] with the historical patterns of their respective states and nationalism. In other words, both the approaches initiate and debate the discourse of duality of worlds. The "reason" and "logic" of European intellectual culture's collision with the "mythic" and "mysterious" belief patterns of the third-world sums up this discourse. Both the writings encompass a wide range of discursive practices which resist colonialism and colonial ideologies critiquing the notions of identity, history and perspectives. But perhaps the most conspicuous one only in the matter of Magical Realism and Postcolonialism is the perspective or world view, the way the reality is perceived by the colonizers and the colonized. And Magic Realism becomes the catharsis for the oppressed and the marginalized to present their dual and hybrid space in which the spatial effects of canonical realism and axiomatic fantasy are interwoven. As Robert Kroetsch and Linda Kenyon observe, magical

* Assistant Professor, DAV college, Chandigarh

realism as a literary practice seems to be closely linked with a perception of "living on the margins" (Kroetsch and Kenyon 15), encoding within it, perhaps a concept of resistance to the massive imperial centre and its totalizing systems which have been constructed through the readings of text almost exclusively of European or United States derivation. The present paper renders the implementation of magical realism as literary technique in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's short story collection *Strange Pilgrims (1992)* as a means to counter the colonial ghosts over the South American fiction and render a reality from the Latin American viewpoint which is a mélange of Colonial logic and Postcolonial fantasy.

Nobel Laureate in Literature, Gabriel Garcia Marquez has been inextricably linked to the fictional style of Magical Realism along with other Latin American writers. One of the greatest writers of the twentieth century, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's fiction with its unique stylistic dispensation have baffled and marveled the critics and readers alike. He is one of the greatest exponents of the fantastic style Magical Realism; in fact the one writer who made it a pliable tool of representing reality in all its dimensions – social, cultural, political – through a make-believe fantasy world which his predecessors couldn't make it credible and endearing to rational readership. Literary critic Michael Bell proposes an alternative understanding for García Márquez's style when he says "what is really at stake is a psychological suppleness which is able to inhabit unsentimentally the daytime world while remaining open to the promptings of those domains which modern culture has, by its own inner logic, necessarily marginalised or repressed." (Bell 49), as the category magic realism is criticized for being dichotimizing and exoticizing.

Magical Realism is closely enmeshed with grotesque, another literary concept which legitimizes the employment of such tools of terror and morbidity to achieve high dramatic effect and lead to a sane conclusion about the reality. Traditionally, grotesque has been likened to the deformed, the perverted, the monstrous and the repelling representation of the reality to achieve an effect of defamiliarization and strange. The strange and the quaint which grotesque represents, juxtapose the real and the fantastic with the end result being a feeling of the macabre and the sinister. But the interplay and the highlighting of such morose elements in the narrative finally acknowledge the higher virtues of humanity and spiritedness of life.

Magical Realism, as allied to grotesque above, aims to achieve the same effects of realism and humane truths through its contradictory taxonomy. The word "realism" attached to "magical" in an oxymoronic fashion gives the hint of many conflicting and disproportionate elements enshrined in it and which,

perhaps, is the reality of the modern day world also. The juxtaposition and the pairings of the polarities is what defines the current scenario of human existence with conflicting questions of identity and dislocation plaguing the civilization and such a clash finds its full expression in Magical Realism where the characters jostle in the world of reality and fantasy to trying to reach at an actuality which remains elusive. Magical Realism is an important landmark in the post-war fiction and postmodernism discourse in which the lines between the reality and fantasy often get blurred and the reality is reached at only through simulations and an abstract series or network of signs which are further manifestations of other signs. According to M. H. Abrams:

> The term Magical Realism, originally applied in the 1920s to a school of painters, is used to describe the prose fiction of Jorge Borges in Argentina, as well as the work of writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez in Colombia, Gunter Grass in Germany and John Fowles in England. These writers interweave, in an ever-shifting pattern, a sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements, as well as materials derived from myths and fairy tales. (Abrams 132)

Robert Scholes adds another dimension to the already fascinating sphere of Magical Realism by attaching the term metafiction to it. The literary world has popularized:

> metafiction as an overall term for the large and growing class of novels which depart drastically from the traditional categories either of realism or romance, and also the term fabulation for the current mode of free-wheeling invention. These novels violate, in various ways, standard novelistic expectations by drastic – and sometimes highly effective – experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of everyday, the fantastic, the mythical and the nightmarish, in renderings that blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic. (Scholes)

The metafiction discourse invariably leads to conclude Magical Realism's postmodernistic interpretation which identifies a body of work characterized by an eclectic approach, [by a liking for] aleatory writing, [and for] parody and pastiche. Such an experimental and innovative framework of the postmodern

discourse validates the fragmented nature of human existence as exists in the contemporary world where the illusory reality is aimed at to escape the fear and fret of the 'real' reality (the entire discourse of signs). It veers the readers to the same spiritual bankruptcy peppered with supernatural and the make-believe grotesque.

Magical Realist works are often set in historically and culturally identifiable locations, but their oral narrative style brings into question "what is 'real' and how we can tell?" (Zamora 56). Magical Realists eschew from the conventional psychological and scientific explanation of things since they intend the narratives to be explained through alternate belief systems. The character or an object in the story transforms into a new being, a "metamorphosis", and the tone of the narrator or other characters stay nonchalant. It is pretty attached to nature; many characters are archetypes that show clash between nature and modernity goading the narrative to raise postmodern questions of the blind quest for modernity in their countries. Hybridity, being postcolonialism's primary feature, is illustrated in the inharmonious arenas of urban and rural, Western and indigenous. Also the plots revolve around borders, mixing and metamorphoses revealing a deeper discursive reality than the commonplace realist techniques. An ironical distance is maintained by the author from the magical to prevent reality being compromised and also magic is respected to prevent its descent to mere folk beliefs or complete fantasy. Authorial reticence, which is lack of clear opinions about the accuracy of events and the credibility of the world view expressed by the characters in the text, is adopted. Magical Realism contains an "...implicit criticism of society, particularly the elite." Especially with regard to Latin America, the style breaks from the inarguable discourse of "...privileged centers of literature." (Zamora 69). This is a mode primarily about and for "ex-centrics": the geographically, socially and economically marginalized. Therefore, Magical Realism's 'alternative world' works to correct the reality of established viewpoints (like realism, naturalism, modernism). Supernatural is not depicted as dubious while integrating it with the norms of perception of the narrator and characters in the fictional world. The polarity between the rational and the irrational is made to be realized by reader.

In short, in magical realism a battle is presented in the language of narration by the foregrounding of two opposing discursive systems (magical of the colonized and realism of the colonized), with neither managing to subordinate or contain the other. This sustained opposition forestalls the possibility of interpretive closure through any act of naturalizing the text to an established system of representation. Also a common assumption is that the act of colonization, engenders a kind of double vision of "metaphysical clash" (Tiffin,

1983: 32) within the colonial culture, a binary opposition within language which has its roots in the process of either transporting a language to a new land or imposing a foreign language on an indigenous population. The local reality can be expressed only through a prolonged procedure of metamorphosis through time as Coral Ann Howells says: "Our way of seeing is structured by the forms in which or language enables us to see." (Howells 61) In a postcolonial context, then, the magic realist narrative "recapitulates a dialectical struggle within the culture's language, a dialectic between codes of recognition inherent within the inherited language and those imagined codes – perhaps the utopian or future oriented – that characterize a culture's original relations with the world."(Slemon 12)

The protagonists of the twelve stories that compose *Strange Pilgrims* are all Latin Americans living abroad, falling prey to the same demons and morbidities which plagued them at home. Contrary to the turbulent history, gigantic geography and untamed nature of South America which fosters magical realism and larger than life characters in authors, Europe has bean a tamer place, having reduced uncertainty over centuries – more set in its ways, with fewer surprises, established sedate. Garcia perhaps sees it in a similar way and it unnerves his Latin American protagonists. Thus, it is the re-encounter with the colonial superstructure which spells doom.

Margarito Duarte, protagonist of "The Saint," is a native of the Colombian Andes who loses his seven-year-old daughter to a fever. Miraculously, the body does not decompose, and when the girl is disinterred, she is completely weightless and the coffin still smells of the roses with which she was buried. Convinced that his daughter is a saint, Margarito hauls the coffin to Rome, where he spends the rest of his life trying to convince the censorious Vatican bureaucracy to consider canonizing the girl. In the end, the narrator concludes that the saint is really Margarito, whose perseverance, patience, and undying hope make him a model of Christian virtue.

> It was he, old and tired. Four popes had died, eternal Roma was showing the first signs of decrepitude, and still he waited. "I've waited so long it can't be much longer now," he told me…" Then I had no doubt, if I ever had ant at all, that the Saint was Margrito. Without realizing it, by means of his daughter's incorruptible body and while he was still alive, he had spent twenty-two years fighting for the legitimate cause of his own canonization. (53)

Here the magical realist elements are perceptible in the mysterious quality of the girl's corpse (which doesn't decay) and the inhuman and callous attitude of

the Church. Through a clever mélange of magic and bitter realism Marquez draws a sharp contrast between the devout, steadfast Colombian peasant, whose profound faith enables him to accept miracles unquestioningly, and the Imperial and scornful bureaucrats, who are reluctant to give him an audience. It is the "metamorphoses", as discussed above, of Margrito from a simple peasant to a "saint" which is a significant magical realism constituent in the story making it all the more impressionable and impacting. The unbending zeal of Margrito for justice before the church's colonial hegemony is tampered with the Latin American myths and superstitions which is to resist the repression.

Since the word magic appears predominantly in Garcia's aesthetics, there is an abundance of psychics, oracles, clairvoyants, and mystics. In "I Sell My Dreams," Frau Frieda is a Colombian woman raised in Austria, whose ability to foresee the future through dreams is her most marketable skill. But the story can't be summed up with such simplification as it has its share of grotesque and startling moments in the fashion of magical realism. The magical realism comes with the absolute naturalness with which Frieda and everyone else accepts her gift and in Frieda's combination of hard-nosed financial acumen and extrasensory powers. In her childhood she dreamed about her brother carried-off by flood and desired his mother to forbid him from eating sweets instead of flinching from swimming! The grotesque vision got true as his brother died eating a caramel. When she suggests the author to not to return to Vienna for five years, he conforms to it immediately:

> Her conviction was so real that I boarded the last train to Rome that same night. As for me, I was so influenced by what she said that from then on I considered myself a survivor of same catastrophe I never experienced. I still have not returned to Vienna.(66)

Similarly, she startles the author about Pablo Neruda's dream about her which actually she had dreamt already. The author, adopting the authorial reticence required in magical realism, doesn't explain the supernatural experience as that would eradicate its position of equality regarding a person's conventional view of reality. The sober description of her macabre death is yet another grotesque trait of magical realism whereby death and its attendant morbidity is naturalized without any trace of terror or lamentation.

In "Tramontana," Garcia Marquez juxtaposes the colonial reason against the local dialogics of customs and tradition through tramontana, "a harsh, tenacious wind" that blows in the vicinity of Barcelona and "carries in it the seeds of madness." (135) The rowdy, vulgar, icily rational Swedish tourists mock the locals' terror of the wind, while the young Caribbean who once made his

living singing Antillean songs in a fashionable bar is paralyzed with fear. Having survived the tramontana once before, the young man is convinced that the next time he is caught in it, he will die. As a Caribbean who has witnessed raging hurricanes, he knows the power of nature and other forces beyond human control, but the cerebral Swedes are determined to cure "him by force of his African superstitions" (139) by taking him back to Cadaques, where the windstorm is about to hit. As often occurs in Garcia Marquez's fiction, belief is more potent than reason. The tramontana achieves its deadly end, although in an unexpected way: "The boy terrified by his imminent return to Cadaques, took advantage of moment's carelessness on the pat of the demented Swedes and in an effort to escape an ineluctable death threw himself from the speeding van into the abyss."(140) The mocking Swedes are the symbols of the colonial authority which disparages every local belief and concept to posit its own logical superiority and reason over the lesser other.

The story "The Ghosts of August" is also filled with trepidation and the pervading influence of the occult whereby a family, husband, wife and kids, on visit to Renaissance artist Ludovcio's home in Tuscan undergoes an unexplainable incident. According to local legend, Ludovico, a great patron of the arts and a former resident of the castle, stabbed his lover to death in one of the bedrooms, then turned his dogs on himself and was torn to bits. The adventurous and reasonable "tourists" decide to spend night there only to wake up not in their own room but in Ludovcio's room. Again, derision is visible in the attitude of the outsiders for the local beliefs. Their dumbfounded state in the morning is a ploy by the author, a form of reply situating his truth over the sceptic colonizers. The beliefs and the epistemologies of the colonized have their own explanations which must not be diluted by the outsiders. "Things have a life of their own," explains Melquiades in Marquez's *One hundred Years of Solitude*, "It's simply a question of waking up their souls." (Marquez 56)

"I Only Came to Use the Phone" is, perhaps, the most hair-raising story in the collection wrapped in grotesque and fright. Maria's car breaks down in the middle of nowhere. She enters into a mental hospital to use the phone but before she knows what's happening, she has been admitted as a patient. Her husband Saturno, referring to their trouble-ridden history, believes she has run off with another man. When she finally finds an opportunity to call him, he curses her and hangs up. She is forced to sleep with a guard to pass along the full message to her husband. When he arrives, he takes the doctor's account to heart and leaves Maria at the hospital, where she eventually adopts the role of insanity imposed upon her by the medical staff. Maria had deserted three different men in the past five years including Saturno hinting at her licentious and instable nature. Her unexplainable and grotesque consequence is the author's ploy to

contrast and lend celebration to the higher virtues of true love, fidelity and spirit. Thomas Mann writes: "Certain attainments of the soul and the intellect are impossible without disease, without insanity, without spiritual crime and the great invalids are crucified victims, sacrificed to humanity and its advancements, to the broadening of its feelings and knowledge in short, to its more sublime and health" (Mann qtd. Hays 127). He further writes about the mode of such an author practicing grotesque in order to bring into light some higher reality:

> An artist who rejected all responsibility vis-à-vis life, and who went so far in his rejection of impressions as practically to cast-off every obligation towards the forms of life as it is, and only allowed the imperious emanations of some absolute art demon: such an artist would be the greatest of all radical fools. (131)

Marquez, through his magical realism, doesn't just sensationalize the narrative in a gothic mode but aims to underscore the hidden realities and the labyrinthine psychological alleys of the human mind which houses numerous conflicts and contradictions. It enshrines a realism which generally gets subdued in the simulations of day to day existence giving a farcical voice to the meta-narratives, which purport to explain and reassure but are mere illusions.

In another grotesque tale "Light is Like Water", two young boys ask for a boat in return for their good grades. When their parents finally buy them the toy sail boat, they break the light bulbs in their home and the light comes flowing out like water. They use the light to sail around their home every Wednesday, and invite their friends to go sailing with them as well. The boys and their friends end up drowning in the light. Here the author's fecundity in merging children's acts with grotesque mired in magic and mystery is the highlight. The author doesn't give any reason about the light acquiring the properties of water to drown living creatures but generates mystery and panic through his make-believe strategy of magical realism which makes it "impossible to determine where reality ends and the extraordinary begins." (Sellman and Deefholts, Web) The reader can't rely on modern science or psychology to explain such an event where light of a bulb acquires lethal dimensions. It is again a paradigm of metamorphosis where an object undergoes complete transformation but the narrator or the characters in the story take it to be very ordinary.

Similarly in the story "Maria dos Prazers", an old woman, who used to be a whore, teaches her dog to cry and laugh, which it does too with perfection. She is actually preparing for her death but realizes in the end that it was her moment to live. A dog crying like a human being is also a magical realist maneuver whereby inanimate objects and non-human creatures are accorded literal

personifications and mundane treatment to naturalize the experiences. The old lady's dog and its quaint traits is the sole succor of her solitary life and it is solitude which makes her visualize her dog as her only companion in the world. Rather than just making the dog a lifeless substitute of her illusory world, the author gives it living dimensions within the limits of fantasy and magic which appears both real and credible without any exorbitance.

Read as postcolonial discourse, then, magic realism can be seen to provide a positive and liberating response to the codes of imperial history and its legacy of fragmentation and discontinuity. The depiction of the exotic and the fantastic in the most realistic manner is the trickery of the Latin-American author to establish the literary canon of the Americas which had been drowned in the materialism and reason of the Spanish colonization. Postcolonialism vouches for the liberation of this logic and eurocentric tradition of narcissism in the form of language and culture and magical realism seeks to unshackle the Latin discourse from the colonial bindings of scientific attitude and logic through the fictional and the occult mode of expressions. This process, it can be held, "can transmute the shreds and fragments of colonial violence and otherness into new codes of recognition in which the dispossessed, the silenced, and the marginalized of our own dominating systems can again find voice, and enter into the dialectic continuity of on-going community and place that is our real cultural heritage." (Slemon 65)

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The Repressed and the Silenced Self of Desdemona and Ophelia

Dr Neeti Mahajan*

Abstract

William Shakespeare's works can have multiple interpretations, while some of his plays seem to be presenting women in a very positive light and seem to be voicing the concerns of women, some others seem to be presenting women as vicious, conspiring and malicious beings. So while some critics call him a feminist, others tag him as a misogynist. While some of his women like Kate, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind, Portia, are very strong-willed and assertive, others like Desdemona, Ophelia, are submissive, repressed, deprived and silenced beings.

In Shakespeare's society which was built upon Renaissance beliefs, women were meant only for marriage. They were supposed to be shadows of their fathers and husbands. They were considered to be physiologically and psychologically inferior to men. The female roles in Elizabethan plays, too were played by men. They were considered incapable of undertaking any intellectual or creative work. The psyche of the woman was almost exclusively subsumed (artistically, socially, linguistically) into the man. In fact the male regard for the female was interminably connected with the female body leading to the assumption that the female body was part of the man's property.

The objectification of Desdemona (Othello) and Ophelia (Hamlet) lead to the formation of their repressed and silenced self. In Desdemona's case, it results in immense fear of her master and husband Othello, so much so that she is silent even when he casts false aspersions on her and kills her. In Ophelia's case, her repressions as a daughter, as a beloved, result in her madness. The denial of an independent thought and an independent conscience to her and the repression and stifling of her desires by the male world, leads to her disorientation. This paper will attempt to re-interpret Shakespeare's plays, Othello and Hamlet from a feminist perspective and probe the reasons for the formation of the repressed and silenced self of Desdemona and Ophelia.

William Shakespeare's works have great relevance even in the present times and Shakespeare is one writer whose works are still thoroughly read, probed, explored and have multiple interpretations. While some critics believe that he wrote with a great understanding for women and even voiced women's

* Designation - Associate Professor Affiliation - Banasthali University

concerns, others tag him as a misogynist who presented women as vicious, conspiring and malicious beings.

In Shakespeare's society which was built upon Renaissance beliefs, women were meant only for marriage. They were supposed to be shadows of their fathers and husbands. They were considered to be physiologically and psychologically inferior to men. The female roles in Elazabethan plays too were played by men. Women were considered incapable of undertaking any intellectual or creative work. The psyche of the woman was almost exclusively subsumed (artistically, socially, linguistically) into the man. In fact the male regard for the female was interminably connected with the female body leading to the assumption that the female body was part of the man's property. Women were expected to be silent, chaste and obedient to their husbands, fathers, brothers and in Shakespearean society 'looseness' of tongue came to be symbolized as looseness of body and spirit' (Russ, 2001:258). Desdemona in *Othello* and Ophelia in *Hamlet* fall into the category of silent, chaste and pure women who are suppressed by their masters and are victimized by them leading to their death.

Ophelia had grown up bearing the brunt of repression at the hands of her father and brother and then in her youth too when Hamlet confesses his love for her, she is warned against believing in Hamlet's words. Her brother Laertes and father Polonius forbid her from exchanging any vows of love with Hamlet because they think that he is insincere. She believes in his earnestness but is not allowed to depend on her judgement. In compliance with their wishes, Ophelia rejects Hamlet's advances towards her and even refuses to meet him. As a result Hamlet feigns madness and speaks harshly with her and denounces her. He even murders Ophelia's father. Ophelia is unable to bear the grief of her father's death and Hamlet's madness and rejection of her. She even blames herself for the two incidents and as a result becomes mentally unhinged herself. She slowly retreats to her death – a completely heart broken soul.

Ophelia remains a minor character in the play and she touches us most in her madness or death. She appears in only five of the play's twenty scenes. She suffers marginalization and repression right from her childhood. Polonius sends his son to the University to study and sow his wild oats and to be true to himself and to others. But his daughter is not allowed to rely on her own judgement. She must depend on her father's and brother's intelligence. She is sure of Hamlet's sincerity towards her but when she tries to assure her father of his genuine love for her, he pooh poohs her. 'Affection, pooh! you speak like a green girl unsifted in such perilous circumstance.' (Act I Scene III, 101-102)

Laertes expects Ophelia to heed his counsel that 'best safety lies in fear' Her whole socialization is geared to relying on other people's judgement and to placing chastity and reputation for chastity, above the virtue of truthfulness. She cannot develop an independent sense of self hood or an independent conscience of her own. Her self is repressed by the patriarchal world.

Women were silenced and repressed in Shakespeare's time and this tradition still continues. As Shoshana Felman theorizes: "Women are associated both with madness and with silence, whereas men are identified with prerogatives of discourse and of reason. In fact men appear not only as the possessors but also as the dispensers, of reason, which they can at will mete out to – or take away from – others" (226).

Ophelia touches us most in her madness and death. This madness is also a means of expression of her selfhood. She could now fearlessly express her selfhood and her innate desires which would be dismissed as a mad woman's blabber. When normal, she endures repression. No one really cares for what she says or even thinks that she was worth listening to. Polonius and Laertes consider her gullible and naive and try to guide her at every step. They consider it their duty to guard her chastity lest she should be victimized by Hamlet.

Therefore even when she assures them of Hamlet's earnestness and sincerity of love, they disbelieve her and compel her to abide by their wishes. Jean Baker Miller in *Toward a New Psychology of Women,* recognizes the fact that the development of the women's sense of self is such that they approach relational conflicts and crisis in a very different way. According to her, 'Women stay with, build on, and develop, in a context of attachment and affiliation with others' and therefore for many women, 'the threat of disruption of an affiliation is perceived not just as a loss of relationship, but as something closer to a total loss of self' (83)

In Ophelia's case, she completely loses her sense of self, once she too is very severely and harshly rejected by Hamlet. Probably in refusing to meet Hamlet, she had earlier not foreseen the consequences. But when the realization dawns on her that she has been in some way the cause of Hamlet's madness and her father's death, she can bear it no more and becomes mad herself. Soshana Felman believes that women more than men require psychiatric help in their lifetime. She observes:

> ... quite the opposite of rebellion, madness is the impasse confronting those whom cultural conditioning has deprived of the very means of protest or self – affirmation. Far from being a contestation, 'mental illness' is a request for help, a manifestation both of cultural impotence

> and of political castration. This socially defined help-needing and help – seeking behaviour is itself part of female conditioning, ideologically inherent in the behavioral pattern and in the dependent and helpless role assigned to the women as such : (118).

While Ophelia is a quiet, submissive, angelic character right from the beginning and could not even stand up for her love, Desdemona is shown to be a strong, assertive woman in the beginning of the play. She shows a strong will and disobeys her father and marries the man she loves. But Desdemona too like Ophelia is victimized by the male world just because she too like Ophelia is soft and passive and must uphold the feminine ideals of obedience towards her husband. Shakespeare shows how it is this obedience and passivity in both the cases that lead to their destruction. In choosing Othello as her husband, Desdemona had earlier shown the ability of subverting the patriarchal hegemony. When questioned by her father for disobeying him and marrying Othello, she very cleverly defends herself and justifies her disobedience on the grounds of patriarchal obedience and duty :

> . . . My noble father,
> I do perceive here a divided duty.
> To you I am bound for life and education ...
> You are the lord of my duty,
> I am hitherto your daughter. But here's my husband,
> And so much duty as my mother showed
> To you preferring you before her father,
>
> So much I challenge that I may profess
> Due to the Moor my lord. (Act I Scene III)

In this way she justifies her act and her disobedience appears as obedience.

She also shows an assertive self when she advocates the honesty and innocence of Cassio before Othello and tries to convince him to return him back his former position and honour. Inspite of her strong will, she believes that it is her duty to be a good wife and that it is her only role in life. When later in the play Othello abuses her and strikes her, she blames herself, never thinking anything adverse about her husband.

Marilyn French explores the masculine and misogynistic value system at work in *Othello.* 'Inspite of her male assertiveness in choosing her husband,' French suggests, 'Desdemona accepts her culture's dictum that she must be obedient to males' and is 'self-denying in the extreme when she dies.' (47)

Hazlitt has truly observed, 'The extravagance of her resolutions, the pertinacity of her affections, may be said to arise out of the gentleness of her nature. They imply an unreserved reliance on the purity of her intentions, and entire surrender of her fears to her love, a knitting of herself, heart and soul, to the fate of another. (Hazlitt, 2010). And it is this being, who is to Othello 'a wonder, and a beauty and a terror'. It is this whom he must hereafter cast away and trample under foot.

Iago in his jealousy of Cassio, who has been made lieutenant over him, seeks to take revenge on both Cassio and Othello. He convinces Othello that Desdemona is in love with Cassio and has committed adultery with him. His wife Emilia, is Desdemona's lady-in-waiting and through her he procures Desdemona's handkerchief which had been gifted to her by Othello. Othello's mother had given the handkerchief to Othello and bid her to give it to his wife. This fatal handkerchief was also believed to have magical powers. Iago convinces Othello that the handkerchief was found in Cassio's bed chamber. Othello is seized by jealousy and believes that Desdemona is a whore. His pride and faith in love are shattered and he seeks revenge on Desdemona and Cassio.

When Othello repeatedly questions her about her handkerchief, she first tries to evade the question but gradually retreats into her shell and silences herself when she catches the hint of doubt and suspicion in his voice. The lost handkerchief becomes the emblem of women's power and its loss. The handkerchief is the symbol of Desdemona's loving power over Othello. The lost handkerchief symbolizes Othello's loss of faith in Desdemona's love and also symbolizes the loss of female power.

Carol Gilligan notes that men and women have different approaches to morality : The male morality has a 'justice orientation' and the female morality has a 'responsibility orientation'. She shows that women's sense of morality and sense of self revolves around issues of responsibility for care of and inclusion of other people. (67).

Women value relations more than self-enhancement. They see themselves in relation to others, merge and organize their selves in the service of home, husband and children, resting their sense of identity and value on it. These feminine virtues have been devalued and treated as unimportant.

Othello's constant insult of Desdemona, his repeated questioning of her makes her understand that something is amiss and she makes no attempt at clearing herself or defending herself. On the other hand she asks Emilia to prepare her bed and to spread her wedding sheets. She has a premonition of her death and even recalls the morbid willow song sung by her mother's maid,

Barbary. The rendition takes the pathos of the moment to its climax. When Othello smothers her and Emilia enters, Desdemona whispers in her ears that Othello is not to be blamed, and thus even in death tries to acquit her husband of all blame.

Lisa Jardine suggests that the stage world of Jacobean drama is wholly masculine and argues that there is only a male viewpoint to offer. Jardine feels that Desdemona proves to be 'too-knowing, too-independent' that the 'shadow of sexual frailty hovers over her throughout the play'. Because of her suspected waywardness, she is punished by patriarchy. Jardine suggests that Desdemona is a patient Griselda 'glorious in her resignation in the face of husbandly chastisement'. She shows 'exemplary passivity in adversity' and becomes a stereotype of female passivity (45)

Iago's revenge culminates in the death of Desdemona who epitomizes innocence. She is victimized by the hegemonic male world and pays for something she is not guilty of. She becomes a bait in Iago's revenge on Othello just because she is a woman. Othello considers her guilty because she is silent. Cameron theorizes, 'Silence is a symbol of oppression, while liberation is speaking out, making contact. The contact is what matters : a woman who lies or is silent may not lack a language, but she does not communicate' (83)

According to Dowden, Shakespeare's generalization about women was that they are made of fewer elements than those of men but that those elements 'are ordinarily in juster poise, more fully organized, more coherent and compact; and that, consequently, prompt and efficient action is more a woman's gift than a man's. Shakespeare's men have a history, moral growth or moral decay; his women act and are acted upon, get from Shakespeare no history of a woman's soul like the history of Romola, Maggie Tulliver or Dorothea Brooke. His women are either wicked or extremely good. We don't find a complex of various qualities like Falstaff. (Dowden, 2009)

Emilia, Iago's wife is the only progressive woman in the play. From beginning to end, Emilia progresses from a more quiet, obedient wife to an out spoken strong – willed woman. Inspite of her calm and quiet demeanour, Iago frames her as a harping wife before Othello. He introduces her to Othello saying, if she would give you so much of her lips / As if her tongue she oft bestows on me, / you would have enough' (2:1, 100 – 102). He also says that like all women, she would "rise to play and go to bed to work" (2:1, 113). However Emilia will not allow her husband to discredit her for he "shall not write her praise" (114).

We don't see the grit and courage shown by Emilia in either Desdemona or Ophelia. Emilia has the courage to go even against her husband in raising an

alarm about Desdemona's death. She reveals the truth about the lost handkerchief which actually had been stolen by her husband and not lost. Inspite of Iago's warnings, she speaks the truth and as a result loses her life. Desdemona and Ophelia are squashed because of their well-intentioned lie and Emilia for her well-intentioned truth. Iago associates women with only sex and subservience and equates them with beasts and the enslaved classes. Therefore a woman has to be domesticated and controlled . If she cannot be controlled and forced into subservience, she should be killed just as a beast is killed. Under his tutelage even Othello has the same opinion about women. So Desdemona has to be killed since he believes that her sexuality cannot be controlled. Similarly Ophelia is condemned by Hamlet because she is disobedient to him and does not abide by his wishes. This condemnation and the double realmed grief, maddens her and kills her. Therefore Shakespeare through the characters of Desdemona and Ophelia represents the misogynistic society which believes in silencing and repressing women.

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Global Use of English for a Variety of Purposes

Dr. Sumer Singh*

Abstract:

In the present global scenario, English has become not only a lingua franca (i.e. global English) but also a gateway of global success and recognition. Besides being a potent vehicle of communication and a global linguistic mediator, it plays an integral role of a link language as well as linguistic and literary creativity in the developing multilingual nations like India. As an international link language and global means of communication, English plays a significant role in promoting interaction, global harmony and human solidarity, and fellowship despite the presence of cultural variants and diversities in the world. It is the language of international trade, political affairs, research, library, sports, popular music, internet and so on. Realizing the utility and urgency of global use of English for a variety of purposes, people all over the world are desperate to equip themselves with communication skills in English in order to ensure their mobility, job, prosperity, status and even their sheer survival in the competitive global market.

If we talk about the role and use of English in Indian context, it is the historical fact that English is going to stay with us forever not only as means of communication, and a link language but as a neocolonial means of hegemony also. The nature of speakers of English, though hardly a little over 5% of India's population, remains dominant in culture, literature and economy, and prompts their counterparts to learn this most coveted language. In our country, where 18 languages and hundreds of dialects are spoken, the language of commerce, industry, parliament and the better universities continues to be English. In this respect, English has maintained its indispensable status as a 'Language of wider communication' (LWC), a link language, or a second language. Needless to say, English is the most favoured foreign language today across the world.

English, after its origin in the 5th century, has prospered with migration and re/settlement of its speakers in different parts of the world. Its forays outside Europe began with the foundation of the American colonies and later in the 17th century with the establishment and expansion of the British Empire. In the 19th century 'with its sun never setting', its language i.e. English emerged as a world language or lingua franca with its subtle mix of power, politics, trade, and

* Lecturer in English, Govt. P.G College, Sirohi Rajasthan.

cultural hegemony. It came to India as a part of the colonial encounter between India and England in the second half of the 18th century. Before Macaulay's advocacy of the use of English in administration and education, especially higher education, as a medium of instruction, India had begun to clamor for the master's language (i.e. English) as a means of reforming the Indian society and its modernization. Thus, English was sought and introduced in India as the means of reformation, refinement and modernization of overall Indian setup. Even our illustrious reformers and eminent scholars like Raja Ram Mohan Ray strongly pleaded for replacement of Sanskrit and Arabic with English so that India not only can make progress in the fields of science, engineering and technology but also can compete at the world level in all the spheres of knowledge and entrepreneurship.

It is a well-known fact that liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG) have had its considerable and diverse impact on the linguistic sphere in the world. Now English is neither British hegemony nor King's and Queen's English; it has become world English or universal language. It is being owned by many other countries, as we have American English, Australian English, Indian English, and Russian English and so on. As we know that English has been with us for more than two hundred years, and Indian English as a variant of English and Indian English Writing as a means of creativity have carved a niche for themselves. However, an important question that arises here is about the ethicality of the presence of English in India. Is the presence of English ethical in democratic India? Or should our pragmatics dissuade us from asking these questions just because English language is a global language of commerce, communication and reservoir of intellectual resources. The present unprecedented ascendancy of English in globalized world is due to some specific solid political and economic backups, as the famous linguist D.P. Pattnayak pointed out in his research paper titled "Change Language and the Developing World" in *Change and Language* (1996) edited by H. Coleman and L. Camerson:

> English is backed by international groups, which treat English as an instrument of colonization and as a commodity for trade... It interprets skill migration as brightening life-chances and it accentuates the divide between (1) rural and urban, (2) the developing and the developed and (3) elites and masses. It permits better education for a miniscule minority. At the same time, it inhibits interaction between science and society and inhibits the creation of appropriate technology.

In the emerging latest trends of marketing and IT, English being a language of power, prestige, opportunity, success and development, is a social

demand across the world. English has come to occupy a unique place in our society as Prof. Prabodh Das Gupta called it the Auntie's Tongue. The title is very interesting because the mother tongue and Auntie's Tongue are not the same. One can put it as that English is mother-in-law's tongue. The meaning is that our mother may be good in Hindi or Rajasthani but all of us want the mother-in-law to be, if not proficient, at least such as be able to speak in English because it ensures the language of one's would be wife. Considering the unprecedented significance and attraction of English language in our society, R. Philipson observed in his book, *Globalizing English: Are Linguistic Human Rights on Alternative to Linguistic Imperialism?*:

> .The global language can be seen to open doors, which fuels a 'demand' for English. This demand reflects contemporary power balances and hopes that mastery of English will lead to the prosperity and glamorous hedonism that the privileged in this world have access to and that is projected in Hollywood films, MTV videos, and ads for transnational corporations.

Thinking over the role and use of English language in India, Prof. Avadhesh Kumar Singh puts his views very adequately in his article entitled "Re/thinking English in India" published in *English in India: Issues and Approaches* (2006) that English is not only used today as a magical tool of success in all the fields of life and as a remedy of all ills but also as the panacea of all diseases. It is prescribed and used as a universal and infallible antibiotic, whatever the disease it might be i.e. fever or infection. Mr. Singh has also illustrated the use of English for various purposes giving adequate examples such as English as a coat, English as a street tongue and English as the bathroom slippers. Really in the globalized world, English is worn (used) at the office, for formal, official and social occasions to present oneself (himself/herself) update, smart, and civilized but taken off at home. Thus, English has become the language of show off, presentation, display, exhibition, impression- making and guarantee of success now everywhere in the world.

English is Changing (English as a Progressive language)

It is an undeniable fact that English has witnessed considerable changes in both its vocabulary and grammar. Since Shakespeare's day some words have disappeared from use, while others have changed their meanings. New words have come into the language. It would be a mistake to assume that this process has come to an end, but a mistake that is commonly made. As long as people have discussed language usage, there have been those who deplore the ways in which it is changing, just as there have been people who want to be in the

forefront ('on the cusp', 'at the cutting edge', to use two relatively recent expressions) of that change.

Where you place yourself in relation to this process of change is a personal choice, made—as many other choices are—after a consideration both of how you feel about the ways in which the language is changing and of how other people will regard you. If, for example, you are a barrister arguing a detailed and complex civil case, then the use of a lot of 'fashionable' expressions may well not be appreciated. On the other hand, if you are an advertising executive you would probably not speak to your clients in language' suitable for the barrister. Language choice and expression are matters of awareness and sensitivity to the situation you are in.

Just as English vocabulary continues to change, so does English grammar, although at a slower pace. In the past, for example, it would have been frowned on to begin a sentence; If I was you . . . Now this is increasingly heard, even from the mouths of educated speakers. Some will argue that there is an important difference between

If I were captaining the team, I'd ... and

If I was captaining the team, I'd ...

The first, they say, means that the speaker believes that there is not the remotest possibility of the situation arising, while the second regards it as unlikely, but possible. If language is developing towards the abandonment of *If I were,* however, it means that more and more people will simply not pick up this difference—so we shall have to find other ways of communicating the same meaning.

How many 'Englishes'?

In the era of globalisation, English is being rapidly glocalised for a variety of purposes. Today, in the boundariless and free- flow world, English is no longer a British hegemony but it has been owned and used globally. In this process of spread and global use of English, it has got several changes and versions with passing of time. Now English has several varieties and forms- such as British English, American English, Indian English, Russian English, Australian English, Standard English, informal English, regional dialect, taboo slang and so on.

Most of us think that people in the United States and people in Britain speak the same language but with important differences of vocabulary and grammar. But an English reader would probably pick up that following message was written by an American:

"I would be happy to meet with you while I am in Oxford. Mornings are best because I will be teaching in the M.B.A. program in the afternoon..."

In above message we come to the conclusion that the Britisher would write *meet* for 'meet with' and *course* for 'program'.

American English has a powerful influence ('impacts heavily') on British usage. Many people are fairly relaxed about this, but some purists resent this Americanization of English. It tends to be new words, especially technical and social ones that transfer most readily. Despite the close contacts between the two countries, a number of common words remain steadfastly different. Britons still speak of *taps, cupboards,* and *lifts* rather than *faucets, closets* and *elevators,* for example.

Many other English-speaking countries, such as Australia and India, also have distinctive versions of the language and even within Britain and the other countries there are important variations of dialect. To the academic linguist, a particular dialect is no better than any other dialect; they are simply different. For the user, social attitudes are important and if you ignore them, you risk alienating those who hold different attitudes from yourself.

Ever since the invention of printing there has been, pressure to standardize English. When Caxton set up his printing press in the fifteenth century, he was aware of the problems caused by the variety of different dialects spoken in England. He had to choose which dialect and which spellings to adopt when publishing books in English. The period since then has seen the evolution of Standard English, which may be only one more dialect of the language, but which has far more social prestige than the others and which is normally used in writing as well as being used in all formal or semi-formal speech situations.

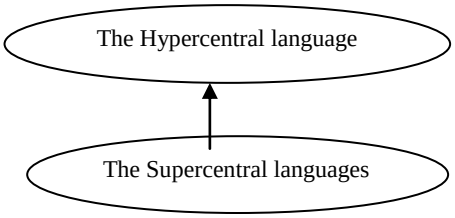
Standard English: *very frightened*

Informal English: *scared stiff*

Regional dialect: *frit*

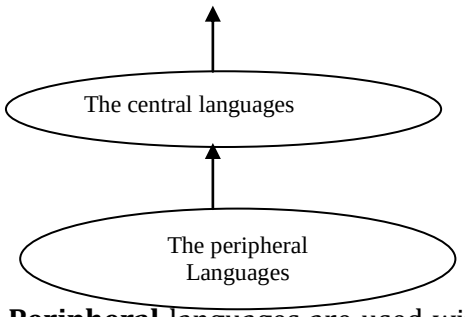
Taboo slang: shit *scared*

According to Abram de Swaan (2001), languages form a hierarchy as follows:



(1 language) English

(12 languages) Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Malay,



Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili

(about 100 languages)

(all the rest; 98% of the world's languages)

• **Peripheral** languages are used within a given territory by native speakers to each other, such as Welsh spoken in some regions of Wales, or Japanese spoken in the whole of Japan.

• **Central** languages are used within a single territory by people who are both native speakers and non-native speakers, for purposes of education and government, say, English in India used by native speakers of many languages.

• **Super-central** languages are used across several parts of the world by natives and non-natives, with specialized function, say, Arabic or Latin for religious ceremonies. Often their spread reflects previous colonial empires, French, Spanish, and so on.

• **Hyper-central** languages are used chiefly by non-native speakers across the globe for a variety of purposes. Today only one hyper-central language exists, namely English.

To de Swaan (2001), languages exist in 'constellations'. India, for example, ha: Hindi and English as 2 super-central languages, plus 18 central languages, such as Gujarati and Sindhi, nearly all of which have official status within a state; the remaining 780-odd languages are peripheral.

Society as a whole depends on the interlocking of these languages and so is based on multilinguals who can plug the gaps between one level and another whether within one territory or internationally. According to de Swaan (200 the learning of second languages usually goes up the hierarchy rather than down: people learn a language that is the next level up. Speakers of a peripheral language have to learn a central language to function in their own society, such as speakers of Catalan learning Spanish in Spain. Speakers of a central language need to learn a super-central language to function within their region, say speakers of Persian learning Arabic. Speakers of a super-central language need the hyper-central language to function globally; and even a native speaker of English needs to learn English as ELF i.e. English as *lingua franca*.

The reasons for acquiring the hyper-central language are the global demands of work; international business becomes difficult without English and the native speaker is only one of the types of people that need to be communicated with. The reasons why languages have got to these particular levels are complex and controversial. Some see the dark side of the dominance of English, regarding it as a way of retaining an empire through deliberate political actions (Phillipson, 1992), and inevitably leading to the death of local languages. Others see the use of English as an assertion of local rights to deal with the rest of the world in their own way rather than as domination (Canagarajah, 2005). English has a unique quality that it can be used for any of the levels, from monolingual local to global hypercentral. Some languages have become global in extremely limited uses, like Japanese for karate. Others have seen their vocabulary adapted to international use -try asking for the Starbucks coffee called 'vcnti' in a coffee bar in Italy - it actually means 'twenty', rather than 'large'. But English has extended its scope way outside the previous boundaries of the British Empire to a considerable range of functions.

Various terms have been proposed for this peculiar status of English, whether 'international English', 'global English' or 'world English'. Recent discussion has preferred the term 'English as lingua franca' (ELF) - English as a means of communication between native speakers of other languages. In this context, 'lingua franca' does not have its historic negative meaning of a mixed language, but means a communication language used by speakers of other languages.

Pier Paolo admires the glocal use of English by Arundhati Roy in her prize-winning novel, *The God of Small Things* (1997), by saying that Roy has undoubtedly enriched the English tongue:

> In fact, through the creation of a new language, she can meet both her ends. It is a language, which expresses old concepts in a new way, which is moulded according to every new need, which is anarchic fashion does not obey the rules of grammar or syntax any more. It is a new world, within which Arundhati Roy is finally able to regenerate all her sensations. Being so original and personal, the fictional discourse sometimes looks like a new journey inside the author's stream of consciousness. Language allows her to break the bonds of distance from the object of her writing without technically evidencing it.

Interpolation of foreign languages has been used by English writers from the days of Shakespeare in order to add a new dimension to their poetry. Roy has used a sprinkling of Malayalam words but for very mundane objects or when

the English equivalents would suffice just as well *e.g.* Ickilee (tickle) (178), 'Kando' (can you see) (178), 'modalali' (master/owner) (271), 'mittom' (backyard), breakfast items like idiappams, Kanji, meen (212), 'avaloose oondas' (273) or names of fish 'pallathi', 'poral', 'Koori', 'Karimeen' (203) etc. The only purpose that is probably served by this kind of interpolation is to provide a local flavour, set it in a particular state or may be even add an aura of mystification. The recitation of 'Lochinvar' and Mark Antony's speech with a Malayalee accent strikes one as being a juvenile attempt at humour.

It is clear that English, which symbolized the hegemonic function of imperial culture, is undergoing transformation in the hands of post-colonial writers and critics. Bill Ashcroft, a famous critic and linguist opines that English that was invented to convey the cultural weight of empire has been transformed by those very societies to which it was disseminated into a forceful medium of self-expression. Because its inherent function as a cultural study has been appropriated, English will never be the same again. (2-3) He ascribes this canonical change and the consequent threat to English to the vast array of literatures in English that have emerged as a direct result of cultural colonization, and which is breaking down the distinction between 'high' and 'popular' in cultural context. This revelation leads to the conclusion that the increasing adoption of English as a second language, where it is nativized or localized is leading to fragmentation, diversity and informalization of the language.

We cannot overlook a fairly well-grounded reality that native speakers of English are already outnumbered by second language and foreign-language speakers, and will be more heavily outnumbered as time goes on. No longer is it the case, if it ever was, that English unifies all who speak it, though the language would continue to enjoy its privileged status in this new millennium, the centre/s from which it operates may change in days to come.

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A Philosophical Inquiry into Select Poems of Early Kashmiri Sufi Poets

Dr. Shahida*

Abstract:

The origin of Sufism is believed to be in Iran in and around 7th century AD. Tasawouf or Sufism is the esoteric school of Islam that was founded in pursuit of spiritual truth; it focuses on understanding of self that further leads to the understanding of the Divine. This paper traces the origin of Sufism in Kashmir and its popularity among masses. Islam did not come to Kashmir as a faith of the conquerors rather Islamization was achieved by the peaceful missionary (Sufi saints) from Persia and Turkestan and therefore was accepted with reverence and pride by the inhabitants of Kashmir. The Kashmiri Sufi tradition is unique because unlike the other Sufi mystics, Kashmiri Muslim Rishis were not particularly interested in spreading Islam. They were similar to Hindu ascetics (e.g. they did not forbid idol worship) and had limited knowledge of Islam. I shall be focusing on the poems composed by the Sufi mystic poets namely Lal Ded and Nund Rishi.

Keywords: *Sufism, tasawouf, Islam, mysticism, poetics, wahdut-ul-wujud.*

Surely in the breasts of humanity is a lump of flesh, if sound then the whole body is sound, and if corrupt then the whole body is corrupt, is it not the heart? ***—Prophet Muhammed***

Origin and Development

Sufism and its relation to Islam are highly contested in the twenty-first century.* This is because of the various theories that have tried to define the

* **Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, NIT, Kurukshetra, Haryana India**

* Sufism, the Islamic mystical tradition, is believed to have originated from a group of 45 companions of the Prophet Muhammed called *Ashab e Suffa*, People of the Bench. Having renounced the world, these people engaged themselves in incessant prayer and fasting. Salman Farsi, Bilal and Abu Huraira were among the people of the bench. Although the word Sufi did not

term 'Sufism.' Muslim mystics traditionally have used the term to convey certain ethical and spiritual ideals; the multiple forms of activity actually practiced by Muslim mystics had distinct names and terminology.[*] Modern Sufi practitioners who wish to legitimate their own perspective sometimes discredit other versions as "pseudo-Sufism," particularly in cases of groups that de-emphasize Islamic practices and identity (Ernst 2011). Fundamentalists often assert Sufism to be a perversion of Islam, while secular modernists reject Sufism as medieval superstition. Scholarly writings with a historical emphasis project Sufism as the mystical aspect of Islam (Schimmel 1975).

Sufism has received very contrasting responses from 19th Century British colonial writers. For instance Sir John Malcolm, ambassador of the British East India Company to Persia in 1800, finds that the practitioners of Sufism in Iran faced extreme contempt and hatred. The Sufis in Persia better known as *dervish* were stereotyped as idle, drug addicts with loose moral standards (Ernst, 2011). John Malcolm in his *History of Persia* (1815) expresses extremely hostile view towards Sufism. Concerning the "Sooffees," he writes:

> We discover, from the evidence of Mahomedan authors, that these enthusiasts were co-existent with their religion. Their rapturous zeal, perhaps, aided in no slight degree its first establishment; but they have since been considered among the most dangerous of its enemies (Malcolm, 382).

On the other hand Sufis in India were held in great respect and reverence. This was because the teachings of Sufis and their philosophy were not new to the Indians. The existence of Shaivism and Bhakti traditions had paved way for the reception of another mystical tradition of a similar order. At the mystical level, there are many speculations about the impact of *Upanishads* and *Vedas* on the growth and development of Sufi thought in India, especially in relation to the Upanishadic '*aham brahmasmi'* and al-Hallaj's declaration 'I am the Truth' (Schimmel 64-66); Sufi practices of *zikr* or the repeated chanting of the names of God (Ahmad 137; Schimmel 358); the concept of *fanna* or total

exist in the time of the Prophet, the foundations of *Tasawwuf*, Sufism, were laid during the early days of Islam. Sufis are of the view that it was the Prophet Muhammed who received two-fold knowledge: *Ilme e Safina*, outer knowledge, and *Ilm e Sina* or *Ilm e ladduni*, knowledge of the heart, as mentioned in the Holy Quran. The Prophet entrusted his inner knowledge to some companions bestowing upon Ali Ibn Talib, his cousin and son-in-law, the title of 'Imam of Walis' and positioning him as the fountainhead of mystic knowledge. The beginning of Sufism as mystical aspect of Islam can be traced from here. For further reading see Carl W. Ernst (2011). *Sufism: An Introduction to the Mystical Tradition of Islam.* London: Shambala.

[*] Different terms for Sufis have been used like *qalandar*, *abdal*, *baba*, *haydari*, *malang*, *or muwallih (*enraptured*)* and so on.

annihilation of self in the beloved, and the Upanishadic doctrine of *tat tvam asi* (Das 6) then the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* or 'unity in being' and the concept of *advaitavad* or non-dualism. Regarding the acceptance of Sufism in India, John Malcolm writes:

> It is in India, beyond all other climes, that this delusive and visionary doctrine has most flourished. There is, in the habits of that nation, and in the character of the Hindoo religion, what peculiarly cherishes the mysterious spirit of holy abstraction in which it is founded; and we may grant our belief to the conjecture which assumes that India is the source from which other nations have derived this mystic worship of the Divinity. (Ernst 12)

In fact Sufism and Bhakti both developed in reaction to the hegemony of institutionalized Islam and Hinduism. However, Sufism never challenged allegiance to the Quran and Hinduism is not a religion of book, the Bhakti movement can be understood in relation to a framework of radical opposition to Hinduism. It emphasises lived experiences over intellect; bhakti or devotion in relation to *jnana* (knowledge), equality in the face of Brahminical hierarchy and emotion over intellect; and in literature and culture too the non-classical, folk and *desi* cultures challenged the domination of the classical, the urban and the *sastriya* (Das, 1984: 37). Though Sufism began as a movement of strong dissent against the political orders in Iran and to some extent in Arabia too, as it reached India it transformed the vocabulary of such decent and protest into a powerful aesthetic. The Sufis were engaged in writing poems and often they engaged themselves in narrating tales or fables for spiritual enlightenment. In India Sufi poets like Amir Khusrau (disciple of Hazrat Nizamuddin), Jayati's *Padmavat* (an epic written in Awadhi, 1540), Shams Fakir, etc., are known for their poetry and are held with reverence till date. Most of the classical Sufi texts, though written in Arabic or Persian, were located in diverse cultures and geographies. The Sufis brought with them a rich stock of knowledge—tales, fables and narratives—that were rooted in a diversity of cultural locations (Khan, 2006). Historical research suggests that it was neither missionary activities nor 'conversions', but the vehicle of folk literature and the institution of the *dargah* that were responsible for the spread of Sufism in India. In Kashmir the socio political conditions and the humane attitude of the Sufi saints resulted in the acceptance of Islam willingly. What has been unique in Kashmir is the blend of Islamic and Hindu philosophies in the poems of Lal Ded, Nund Rishi, Shams Fakir, Govind Kaul and so on.

History of Emergence of Islam and Sufism in Kashmir

The land of Kashmir has been very unique in its ability to imbibe varied cultures and ethnicities. Located in a valley in the Western Himalayas, Scholars believe that it has existed for more than 3000 years and has been a meeting ground of diverse ideas and religious movements.* Equipped with a high degree of intellect and a store of knowledge, Kashmir received every new creed without discrimination and enriched it with its own contribution without discarding its earlier acquisitions. Historians divide Kashmiri history into four periods: the early period of Hindu Kings chronicled by Kalhana in *Rajataringini*; the period of Kashmir Musalmen known as Salatini Kashmir; the period of Mughals known as Padshah-i-Chagatai or Shahn-i-Mughalia, and the period of Pathans known as Shahn-i-Durani.† Each of these periods if dealt in detail can contribute much to the understanding of Kashmiri culture or *Kashmiriyat* which exists today.

The earliest settlers in Kashmir are believed to be the Naga tribes. The widespread prevalence of Naga worship before and even after the Buddhist period indicates that Naga and indigenous tribes lived in Kashmir before the advent of Aryans in the subcontinent. According to James Ferguson, Nagas were serpent worshippers, an aboriginal race of Turanian stock inhabiting North India, who were conquered by Aryans. Buddhism entered Kashmir probably as early as the third century BC. It established itself firmly in the valley and flourished there particularly during the Kushana period. Kashmir became an important center of Buddhism and the place from which it spread into Central Asia and China. Parallel to Buddhism, which maintained strongest influence, the Brahmanic religion was also practiced by huge population in Kashmir. Kashmir was also an active center of Sanskrit learning and produced a large number of writers whose importance was recognized far beyond the valley. The writings of Abhinav Gupta (tenth century AD) namely the expositions on the concept of *rasa* and commentaries on Bhata's *Natya-Shastra* are of remarkable importance. Thus the valley of Kashmir was under strong Buddhist and Hindu influences. In such

* The history of Kashmir is unique because according to Sir Aurel Stein, the translator of the celebrated book on history of Kashmir, *Rajtarangini*, the distinction of being the only region of India which posses an uninterrupted series of written records of its history. The archaeological excavations of Bourzahama, 15 kms from Srinagar in 1960s, establishes its antiquity to beyond 3000 BC. Although it was contemporaneous to Mohenjodaro civilization, Kashmiri civilization was characterized by some independent features. For more on history of Kashmir refer Khan, Nyla Ali.ed. *The Parchment of Kashmir: History, Society and Polity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

† For more on history of Kashmir see *The Valley of Kashmir* by Sir Walter Roper Lawerence. London: Oxford University Press, 1895.

situation the advent of Islam and its acceptance among the Kashmiris is deeply embedded in its socio-political condition.

Historians are of the view that the earliest contacts of Kashmir with Islam date from the eighth century when Arab armies approached the Western borders of India and were confronted by the army of the Kashmiri Kingdom of Lalitaditya. The contact increased in the tenth century as a result of the expedition of Muhammad Ghazni to Northern India. Again, in the twelfth century, Kashmir faced the threat of Islamised Turks from Central Asia. None of these onslaughts, however, succeeded in conquering Kashmir and introducing Islam by force.

Islam did not come to Kashmir as a faith of the conquerors rather Islamization was achieved by the peaceful missionaries (Sufi saints) from Persia and Turkestan and therefore was accepted with reverence and pride. Islam was embraced as a result of conversion of a local ruler Rinchen Shah Rinchen. He did not feel secured as a Buddhist when ascended the throne in 1320, so he tried to take up Hinduism as his first choice, but the staunch Brahmins refused to convert him into a Hindu so he took up Islam as his second option. He was converted by the well known Sufi master Bulbul Shah. Bulbul Shah is believed to be the earliest Sufi from Turkey visiting Kashmir. He is believed to have spread Islam in Kashmir with the conversion of Buddhist ruler Rinchen Shah. Massive conversions among Buddhists and lower caste Hindus followed after Rinchen Shah's conversion to a Muslim and with the arrival of many Sufis and Sayyids from Persia towards the end of the fourteenth century, escaping the oppression of Timurlane. (Ahmad, 1979; Sikand, 2003).

Islam in Kashmir was acceptable for several reasons. Shaivism (Hinduism) was declining because of the rigid caste structures, oppression and chaos due to political instability; while Islam was readily accepted because of its egalitarian spirit propagated by the Sufis. Moreover, Sufis introduced the basic tenets of Islam in Kashmir in a language that was not alien to them. Shaikh Nuruddin the founder of the Muslim Rishi Brotherhood in Kashmir has been responsible in teaching the basic tenets of Islam by his poetries.[*] He is hailed as a

[*] The Rishis have an important role to play in Hindu-religio-cultural tradition. In Hinduism, they have been originators of religion. The term Rishi is actually 'rshi' of Sanskrit origin. They were ascetics who retired to caves and forest to lead a life in search of knowledge and meditation. It has been used in Vedas profusely. It means an inspired poet or sage. In Kashmiri parlance it connotes a pious soul more concerned with the 'Spirit' than with the 'self'. For this very reason the most predominant trait of tolerance and Godliness exhibited by Kashmiris has earned the name 'Reshvar' "Rshivatika"-a retreat of Savants for this habitat (Kashmir). Kashmir is called abode of rishis because it has been a place where most of them resided in search of knowledge and found it an ideal place for meditation. Walter Lawrence in *The Valley of Kashmir* discusses rishi as "the

a Sufi poet who acted as a connecting link between the Iranian Sufis and people of Kashmir. Born in around, 1356 Nund Rishi has contributed greatly in spreading Islam in Kashmir.

Islam spread by the Sufis and Muslim Rishis was easily acceptable to the inhabitants of Kashmir because philosophically the teachings of Sufis did not present such a diametrically different idea from what already prevalent in Kashmir. Lal Ded, a devout Saivite mystic poet and predecessor of Nund Rishi has spoken about finding God within self in her poems. It is same idea expressed by the Sufis too in their poems. In one of her poems she sings:

> Lord! I've never known who I really am, or You.
> I threw my love away on this lousy carcass
> and never figured it out: You 're me, I'm You.
> All I ever did was doubt: Who am I? Who are You? (27)

In Kashmir, in the fourteenth century, Saivism was brought into contact with Naqshbandi Sufism by Lal Ded (Ahmad, 2002: 136). Her poetry reflects deep impact of Bhakti and Sufi philosophy. They focus on self awareness and in the same tone they are fortified by a palpable, first-hand experience of illumination; it conveys a freedom from the mortal freight of fear and vacillation. She cherishes these while attacking the parasitic forms of organized religion rituals that have attached themselves to the spiritual quest and choked it. Her poems express ways of transcending the obstacles in union with the Divine as she sings:

> It covers your shame, keeps you from shivering.
> grass and water are all the food it asks.
> who taught you, priest-man,
> to feed this breathing thing to your thing of stone? *

most respectable people of this (India) country are the Rishis, who, although they do not suffer themselves to be fettered by traditions, are doubtless true worshippers of God. They revile not any other sect, and ask nothing of any one; they plant the roads with fruit trees to furnish the travelers with refreshments; they abstain from flesh, and have no intercourse with the other sex. There are near two thousand of this sect in Kashmir." (287). The Muslim Rishi cult founded by Shaikh Nuruddin differed from the traditional Hindu Rishis as it was drawn from the Qura'an and the Sunnah. K. N. Dhar in *Nund Rishi-A Rosary of Hundred Beads* in this context declares Muslim Rishis are the ones who "derive their inspiration from the word of Qur'an and the life of Prophet Mohammed." For further reading see Yatoo, Dr. Altaf Hussain (2012) *The Emergence of Islam in Kashmir: A Study of Hazrat Sheikh Nuruddin Noorani.* Srinagar: Gulshan books.

* Hoskote, Ranjit ed. (2011) *I, Lalla: The Poems of Lal Ded*. Penguin Books: New Delhi. 20

Kashmiri Saivism advocates the transmutation of all outward observances into visualizations and experiments in consciousness, so that the idol is replaced by the mental image and the sacrifice of an animal by the deliberate extinction of the lower appetites. In this spirit Lal Ded rejects all the conventional physical elements of worship in favour of meditative depth and devotion:

> Kusha grass, flowers, sesame seed, lamp, water:
> it's just another list for someone who's listened,
> Really listened, to his teacher. Every day he sinks deeper
> into Shambhu, frees himself from the trap
> of action and reaction. He will not suffer birth again. (20)

A similar idea resonates in poems of other Sufi poets too. They too focus on finding the Divine in one's heart. For instance Rumi has spoken about this explicitly in the following lines:

> I searched for God among the Christians and on the Cross and therein I found Him not.
> I went into the ancient temples of idolatry; no trace of Him was there.
> I entered the mountain cave of Hira and then went as far as Qandhar but God I found not.
> With set purpose I fared to the summit of Mount Caucasus and found there only 'anqa's habitation.
> Then I directed my search to the Kaaba, the resort of old and young; God was not there even…Finally, I looked into my own heart and there I saw Him; He was nowhere else. (56)

Nund Rishi too sings in the similar tone, urging the Hindu Brahmins (Pandits) to abandon outward observances or rituals to reach God. He asserts on understanding the true essence of life:

> Pandit, Obrother Pandit!
> You always sought stones (statues) and *nagas*
> Having got these, you did not recognize God.
> (Instead) seek God and his Apostle,
> This is the only way for salvation. (Yatoo 72)

Lal Ded has been a source of inspiration for Nund Rishi. It is also believed that Lal Ded showed motherly affection as she is said to have lulled the 'little Shaikh' to suck milk through these words:

Che mali che; zeri mand chhakh n' t' chari kiyazi chhukh
mand chhan (45)

[suck O dear! Suck;
thou wast not ashamed of being born;
why then art thou ashamed of Sucking (at the mother's breast)].

In fact Nund Rishi acknowledges the influence of Lal Ded on his own evolution as a mystic. He eulogizes Lalla or Lal Ded for her role in shaking and stirring the superstitious and caste-ridden society of Kashmir. Nund Rishi further accomplished what Lal Ded had started. She was propagator of a new type of cultural pattern in Kashmir. She was a rebel who openly urged people to cast away the old dogmas and adopt new ways. The influence of her *vaakh* [verses] was deep on Nund Rishi during the formative years of his mystical career; likewise the impact of her revolt against social and religious discrimination was tremendous on the local inhabitants of Kashmir for whom, she was the savior in case of spiritual crisis. She has been declared to be avatar by Nund Rishi. According to Hindu scriptures, avatars are born for the purpose of re-establishing dharma, but as *Bhagavat Purana* repeatedly stresses they also emerge on the social scene for teaching the mortals the wisdom of ages. They have enlightened men and set themselves as role models. This is why Nund Rishi has described Lal Ded as an *avatar*, as she assumed the role befitting the situational demands and reshaped anomalies and derangements into a progressive adjustment and harmony (Khan 77).

Further Islam was accepted by people in Kashmir because it was imported not from centers of the orthodoxy, but from Persia and Central Asia, the areas of contact of Islamic and Indian thoughts, and was impregnated with the teachings of Sufis. Unlike the rigid and strict Arabic Islamic principles, the mystical Islam taught by the Persian Sufis offered flexibility and freedom to its practitioners. The father and son duo of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani and Mir Sayyid Muhammad Hamadani (Sufi saints) were greatly responsible in influencing people towards embracing Islam. Socially, Islam preached by Sufis was democratic in principle, offered better status to the lower classes and therefore it was accepted by all castes except Brahmans, who until now constitute a separate group called Pandits. Prof. Muhammad Ishaq Khan in *Kashmir's Transition to Islam: The Role of Muslim Rishis (*1994) discusses in detail the role of Muslim Rishis in spreading Islam in Kashmir.

There were several orders of Sufis active in Kashmir such as Suhravardi, Naqshbandi and Chisti. These Sufi saints influenced tremendously the local religion and lives of the inhabitants. For instance Mir Syed Hamdani hailed as

*Amir-i-Kabir (*great leader) and *Bani-i-Musalmani* (the founder of Islam in Kashmir). He had come along with his disciples from Iran who settled in Kashmir and spread Islam and principles of Kubrawi Sufi order and so on. They have left lasting impact on the locals of Kashmir. It is also observed that there are similarities between Sufi doctrine and Hindu Philosophy, for instance the Sufi concept of 'wahdat –al-wujud' (unity of being) is universalist by its pantheist content. The entire universe, according to this doctrine, is a creation of god and reflects his glory. Thus there is no question of fraternizing with one section of humanity, while rejecting the other for having different outward beliefs. The Sufi, accordingly, fraternizes with all. The same idea is reflected in the poems of Nund Rishi, His approach to faith and ethical laws of life were rooted in both Quranic teachings and the Hindu/Buddhist philosophy, especially in the similar notions of divine unity (*wahdat-ul-wajud*) of Islamic philosophy and the Hindu philosophy of no duality ("*advaita*")[4]. This gave rise to a distinct indigenous Rishi order of Sufis in Kashmir. Their principle mainly lay in leading a humble, ascetic life of abstinence. Nand Rishis poems or sayings have been recorded in two volumes called *Rishi Nama* and *Nur Nama.* During the communal unrest of Sultan Sikander's reign, Nand Rishi writes to unite the Hindu Muslims:

> We belong to the same parents.
> Then why this difference?
> Let Hindus and Muslim(together)
> Worship God alone.
> We came to this world like partners.
> We should have shared our joys
> and sorrows together. (Yatoo 56)

Many of Nand Rishi's poems not only spoke of Hindu-Muslim unity but also addressed mankind as a whole. That why Sufism was extremely popular in Kashmir. It was away from the Islamic orthodoxy and rigidity and based more on the principles of humanity and love for divine. Both Lal Ded and Nund Rishi have focused on finding the divine within and strictly advocated the shedding off all the old dogmas and rituals. Both of them have expressed their extreme concern towards corrupt behavior of the mullas and pundits towards innocent people. Nuruddin in one of his poem comments:

> If you talk about a *mulla,* then mention Maulana Rumi;
> Otherwise beseech (God's) forgiveness on facing a (so-called) *mulla.*
> He (Rumi) crossed the ocean (of spirituality)!
> He assisted his own self (and succeeded). (Yatoo 75)

Nuruddin talks about the religious elite-*mullas* of Kashmir in a sarcastic manner. He says "the *mullas* run after fried meat; treat vegetables (simple food) with contempt; always eat ghee-baked bread; and hardly turn to the mosque" (Yatoo 75). In a similar tone Lal Ded too criticizes the pundits for their rigidity and religious intolerance. The later Sufi poets like Shamas Fakir and others too have expressed their concern over religious intolerance.

Conclusion

The inhabitants of Kashmir during pre-Islamic period included Hindus, Buddhist and they have equally contributed in the development of unique Kashmiri Sufi tradition. Sufis found much to learn from the non-Muslim traditions, for example, *Advaita* Hinduism claims that *atma* (soul) and parmatma (God) are one and the same, a theory similar to *wahdut-ul-wujud*. Also, Sufis found much to learn from Hindu spiritual disciplines such as yoga, which influenced their meditation and other spiritual practices. Though some scholars found this cultural mingling undesirable as Mirza Haider laments the mingling of the other "Un-Islamic and anti-*Shariat* ways of Sufis…" (Warikoo 2005). In fact a Sufi poet Haltaj in Persia was put to death for claiming that there is God in every being. The Kashmiri Sufi masters also faced opposition as they were influenced by the *Vedanta.* The Kashmiri *Rishis* following secular tradition were not considered to be Muslims at all. These Sufi masters were excellent poets and storytellers. Sufi writings focus on social roles and ethical teachings.They have promoted inter communal harmony and social justice based on an expansive understanding of Islam in Kashmir.

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Children's Literature: Need for its Emergence in Today's World of English Literature

Suma Priyadarshini.B.K.*

Abstract:

Children's Literature is the body of written books and accompanying illustrations produced in order to entertain or instruct young people. Children's Literature or Juvenile Literature includes stories, books, magazines and poems that are enjoyed by or targeted primarily at children. It's division into Two ways; Genre or The Intended age of the reader. It can be broadly defined as fiction, non-fiction, poetry or drama intended for and used by children and young people. The genre encompasses a wide range of works including acknowledged classics of World Literature books and easy-to-read stories written exclusively for children and fairy tales, lullabies, fables, folk songs and other primarily orally transmitted materials. It has its roots in the stories and songs that adults told to their children before publishing existed as part of the wide oral tradition, because of this it can be difficult to track the development of early stories, since 1400s there has been much literature aimed specifically at children, often with a moral or religious message.

Key Words: *Instruct, Juvenile Literature, Genre, Classics, Fairy Tales, Lullabies, Folk Tales and Songs, oral Transmission, Moral Message.*

Every group has its own mythology, unique fables and traditional stories told for instruction and entertainment of adults and children. The Earliest written folk tales include THE PANCHATANTRA, from India, composed about 200AD it may be the World's Oldest Collection of stories for children. THE JATAKAS, stories from India about the birth of BUDDHA, go back to 2nd or 3rd BC. The source stories for the ARABIAN NIGHTS, perhaps also originally from INDIA!! Children's Literature clearly emerged as a distinct and independent form of literature in the Second half of the 18th century, before which it had been at best only in an embryonic stage. During the 20th century, however, its growth has been so luxuriant as to make defensible its claim to be regarded with the respect though perhaps not the solemnity – that is due to any other branch of literature.

* Assistant Professor of English, Department of English. P.G.Studies, Government Arts College, Dr.Ambedkar Road, Bengaluru-560 001. Karnataka.

Children's Literature was a tributary of the LITERARY MAINSTREAM, offers its own identifiable, semidetached history. In part it is the issue of certain traceable social movements of which the 'Discovery of the child' is the most salient feature. It is independent to the degree that, while it must meet many of the standards of adults literature. It has developed aesthetic criteria of its own by which it may be judged. According to some of its finest practitioners, it is independent too, as the only existing literary medium enabling certain things to be said that would otherwise remain unsaid or unsayable. The nature of its audience sets it apart; it is often read, especially by children younger than 12, in a manner suggesting trance, distinct from that of adult reading. Universally diffused among literate people, it offers a rich array of genres, types and then some resembling grown up practitioners. Other measures of its maturity include an extensive body (notably in Germany, Italy, Sweden, Japan and United States) of commonly scholarship, criticism, history, biography, and bibliography, along with the beginnings of an aesthetic theory or philosophy of composition. Finally, one might note its power to engender its own institution, publishing houses, theaters, libraries, itinerant storytellers, critics, periodicals, instructions in certain higher learning, lectureship, associations and conferences like this.

There is no single or widely used definition of Children's Literature. It can be broadly defined as anything that children read or more specifically defined as stories. NANCY ANDERSON, of the College of Education at The University Of Florida, defines Children's Literature as "all books written for children, excluding works such as comic books, joke books, and non-fiction works that are not intended to be read from front to back, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias and other reference materials." The International Companion of Encyclopedia of Children's Literature notes that "the boundaries of genre are not fixed but blurred".

Sometimes no agreement can be reached about whether a given work is best categorizes as literature for adults or children! Some works defy easy categorization, J.K.Rowlings' Harry Potter series was written and marketed for children, but it's also popular among adults. The series extreme popularity had the New York Times to create a separate Best-Seller list for Children's books. Despite the wide-spread association of Children's Literature with picture books, spoken narratives existed before printing and the root of many children's tales go back to ancient story tellers. SETH LERER, in the opening of Children's Literature: A Reader's History From Aesop to Harry Potter says "This book presents a history of what children have heard and read… The History I Write is of History of Reception."

DEFINITION OF CHILDREN: All potential or actual young literates, from the instant they can with joy leaf through a picture book or listen to a story read aloud to the age of perhaps 14 or 15, may be called children. Thus, 'children' includes 'young people'. Two considerations blur the definition. Today's young teenage is an anomaly; his/her environment pushes toward a precocious maturity.

DEFINITION OF LITERATURE: In the term Children's Literature, the most important word is Literature. For the most part, the adjective important native is to be felt as preceding it. It comprises that vast, expanding territory recognizably staked out for a junior audience, which does not mean that it is not also intended for seniors. Adults admittedly make up part of its population; children's books are written, selected, for children sold, bought, reviewed and often read aloud by grown-ups. Sometimes they seem to be written with adults in mind too!

INDIA: Christian Missionaries first established the Calcutta School Book Society in the 19th century. Creating a separate genre or children's literature in this country. Magazines and books for children in native languages soon appeared. In the latter half of the century, Raja Shivprasad wrote several well-known books in Hindustani. A number of separated Bengali writers begun producing Bengali literature for children including Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, who translated some stories and wrote others himself. Nobel Prize Winner Rabindranath Tagore wrote plays, stories and poems for children including one work illustrated by Painter Nandalal Bose. They worked from the end of the 1800s into the beginning of 20th century. Tagore's work was later translated into English, with Bose's pictures. Behhari Lal Puri, was the earliest writer for children in Punjabi. His story books were didactic in nature.

The full length of Children's Literature was Khar Khar Mahadev by Narain Dixit which was serialized in one of the popular children's magazines in 1957. Other writers include Premchand and poet Sohan Lal Dwivedi. In 1919, Sukumar Ray wrote and illustrated Nonsense Rhymes in Bengali language and children's writer and artist Abarinath Tagore finished Barnngtarbratn. Bengali children's literature flourished in the later part of the 20th century. Educator, Gijubai Badhaka published over 200 children's books in the Gujarati language and many of them are still popular. In 1957 political cartoonist, K.Shankar Pillai founded the Children's Book Trust publishing company. The firm became known for high quality children's books, and many of them were released in several languages. One of the most distinguished writers is Pandit Krishna Chandra Kar on Oriya literature who wrote many good books for children, including Pari Raija, Kuhuka Raija, Panchatantra and Adi Jugara Galpa Mala. Ho wrote biographies of many historical personalities, such as Kapila Deva. In 1978, the

firm organized a writer's competitiveness to encourage quality children's writing. The following year, children's books trust began a writing, workshop and organized the first International Children's Fair in New Delhi.

I would like to end this paper with a serious note that Children's Literature would get its due credit as an important and useful form of literature, especially for children. Because, today's children are our future citizens. So, we as parents, elders, teachers and educators need to imbibe moral values to our children for their better future. Children's Literature, in turn would teach our children the basic moral values in such an easy way that children would understand. It's high time, to make our children orient towards reading habit as well as incorporating moral values in their lives.

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The Human World of Gordimer in *My Son's Story*

Dr Madhavi Nikam*

Abstract

Abstract: Novelist, play writer, short story writer, polemicist and activist Nadine Gordimer emerged as the most resourceful, versatile writer in South Africa. She is the notable exponent who writes on the philosophical ideas on interracial experiences. She is honoured by the Nobel Prize in1991. Gordimer is the first South African, the third African and the first woman in twenty five years who wins Nobel Prize. Throughout her career she utilizes her language and experiences and successfully outlet her thoughts through her pen. She has become a focal spokesperson and symbol for a white minority. She has earned critical and popular acclaim as a major South African writer. Fourteen novels, more than two hundred short stories, number of essays on political and literary issues made her the acute sentimental writer of her times. Her varieties of writing explored performative social as well as political consciousness and reflect her dream about future of South Africa. Her attitude towards life made her work more sharp and lively, which shows her increasing concern with social issues like racism, rootlessness and identity crisis. Her writing reflects the multicultural heritage of South Africa. In the present paper an attempt has been made to focus "The Human world of Gordimer in My Son's Story".

Key words: *Black, rootlessness, coloured, community, etc.*

The gifted writer Nadine Gordimer sensitively expressed impact of contemporary South African apartheid when Black Africans and other oppressed protest against the cruel, uneven, unjust social system of the country. Human, humanism is the most important concepts in literature which involves the cultural practices all across the world. The writer expresses the social, political, economical and racial context of referred country in the aesthetic sense. The tenth novel of Nadine Gordimer 'My Son's Story' published in October 1990. It shows her consciousness about history as well as present social situation in the country which evokes the political-social vision of Nadine Gordimer. In those days the citizens are classified as per their colour and are allowed to live in their own race. The categorization of the race makes the community to face the problematic awkward special identity due to their biological differentiation.

* PG Department of English R K Talreja College, Ulhasnagar (University of Mumbai, Maharashtra)

The novel opens with the narration of Will, the son of a coloured school teacher, Sonny. Will sees his father out of the movie theatre with an unknown white woman. The novel has five main characters, two men and remaining three are women. Both males are the representatives of the mixed heritage, near about white but not totally white or equal to white. Being coloured persons both face the rootlessness as they are nor 'real black' and neither 'real white'. Sonny, the protagonist has been presented throughout of the novel emphasizing his wish of liberation. Sonny is the son of the upholsterer and is originally from Benoni. His people pride of him as he is the only person having educated in the family. He becomes a teacher. His wife Aila is a good natured mature woman presented nicely by Nadine Gordimer. Being the coloured he has to face the problem and hardship because of the laws of apartheid. When he visits somewhere with his wife and children he has to stand in the separate queue in the shops and only railway station lavatories they can use. The presentation of Sonny's hardship is nothing but the crucial role of the political race. It shows their in-betweenness and rootlessness in the South African society. Being a common teacher he does not much interested in the oppression of the black. He is totally wanted to omniscient from these social affairs. Gordimer writes:

> …if he had been really black? He might have joined, waved a fist. Admiring the real blacks from this sort of distancing, he left it to them. It seemed more their affair. (Gordimer 23)

Gordimer distinguishes the coloured and the blacks. Nadine Gordimer deals here with the philosophical idea of interracial relationship. The coloured thinks that they are better than the blacks. It shows the cross cultural representation of Nadine Gordimer. But afterwards the views of Sonny change and he joins the liberation movement. When he goes in the procession as a mediator and banned from teaching, he gets imprisoned. It becomes the turning point of the life of Sonny. He becomes an orator and the leader of the revolutionary activity. He gets respect from the black community. During the imprisonment, Hannah Plowman, Agent of a human rights organization visits him in prison. Hannah is grown up in missionary. She desires to do something for blacks "For her the drive was to struggle against it (evil) for man- for humans." (88)

She helps the people who are in the struggle and in the same way she comes in contact with Sonny while imprisoned. Sonny finds good friend in her and afterwards falls in love with her. Their relationship symbolizes the multiracial relationship. It expresses Gordimer's wish to wash out the boundaries of the colour and race from South Africa and make the people live with love though not belong to the same race and class. It shows Sonny's plight towards liberation and

wish to change his identity from becoming coloured (weak race) to white (strong race). Nadine Gordimer remarks about her My Son's Story that-

> The book is really about the problems, the ordinary form of love bring within a particular context… in which love of the country is inextricably bound up with these other types of love. And by love of country, I don't mean gungho patriotism but involvement with the time. (Laurel 21)

Sonny's involvement with Hannah disturbs the family. Will, the son of Sonny lost respect about his father. Baby, the daughter of Sonny tries to suicide as she cannot bear shame. She leaves the house and joined freedom fighters camp in Lusaka. Aila secretly joins the revolution activity. She becomes bold and independent person and works as the messenger of South Africa to Lusaka. Her involvement in political struggle creates a problem and she has been arrested due to some arms and explosives in her house. Every character of the novel tries to create their identity. It symbolizes the movement of every character into the future of unpredictable ambiguities. It shows South African political impact on the common people's life. Gordimer thus underlines the real picture of the disturbed family. It is a different way of assessment of South African experiences which makes these all to lead the liberation movement. She presents the political and social turmoil through these characters. Her writing expresses the revolutionary approach towards the uncertain social life of South Africa. These characters are the spokesperson of Nadine Gordimer who expresses her urge to reflect the sensitive awareness about equality.

Aila, though imprisoned does not allow her son, Will to be a witness. She is released on bail. Hannah becomes very sad due to the arrest of Aila. Sonny feels guilty about his wife's imprisonment. With these examples Gordimer creates the world of human. Though all these are the victims of the social and political unrest they care and respect for each other. It makes the political commitment of the coloured protagonist a dynamic force of transformation in the whole family. The novel explores the growth of the family towards the revolutionary movement which signifies the liberation of the blacks from the centuries of oppression by the whites. It also expresses the sacrifices of the common people for their race. Hannah symbolizes the helping positive participation of the whites in the liberation struggle of the blacks. Gordimer seems to be the propagandist who wants to bring the needed change in the South African social unevenness by creating awareness in the white ruling community. It is her firm support to the oppressed. Hannah leaves Sonny when she joins the job of the High Commission's Regional Representative of Africa in Addis Ababa. She leaves Sonny expecting that the relation between Sonny and Aila can mend and lead to

happy life. Aila and Hannah both are the representatives of their own race. Aila changes the stereotypical image of black woman. Gordimer wills to break down the victimized position of black female. She presents the needed replacement from personal to general, private to public sphere. The new direction and new approach of life bring the enormous changes in her family as well as social life. Gordimer provides her character more active and independent role to break down the fixed barriers of her gender and race. It seems that Gordimer wants to offer a wider space for Aila and make her bold and strong to change her place of caretaker and silent victim and shapes a new sphere of transformation. The rigid conventional roles of women are replaced by the bold, active and independent activists like Aila and her daughter Baby. Male characters of the novel no doubt are strong but the female world of Gordimer in 'My Son's Story' is really a revolutionary attempt of showing the strong cultural space. She expresses the possible liberal future of South Africa where women will have the independent personalities having their own important space not only in family but also in society.

Overall, all the characters in the world of Gordimer are the significant figures doing progressive attempt for their place in the apartheid South Africa. The novel reveals the personal sacrifices of the common people to change the social and political condition of the country. Gordimer is recognized all over the world as the representative of South Africa who outlets the rigid realities of her country about political turmoil and social segregation of the people. Her work shows her firm support to the freedom struggle of the oppressed class. Presenting Hannah Plowman, she depicts her wish about the support of whites in the liberation struggle of the blacks. In short, her novel expresses her dream about the ethical change of the basic rights of human beyond the boundaries of colour and race.

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Caste Consciousness in Girish Karnad's *Tale-Danda*

Dr. N. G. Wale*

Abstract:

The present research paper attempts to examine Karnad's play Tale-Danda (1993) that deals with the inhuman caste-system which has affected the Hindu society for a long time. The play portrays the difficulties that are encountered in an attempt to challenge out-dated customs and traditions. We can say that the history of India is the history of the struggle of the castes. The play depicts the struggle between two social groups- the exploitative and the exploited. The acute sense of caste consciousness of the Indian society is clearly depicted in the play. The paper attempts to reveal how caste consciousness is an endemic problem in the Indian society which disrupts the harmony of the social structure. For his play Tale-Danda, which literally means beheading, Karnad has selected the theme from history- a movement that took place in the city of Kalyan eight hundred years ago during the two decades ending in AD 1168 when a man called Basavanna assembled a congregation of poets, mystics, social revolutionaries and philosophers who opposed idolatry, rejected temple worship, upheld the equality of sexes and condemned the caste system. The movement despite its high ideals ended in violence when theory turned into practice and a Brahmin girl married a low-caste boy. The paper attempts to reveal how caste consciousness is an endemic problem in the Indian society which disrupts the harmony of the social structure.

Key words: *Caste Consciousness, Caste System, Girish Karnad, Tale-Danda*

> *"One's caste is like the skin on one's body. You can peel it off top to toe, but when the new skin forms, there you are again: a barber – a shepherd – a scavenger!" (Karnad, 1993:14-15)*

Myths and History are the endless source of inspiration and motivation for the creative writers. Karnad revises and changes myths and history to suit his dramatic productions. He connects past and present and maintains continuity. It is really thrilling and interesting to look at the past while you are in the present. Karnad's *Tale-Danda* (1993) throws light on the inhuman caste-system which has affected the Hindu society for a very long time. We can say that the history of India is the history of the struggle of the castes. The play depicts the struggle between two social groups- the exploitative and the

* Assistant ProfessorDepartment of English, Balasaheb Desai College, Patan

exploited. It is interesting to note how Karnad treats history as myth and with his fertile imagination how he presents contemporary reality by exploiting historical material. History and myth, as it were, become inseparable parts in the depiction of contemporary issues. In this context, Dixit remarks, "Girish Karnad treats history as myth and rather than writing a strictly factual historical play, he gives it symbolical reshaping to reinforce the contemporary issues." (86)

In his historical plays, Karnad, reinterprets the historical events in contemporary contexts. The saint-poet and the social reformer Basavanna in *Tale-Danda,* the fourteenth century King Tughlaq in *Tughlaq* and the eighteenth century King of Mysore, Tipu Sultan in *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* are the historical personalities but they have gained a mythological status with the passage of time. These personalities and the historical events come alive and fresh with the artistic touch of Karnad.

For his play *Tale-Danda,* which literally means beheading, Karnad has selected the theme from history- a movement that took place in the city of Kalyan eight hundred years ago during the two decades ending in AD 1168 when a man called Basavanna assembled a congregation of poets, mystics, social revolutionaries and philosophers who opposed idolatry, rejected temple worship, upheld the equality of sexes and condemned the caste system. The movement despite its high ideals ended in violence when theory turned into practice and a Brahmin girl married a low-caste boy.

Tale-Danda seriously deals with the age-old problem of caste system. The playwright "re-examines the need and structure of the caste system of India that was once, in the past, hailed as an ideal one. Picking up historical-cum-political background for his plot, he moulds his theme of *Tale-Danda* to serve his present needs." (Shukla 289) The play fearlessly questions the validity of the Hindu myth which explains how *Varnashram* (Varna system) came into existence. According to this myth the four acknowledged classes originated from the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet of Brahma, the God of creation respectively.

However, with the passage of time the very structure of the Varna system based on the division of labour became distorted and degenerated into castes and sub-castes. In order to prove the superiority of their caste, Brahmins disfigured the very concept of the fourfold order of society. The status of a person in the society was measured on the basis of the caste in which he was born.

And gradually there came watertight compartments among the people of different classes. M.Sarat Babu observes how this caste system sowed the seeds of disruption and disintegration in society. He comments:

"The social deformity in the Hindu society took the form of caste system. …According to a Hindu myth the four recognized classes emanated from the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet of Brahma, the God of Creation, respectively. Such myths and literature, created and perpetuated by Brahmins, seek to justify the social hierarchy and sanction their superiority. " (1999 281)

In the medieval period caste system was mercilessly executed. Shudras were prohibited to read Vedas. The lower class people were cruelly suppressed by the Brahmins. Established norms were strictly observed. The upper castes took undue advantage of their privileged positions. The lower castes were severely punished for violating the norms of the caste system. Several saints and social thinkers in India like Kabir, Mira Tukaram, Eknath, and Gandhiji, Phule and B.R. Ambedkar tried their best to eradicate caste-system. Even many writers writing in English and regional languages also attempted to raise this problem. M. Sarat Babu aptly quotes: "Like Mulk Raj Anand and Bhabani Bhattacharya in Indian English fiction, Girish Karnad, Badal Sircar and Mohan Rakesh in Indian English drama are concerned with social deformity and expose the evil effects of caste and class in their plays, particularly in *Tale-Danda, Stale News* and *One Day in Ashadha,* respectively." (46)

Caste system is the social deformity that exists ever since the formation of civilization and is unquestioningly accepted by most people. Caste can be condemned publicly and it can be removed from official documents and papers. However, it is deeply ingrained in the orthodox society in such a way that it cannot be removed from people's mind. The King Bijjala's comments on the caste system, in act I, scene II, make us realize how caste consciousness is deeply rooted in the society. He says, "One's caste is like the skin on one's body. You can peel it off top to toe, but when the new skin forms, there you are again: a barber – a shepherd – a scavenger!" (14-15)

Speaking about the relevance of such a play even today, in the author's Preface to the play, Karnad says: "I wrote *Tale-Danda* in 1989 when the 'Mandir' and the 'Mandal' movements were beginning to show again how relevant the questions posed by these thinkers were for our age. The horror of subsequent events and their fanaticism that has gripped our national life today have only proved how dangerous it is to ignore the solutions they offered." (1993 Preface)

The characters are portrayed through their action and reaction. Karnad avoids idealization of any character. Karnad has deep insight into the human mind and very skilfully presents internal conflicts of his characters. Basavanna meets a mysterious death in the end. Thus, Basavanna's grand intention to form a castless society ended in a failure. Vanashree Tripathi is of the view that we should learn a lesson from history and avoid repeating the mistake. She writes:

"…The play is an invitation to look at ourselves – our empty present and our futurelessness. A clear understanding of the drama, *Tale-Danda* obviously requires an illumination of the cultural context of history of the 12th century and also of the contemporary response to the configurations of caste and religion in India." (91)

Though Bijjala, the King of Kalyan, has married into a Kshatriya Royal family of Hoysalas, he is well aware of his own caste. Bijjala himself clarifies how hard his ancestors tried to become Kshatriyas and how it is a herculean task to root out caste system from society. He tells his wife, Rambhavati, "But I am a Kalachurya… A barber. His Majesty King Bijjala is a barber by caste. For ten generations my forefathers ravaged the land as robber barons. For another five they ruled as the trusted feudatories of the Emperor himself. They married into every royal family in sight. Bribed generations of Brahmins with millions of cows. All this so they could have the caste of Kshatriyas branded on their foreheads." (14) The King Bijjala rules Kalyan for fifteen years very successfully. Through the example of Bijjala, Karnad suggests that man attains greatness not by his caste but by the virtue of his natural ability and sincere efforts. A.R. Shukla aptly comments: "Here Karnad achieves two aims. He shows that the king of Kalyan is not a kshatriya but a barber. Further he shows him full of insight and noble thoughts, perhaps to show that deep insight, noble character and ideal administration are not the inborn characteristics of one community only. " (291)

All the *sharanas* and low-caste characters are acutely aware of the problem of caste; even the King Bijjala is not free from the feeling of caste consciousness. Therefore, he expresses his feeling of grief while talking to his wife. "And yet you ask the most innocent child in my empire: what is Bijjala, son of Kalachurya Permadi, by caste? And the instant reply will be: a barber!" (14) And he further thinks that only the *sharana* people treat me equally. He says, "In all my sixty-two years, the only people who have looked me in the eye without a reference to my lowly birth lurking deep in their eyes are the *sharanas:* Basavanna and his men. They treat him…as human being." (15) Hence, he highly appreciates and supports Basavanna's crusade against the caste system. He applauds Basavanna's noble deed by saying, "Basavanna wants to eradicate the caste structure, wipe it off the face of the earth. Annihilate the varna system. What a vision! And what prodigious courage!" (14)

King Bijjala is happy with the s*haranas.* He knows well that it is because of their hard and honest work his country's economy is prospering. So he says: "Every *sharana* seeks only to earn the days keep, makes no extra demands, treats profits with contempt. So who benefits? From every corner of the country, trade and commerce have come pouring into Kalyan..."(24)

Basaveshwara, who is popularly known as Basavanna, is the founder of Lingayat sect called a Lignyats or Virsaiva. He shows his commitment to the eradication of caste and untouchability in setting up of a unique institution 'Anabhava Mantapa' a Spiritual Academy. Everyone, irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion sex or status is welcome to participate in the discourse on the basis of equality. So Bijjala takes a note of the social reformation taking place in Kalyan. He says: "Look at those he has gathered around him: poets, visionaries. And nothing airy-fairy about them, mind you. All hard-working people from the common stock. They sit together, eat together, argue about God together, indifferent to caste, birth or station. And all this is happening in the city of Kalyan – my Kalyan." (15)

Basavanna, a social reformer, works as a treasurer in King Bijjala's court. He tries to mobilize people of different castes for the formation of a new sect i.e. *sharana*. He exhorts them to work for the common good. All *sharanas* are highly impressed by Basavanna's vision of creating a casteless and classless society. Therefore, he is always surrounded by the poets, mystics and visionaries. In this noble task Basavanna gets a strong support from his Brahmin disciples like Jagadeva and Madhuvarasa. There are over hundred and ninety six thousand *sharanas* in the city of Kalyan.

While Bijjala encourages and supports Basavanna and his social movement, Sovideva, his son, shows his hatred against Basavanna and his philosophy. Since Basavanna spends lot of money in treating the *sharanas*, Sovideva suspects that he might have misappropriated some amount of money from the royal treasury. So he hatches a plot to demolish the public image of Basavanna by opening the treasury and exposing the fraud committed by him. Jagadeva, a *sharana* learns about Sovideva's secret plan to open the treasury. He immediately collects thousands of *sharanas* to keep a watch on Sovideva. In this way, Jagadeva prevents Sovideva from meddling with the treasury. After verification they come to know that the treasury is safe and sound and no money is taken. Sovideva is taken to task by his father for his misbehaviour. At this, Sovideva feels deeply distressed and humiliated. So he makes up his mind to retaliate upon both his father and Basavanna.

Damodara Bhatta, Queen's priest and Manchanna Kramita, the Brahmin adviser to the King are very miserable about Basavanna's mission and Bijjala's support to it. They express their serious concern over the growing popularity of Basavanna. Therefore, Sovideva, Damodara and Manchanna come together and make a plan against Bijjala and Basavanna. Basavanna is against religious intolerance. He is deeply hurt when he comes to know that at Maddur some *sharanas* have occupied a Jain temple by force and are threatening to smash the

naked idols in it and turn it into a Shiva temple. Jagadeva, tries to justify the action of the *sharanas* by stating that Jains should be held responsible for the violence as they instigate the sharanas to do so. Therefore, Basavanna decides to go to Maddur to prevent the violence. On this occasion what he says to Jagadeva is quite applicable to our own times as well: "Violence is wrong, whatever the provocation. To resort to it because someone else started it first is even worse. And to do so in the name of a structure of brick and mortar is a monument to stupidity." (29)

The problem of caste system becomes very critical after the announcement of the inter-caste marriage of two *sharana* children. We find several *sharanas* coming together in the house of Basavanna with regard to the engagement of Kalavati, a Brahmin girl of ten with Sheelavanta, a Cobbler boy of fifteen. Madhuvarasa, Kalavati's father happily announces, "We have the engagement ceremony tomorrow evening. You must all come." (36) All *sharanas* feel very much delighted as a *sharana* boy is going to marry a *sharana* girl. But they are not aware of the horrible consequences of the marriage of a Brahmin girl with a Cobbler boy which is known as hypergamous marriage.

In Basavanna, we find a rare blending of practical knowledge and the philosophy of his *sharana* cult. He knows well that his teaching has brought about a revolutionary change in the attitude of his *Sharanas.* But he thinks that a proper time has not come yet to bring the theory of his cult into practice. He realizes that radical changes in the caste system will not take place overnight. He is sure that the orthodox will react to it violently because society is not yet prepared to accept such type of marriage. Therefore he expresses his apprehension about the dire consequences of marriage by stating: "Until now it was only a matter of theoretical speculation. But this – this is real. The orthodox will see this mingling of castes as a blow at the very roots of varnashram dharama. Bigotry has not faced such a challenge in two thousand years. I need hardly describe what venom will gush out, what hatred will erupt once the news spreads." (38)

Basavanna knows well that social changes will not take place all of sudden. Therefore, he cautions the *sharanas* to reconsider the proposal of marriage But at the same time he is quite confident that one day the age-old caste system will be destroyed. So hopefully he predicts: "Some day this entire edifice of caste and creed, this poison-house of varnashrama, will come tumbling down. Every person will see himself only as a human being. As a bhakta. As a *sharana.* That is inevitable. But we have a long way to go. You know the most terrible crimes have been justified in the name of sanatana religion." (38-39)

Both Basavanna and Haralayya ask Sheelavanta about his readiness for the marriage. He says that he likes Kalavati but is unwilling to marry her because she cannot tolerate the smell of leather. Caste system is so firmly rooted in the society that it is hard to wipe it off at once. So Karnad reveals that even those who are at the bottom of the social structure try to create hierarchies among themselves. When Lalita says that her daughter will not tolerate to skin dead buffaloes, Kalyani of the cobbler cast feels offended, and tells her tensely, "Lalitakka, we are cobblers. Not skinners or tanners." Her husband Haralayya also explains: "The holeyas skin the carcass. The madigas and the dohas tan the hide. Only then does it come to us." (40) Lalita rightly points out the prophecy of Haralayya's mother who says, "Rivers of blood will flow if the marriage takes place." (41) But sharanas are not in a position to listen to anything against the inter-caste marriage.

The news of this inter-caste marriage reaches Bijjala who is as much suspicious of the consequences of the proposed inter caste marriage as is Basavanna. He calls upon Basavanna to prevent the wedding because it'll lead to communal violence.

The climax of the play reaches with the marriage. Though King Bijjala, keeping in mind the interest of the kingdom, accepts the marriage, the uppercaste people strongly reject it. When *sharanas* consider the wedding as a union of two *sharana* families, the orthodox take it as a marriage of upper caste girl with a 'low caste' boy. That is why the problem of caste is not at all solved, instead it gets aggravated. Commenting on the type of marriage and why the orthodox show their strong protest against it, Vanashree Tripathi rightly puts it: "In the Hindu religious tradition, two types of *inter-varna* marriages are found. 'Anuloma': (hypogamous) marriage, the higher caste man marrying a lower caste woman is not encouraged, but can still be tolerated. The second 'Pratiloma' (hypergamous) marriage, a marriage of lower '*varna'* man with a higher 'varna' woman could lead most often to excommunication of the couple." (93)

The upper castes and Brahmins are deeply offended and provoked by the sacrilegious act of hypogamous marriage. Now the social situation in Kalyan has become very critical. Damodara, a staunch follower of the Vedic Dharma decides to take advantage of this chaotic situation by making a secret plan to dethrone King Bijjala with the help of Sovideva. So "the prospect of this marriage is perceived as the greatest violation of the caste taboo and this gives an opportunity to the power seekers to foster hatred between the two castes and to use this issue to gain political victory over the rival religious ideologies." (Tripathi 94-95)

Damodara Bhatta holds King Bijjala responsible for protecting the *sharanas.* Now he begins a secret plan of demonstrating a strong protest against the movement. The very idea of mingling of the lower caste with the upper caste is highly intolerable to him. While talking to King Bijjala, his suppressed feelings of hatred and resentment come up and he fiercely criticizes the accursed hypergamous marriage. "The marriage arranged by the *sharanas* was no trifling matter. On the one hand stands the Vedic Dharma, which has branched out in strength over the centuries and now shades the whole of Aryavarta. On the other, there is the *sharana* movement a pestilence – but of virulence not seen since the days of the Buddha. These two face each other in implacable hostility… And if Your Majesty had not intervened, the *sharanas* would have met their fate on the day of that infamous wedding. But You Majesty staunched the wrath of the people and invited disaster on his own head. Why?" (64-65)

In order to gain their selfish ends, all the three – Bhatta, Sovideva and Manchanna make a secret plan to topple the King Bijjala and curb the *sharana* movement with an iron hand. "Bhatta and Manchanna find this an opportune moment to strike an offensive against the *sharanas.* To achieve this goal they pamper the ambition of the King's youngest son, Sovideva. By inciting Sovideva against his father and the *sharanas,* they also promise him their support in usurping the throne of his father." (Tripathi 95)

As per strategy of the dissident faction, the King Bijjala is dethroned but not killed by them. He is imprisoned in his own palace and his son, Sovideva is declared to be the new King of Kalyan. Bijjala cries in vain, "Treachery! Bloody Treachery! Help…" (61), but it is of no use.

Next morning Basavanna, along with seven hundred and seventy *sharanas* visits Bijjala who is greatly distressed. The playwright has very often made reference to the myth of Lord Shiva in the play. So Basavanna advises him to cling to Lord Shiva who alone can save him from any calamity. When Basavanna leaves for Kapadi, Bijjala bursts into sobs and laughter. Basavanna cannot protect Bijjala and the most ironic and unfortunate thing is that his close disciple Jagadeva cruelly murders him.

With their power politics both Bhatta and Kramita try to instigate Sovideva to kill all the *sharanas* who challenged the Hindu religion. Vanashree Tripathi's comment throws light on the Machiavellian nature of Kramita. She observes: "As the court politics grows deeper and more sinister, in the contest for power, Kramita proves himself to be unscrupulously Machiavellian. He beats the more conscientious Bhatta in taking charge of the situation. At the most opportune moment he puts forward a strong argument in favor of striking fear in the masses by annihilating the entire community of sharanas." (100) The

excited Sovideva says, "I shall strike terror in their hearts, I shall wreak havoc." (80) And in no time he brings the devilish plan of Damodara and Manchanna into action.

The *sharanas* are dragged out and butchered violently and mercilessly. In the absence of Basavanna, the fear-stricken *sharanas* run here and there to save themselves. Manchanna advises Sovideva to destroy all the disciples of Basavanna without any discrimination and pay a brief visit to his father-in-law for his safety. Offering the charge of the Kingdom to Manchanna, Sovideva goes to his in-law's house along with Damodara.

Manchanna commands the soldiers to arrest those responsible for the wedding. Immediately Haralayya and Madhuvarasa, the parents of the newly married couple are arrested and brought to the city square and their eyes are plucked out with iron rods. And the height of cruelty is that the soldiers "bound them hand and foot and had them dragged through the streets – tied to elephants' legs – Torn limbs along the lanes, torn entrails, flesh, bones – they died screaming!" (81)

Jagadeva and other *shavanas* lose their temper when they come to know the brutal killing of innocent *shavanas.* They make up their mind to take revenge on Sovideva. Being very furious, Jagadeva addresses his friends, "We can't sit here like old women. Come on. Let's attack the palace. Sovi won't expect us to act so soon. He doesn't know I know the secret route. We'll trap him, cut the bastard into pieces." (82) So he and his *sharana* friends enter the palace with naked swords in their hands, but they find the palace empty except for the imprisoned former ruler, Bijala. Jagadeva thinks that if he and his *sharana* friends go out empty-handed, they will "go down in history as incompetent clowns." (85) Bijjala is seen sitting in the inner shrine of Shiva clinging to the Linga. He is sure that nobody will kill him as long as he is with the Linga. Finally Jagadeva persuades him to come out telling him that he has been sent there by Basavanna. Trusting him, Bijjala comes out of the shrine. And in a state of mad anger, Jagadeva kills the King callously. While his friends go away, he sits in the sanctum of the palace "in front of the linga and plunges the dagger into himself."(88)

Like the absurd hero Jagadeva kills Bijjala and kills himself. Basavanna is greatly grieved when he knows about the brutal killing of the king. In the end he, too, meets his death mysteriously. In this way, "History comes to full circle by end of the play with the dramatic reporting on the stage of Basavanna's death and with him dies his vision of a castless society." (Tripathi 101)

Sovideva learns from his messengers that "The royal guards have gone on a rampage and started looting the city. Temples are sacked, trading houses torched. The city reels under gruesome tales of rape, murder and rioting." (89) He thinks that he has been misguided by Damodara. Now he holds him responsible for the anarchical situation in Kalyan and gets him killed by his guards. He has a fear in his mind that the *sharanas* will destroy him. Knowing that the *sharanas* are running away from Kalyan, he recklessly orders: "Pursue them. Don't let them escape. Men, women, children—cut them all down. Set the hounds after them. Search each wood, each bush. Burn the houses that give them shelter. Burn their books…Tear them into shreds and consign them to the wells." (90)

In the end, Sovideva's coronation takes place amidst the heart-rending cries of pains and groans. The screams of the victims and the Vedic chanting can be heard at the same time. Thus *Tale-Danda* highlights the most delicate and crucial problem of caste system which has been being discussed for the last two thousand years by our socio-political reformers, thinkers and philosophers. M. Sarat Babu aptly quotes Karnad in his article on "Social deformity in *Tale-Danda."* Karnad asserts: "You can perceive deep irony, because, after all the martyrdom of the *sharanas,* when they re-emerged after three centuries of underground survival as lingayats, they were totally cast-ridden." (286) Again explaining the major cause of the failure of the *sharana* movement, Karnad states: "Ultimately the final betrayal was not by the enemies, but by the followers." (Babu 286)

With his missionary zeal Basavanna wanted to build up a democratic society based on the principles of freedom, justice, equality and fraternity. But the age in which he was born was not favourable to the radical changes in society. The orthodox Hindus strongly opposed Basavanna's movement because they feared that the hierarchical caste system would fall down and their social status would come on par with that of low-caste people. And in addition, Basavanna's followers also could not understand the real intention of the movement. No doubt, at the call of Basavanna, they came forward at once and joined his mission; but in their passionate enthusiasm, without realizing the importance of Basavanna's preaching, they too, resorted to violent means. And without being united by mind, they attempted to establish equality by way of intercaste marriage of a Brahmin girl with a low caste boy. Thus Basavanna's efforts to bring about complete transformation in the conventional social structure received a setback.

The title of the play *Tale-Danda* is significant one. At the beginning of the play Karnad explains its literal meaning i.e. death by beheading. (Tale: Head.

Dand: Punishment.) However, Madhumita Ganguli, explains the implied meaning of the title. Tale-Danda means "to destroy' the practice once and for all, through a revolution aiming at social change. To finish off a system which has lost its importance has become relevant in the present day of technical and scientific advancement, in the age of modernization, where a person's individual quality recommends him not his caste or class." (60-61)

Several social movements in the history of India tried their best to eradicate social evils but unfortunately they failed to bring about total transformation in society. So time and again it has been proved that to establish equality in all walks of life, all the sections of society should come together forgetting their differences for the betterment of the country.

Karnad exploits history to expose intolerance and violence in the name of religion and throws light on the present social and political crisis.

Though Karnad raises the socio-religious problem of caste system, he does not give readymade solution to the problem. As an impartial artist, he presents the modern man with his predicament, his challenges, difficulties and complexities.

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Culture in Arun Kolatkar's Jejuri Poems

Dr. N.K. Shinde*

Abstract

There is a close nexus between culture and Literature. The author cannot escape from the culture in which he lives. The culture is reflected in his writing directly or indirectly. Culture is the sum total of habits, values, customs, fine arts, drawings, architecture, traditions and conduct of life-style of man. It also means achieving the highest ideals of mankind, at a particular period of time in human history.

Historians and thinkers believe that India is the country from where the ray of culture emerged and great thoughts are propagated. It is the only culture in the world which spreads realization of 'sat' (truth) 'chit' (concentration) and 'anand'.

Many things can be included while describing the distinguishing characteristics of Indian culture. But it is a fact that India is an amalgamation of various thoughts and ideologies. It is very vast and varied culture rich in knowledge, devotion.

Culture Heritage that India has gifted to the world is also prosperous rich and varied. Culture heritage is man-made heritage. Whatever man obtains or creates with his intellect, skills is called culture heritage.

Arun Kolatkar is a bilingual poet writing both in English and Marathi. He has published four volumes in Marathi. His famous works in Indian English include A Boatride, Jejuri, the Kala Ghoda Poems and Sarp Satra. He has portrayed Indian culture in his famous Jejuri poem. It is a long poem in thirty one sections. It won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize in 1977. It is remarkable about its unity, the way thirty one poems are linked together. This poem throws light on the Indian culture. The present paper tries to trace the various cultural traits the poem encompasses in various sections.

Jejuri is, in fact, a travelogue poem dealing with journey to the temple of Khandoba at Jejuri which is somewhat 50 km away from Pune. It is the location of Khandoba known as Mallari, Mallari Martand, Mhalsakant, Malhar. People from all castes and communities worship Khandoba and is known as Ajmal Khan among Muslims. It is said that Emperor Aurangzeb presented diamond ring to the temple (M.K. Naik). The poem depicts the shrine of Khandoba, the

* Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College, Peth Vadgaon

surrounding and the arid atmosphere of Jejuri. The poet expresses what he sees with an eye of a reporter. The poet objectively depicts the reality around him. Each section is a poem itself and can be read as if it were a single, long poem. Sometimes the poems follow a sequence of events. Through this description Indian culture, i.e. the way of life, the customs, beliefs etc. is portrayed.

The first poem is 'The Bus in Jejuri'. The poet vividly describes the bumpy journey from beginning to the temple. The poet begins his journey in a state transport bus. The windows are covered with tarpaulin flaps. It is a journey during night. The bus is full of pilgrims who want to worship Lord Khandoba. There is an old man wearing a tilak which shows that he is a pilgrim. The tilak indicates that he is a Hindu. It is the Indian culture of devotees to wear tilak. The bus finally reaches Jejuri at the daybreak.

The next poem 'The Priest' is a scathing satire on the greed of the priest i.e. Pujari of the temple of Lord Khandoba. The priest is waiting eagerly as the bus is late. He is anxious to know why the bus is late. He ruminates in his mind whether the bus would come with pilgrims and whether pilgrims would make sufficient offerings to Lord Khandoba. He is anxious of getting 'Puran Poli'. He is sitting on a stone wet in dew. All of a sudden he gets up and sees the bus coming. His face is filled with cheer. He is chewing betel nuts and chanting mantras. With cat-like agility he pounces upon them for his gains. This is the way that the most Pujaris in Indian temples do. They have become commercial. This is their way of life.

'The Priest's Son' is the next poem. The priest has trained the son to be greedy and cunning as he himself is. He deputes the son to take the pilgrims to different parts of the temple and five hills representing five demons whom Lord Khandoba killed. The son acts as the guide. One day he takes the poet to the five hills and tells about the five demons killed by Khandoba. The poet asks the son whether he believes in the truth of the story. He just shrugs his shoulders and keeps silent. The son is confused. He diverts the attention of the poet by that there is a butterfly in the grass. Indian culture is full of myths there is doubt in the truthfulness of these myths. Still pilgrims believe in the myths and worship god.

'A Low Temple' is the next poem. The ceiling of the temple is not high and it is called low temple. There is darkness inside the temple. There are various idols in the temple. In order to see the idols, one has to light matchstick. One of the pilgrims lights the matchsticks and the poet sees various idols. One of the idols has eighteen hands. It is the idol of goddess and the poet asks the priest the name of the deity and why she has eighteen arms. The priest is irrational. The

poet is confused and comes out of the temple and lights a charminar cigarette. This is the Pujari of the temple.

The poem 'Makarand' again throws light on the culture in the temple' if a pilgrim wants to offer prayer or perform 'puja' in the temple, he has to take away his shirt and wear 'sohale', a saffron coloured dhoti and a veil i.e. 'uparan' over his shoulder. This is the custom in temple for performing 'puja'. Those who do not wear 'sohale', they are not allowed to perform 'puja'. The poet refuses to take away out his shirt and goes out with a matchbox from one of the pilgrims. He lights a cigarette and smokes. This is his makarand i.e. honey.

The poem 'A Search' points out the belief in Jejuri Hills. All the stones on the hill are holy. If a pilgrim scratches a rock, he will find some mythical image on it. All stones are sacred and represent various gods. A huge portion of the rock in Jejuri is considered to be Khandoba's wife whom Khandoba struck down in a fit of anger and turned her into a stone figure. A crack in the middle of the rock represents the scar of the wound she received from the broad blade of her husband's sword. This myth is believed by the devotees and very few like the poet question this myth.

The poem 'Blue Horse' is about the superstition and rituals at Jejuri. After performing prayers at the temple of Khandoba, the priest, i.e. Pujari arranges a ritual at his house. It is singing ceremony which is called the recitation of 'Waghya Murali'. It is a chorus song in the praise of Khandoba's horse. A toothless lady singer leads the chorus. She sings the hymn on Khandoba. However, the song she sings is not at all melodious. Something is wrong with her throat. The words of song come out of her throat with great difficulty. She is toothless. The song appears farfetched without melody. The other singers are in chorus. There is a drummer with black skin. He is drumming the tambourine with full force to keep company with the singers. There is also his step-brother playing clumsily on the one string instrument i.e. 'tun- tune'. These singers are thought to be God' own children. The livelihood of these singers totally depends on their singing. This is their life. It is singing with dance. The song is sung on the blue horse of Khandoba. The lord Khandoba killed demons and murdered his wife Malsa. After this act Lord Khandoba rode away on the blue horse. The protagonist asked the Pujari why the horse on the walls of his house is white and not blue and he asked to explain him about the contradiction. The pujari told him that the horse appeared to him blue. The poem depicts the hollowness of rituals and religious superstition.

The poem 'Chaitanya' is again the blind belief of the devotees in Lord Khandoba. Chaitanya was a renowned Bengali saint. He is believed to have visited Jejuri around 1510. The saint too believed in the view that the stones at

Jejuri represent gods; the stones are sweet as grapes. When a pilgrim puts a stone in his mouth, he will spit out gods. This belief is explained to the devotees and the devotees without questioning believe this.

'An Old Woman' is a vivid and touching picture of a beggar woman. This is a representative picture of beggars at pilgrim places in our country. It is a description of a helpless woman who is forced to beg. The poem restores human touch and establishes our contact with humanity. The protagonist's hand is caught by the old woman. She begs fifty paisa coin from the poet. In return she promises the poet to take him to the horse shoe temple. The poet tells her that he has already seen the temple and does not want to visit it. Still she hobbles with great difficulty and tightens her grip on his shirt. The poet looks at her with an air of finality, which shows that he would not give her any coin. She sticks to her request and asks the poet [what she can do on hill as wretched as this'. The poor woman cannot find any work on these barren and old rocks. She is forced to beg. She has no option other than begging. The poet looks at the sky and then turns his look at her eyes which look like bullet holes on her face. The cracks around her eyes spread beyond her skin and spread across the sky. The poet is moved by her utter poverty and helplessness. He parts away a small coin to her. The poet feels the futility of his existence. He feels himself as trivial as the small coin.

'Heart of Ruin' is again about the blind belief at Jejuri. The temple of Maruti i.e. the son of god of wind, Pavanputra, is in ruin at Jejuri. The ceiling of the temple is collapsed over the head of the idol of Maruti. A pariah dog i.e. bitch has given birth to its puppies in this ruined temple. The puppies move about freely. There is a charity box in the temple. The pilgrims drop coins in it and nobody has bothered to take out this charity box lying buried under the weight of the beam fallen from the roof of the temple.

The poem 'Yashawant Rao' is also on the blind belief of the pilgrims. He is a minor God, not important. So his idol is not in the main temple of Khandoba. It is outside the main temple of Khandoba. The god would not promise you to fulfill your aspirations on various dreams of your life. However, Yashawant Rao is a god the pilgrims must visit. He is full of merci. He can cure the fractured bones. He can restore the missing part and can make the body whole. He is a kind of bone setter. The contrast is that he himself has no head, no hands or no single head.

The Railway station concludes the poem Jejuri. It consists of six parts and each part has a heading. These six parts form a picture of the railway station which is managed and administered inefficiently and ineffectively. The pilgrims tolerate inconveniences at station patiently. 1. The indicator- it is a clock like

instrument which indicates the time of the arrival of the trains. However, it is not functioning. The numerals on the clock are faded and not properly visible. They create confusion for the passengers. 2. The station dog- there is a skin diseased dog for the last three hundred years. It forms the very spirit of the whole place. If a passenger goes near the dog, it opens its right eye. It opens its eyes only to see the person standing is a man or a demon or a demi-god. The poet sarcastically says if the dog is offered a ticket for heaven it would refuse it saying that the day of his exit from the world has not yet arrived. 3. The tea stall- it is managed by the young man. He is inexperienced. If a passenger asks him any question, he does not answer. Instead he starts washing his dishes in the kitchen sink. He has vowed not to speak. 4. The station master- he is a typical class. He has strange opinions about time table. He rejects every time table. He is waiting for the sun to set. Perhaps time to retire to home. 5. Vows – the poet is waiting at the station for the train to arrive. The train has not arrived. He inquires about the arrival of the train. Nobody gives any information about the train. He vows to sacrifice a goat, to crack a coconut on the railway track, or bathe the station master in milk or give a gold toy train to the booking clerk. These offering are made by the devotees to fulfill their dreams. This is the way of the devotees. 6. The setting sun- it looks quite big, as a wheel. It reminds the poet of the wheel of the bus that he came in to Jejuri. This connects the beginning and end of the journey to Jejuri.

To conclude, Arun Kolatkar has vividly portrayed the culture at the pilgrim place of Khandoba at Jejuri. It throws light on the beliefs, ways of life, superstition etc. The tone of the poet is sometimes sarcastic. However, at times he is detached and just describes what he sees. This is the realistic picture of Jejuri.

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The New Woman in the Short Stories of Cornelia Sorabji

Fahmeeda. P*

Abstract:

Love and Life Behind the Purdah (1901) is a collection of ten short stories by the Indian Parsee woman writer Cornelia Sorabji, depicting traditional life and culture in the women's domestic quarters and other aspects of life under colonial life in India.There are four distinct perspectives in the collection of short stories. Firstly it is a historical narrative documenting life of women under colonial rule written in English language for British/International readers, 'appropriating' the language of the Imperialists'. Secondly the stories depict the emerging nascent New Woman and the apparent British socio-cultural influence. Thirdly the text gives voice to the marginalized, thus letting the 'Subaltern' speak through the collection of stories which presents an amalgamation of traditional practices and modern influences on the women of colonial India from a New Woman perspective by a true New Woman author. Sorabji qualified to be a lawyer successfully completing the Bachelor of Civil Laws exam at Somerville College, Oxford in England. Yet she was barred from practicing Law due to a patriarchal caveat, which barred women from practising law in courts until the year 1920. Lastly it is a feminist text voicing the core issues of New Woman; right to education, right to employment and right to choose a partner in marriage, hence relevant to the present day.

***Key Words**: emerging New Woman, British socio-cultural influence, expression of the marginalized subaltern, significant social aspects of New Woman find expression.*

The collection of short stories *Love and Life Behind the Purdah* (1901) has only female lead protagonists' depicting the women behind the purdah with a sensitive and particular eye for detail. One can see the conflict between repressive orthodoxy and aspiring selfhood in the different stories.

The story titled *The Pestilence at Noonday*, and depicts a young married woman's struggle against society and plague to save her father-in-law and son singlehandedly. *Sita* the protagonist is a potential fully equipped New Woman, an educated, bold, saucy and brave woman who is different from her peers. Her husband*, Het Ram* in the beginning of the story leaves home to "knowledge to

* Research Scholar, Department of English, Tumkur University, Tumkur

acquire, the world to sample, a name to make" (14) and promises to come back when he is "tired of it all" (14) and hopes to find "you just the same, sitting here among the lotuses and marigolds, and with a heart just as full of love for me as it is now-rather fuller, perhaps, with enforced repression!" (14)

Het Ram is chauvinistic in his attitude towards her at her response to his going away for an undetermined period of time.

> ...Seriously Sita, you must drop this nonsense. I am sorry that I let them educate you. It has given you notions which patch clumsily on to the heritage of traditions into which you were born. Remember you are still a Hindu wife, however glibly your tongue may adapt itself to foreign languages… (14)

The scenario changes after his exit. With no definite source of income to sustain the family, the Brahmin father-in-law being too weak to perform puja rituals financial situation turns grim*. Sita* receives a proposal of marriage from a journalist *Gopal.* The father-in-law counsels her to accept the proposal for the future of her son. *Sita* refuses the proposal because she does not like the notions of remarriage and she responds there is another way

> …I like not this notion of remarriage. Your grandparents would have deemed it sin…there is a way, other than the one through Gopal's courtyard. Of what avail is all that you have let me learn, Sanskrit and English, ... and I am less able to help myself than the woman who grinds the corn for our daily bread? I will seek my old teacher; ... show me how to make use of my learning. (20)

These thoughts of *Sita* depict the New Woman in the making. *Sita* is brave and courageous to think of gainful employment of her education and take on the responsibilities of the family in the absence of the patriarch of the family. For her a second marriage is not an option for she is equipped and mentally ready for steering the family in the right direction, alone. Thus *Sita* is a heroine who is ahead of her times and a reflection of the New Indian womento British counterparts.

Yet the story concludes rather tamely with the potential New Woman being portrayed as being resourceful and industrious in protecting her son and father-in-law from the medical authorities who are enforcing quarantine as there is the dreaded plague in the town.

In a story titled *Love and Life*, the incipient New Woman in the making can be seen. The young *Piari* the lead protagonist, the fourth wife of the *Raja*, is different from the three elder *Ranis*. *Piari* is educated, learns English from the

Raja himself, yearning for an intellectual challenge and is hoping for an experience beyond the zenana*. *Piari* represents the women who are to be emancipated from the figurative zenana of the mind through education and independent thought, yet refusing to leave behind traditional customs, beliefs and ideas.

Piari comments to the senior *Rani* thus,

> I am getting so clever. I can read the Fourth Book in the vernacular, and – *He* is so pleased. *He* is going to teach me English, and yes! Also to keep accounts, and to read newspapers...I shall be quite as clever as the memsahibs, whom he sees in England, ...as if their brains were men's brains! (43)

One can observe that *Piari* is not happy with her achievements just for their sake but that the *Raja* is happy about them and makes much of her. The senior *Rani* goes on to comment to the *Raja* later in the story,

> …My Lord, these books are not good for her (44)

The *Raja* supports and encourages *Piari* in her academic endeavours. He deals her a cruel blow when he brings home a fifth *Rani* (a political necessity) an educated girl from a more liberal zenana. Gradually time and affections of the *Raja* recede from *Piari. Piari* is unable to come to terms with this aspect of the *Raja* even though she is well aware of the number of *Ranis* preceding her. The fifth *Rani* is a New Woman, highly individualistic and unorthodox, who has literally arrived from England and her behaviour is figuratively 'English'. She can speak English, does not follow the etiquette of the zenana and is unorthodox in her way of life, a constant juxtapose to the young, irreproachable*Piari*who dies after giving birth to a son greatly disappointed in the *Raja.* The present study argues that the ending of the story is rather unfortunate and the potential of the character is not explored.

The next story *Love and Death* is a tragic depiction of the consequences of child marriage with the plot being no less than a potboiler for a Hindi Bollywood movie. The lady protagonist is a New Woman, for she is a doctor-girl (no name given- referred to as doctor-girl throughout the story), educated, financially independent and despite her achievements not yet married. On perusal and questioning from her friends in India she replies that there has been a child marriage performed when she was very young, a girl of five. She is not aware of her husband's present whereabouts for she has just returned from Europe

*the ladies quarters of the house where men are not allowed to enter- except the *Raja* and a few trusted male servants

having completed her medical education and no one from her family has informed her. There is a young Indian doctor also travelling from abroad, presumably Khartoum, Sudan after completion of medical education. His past is the same as the young doctor-girl. They are both deputed to work in their country in a town ridden with the plague. They meet fall in love and suffer inwardly as they are worried about the prospect of meeting the bride and the groom they have left behind in the child marriage. The doctor-girl attends a festival of fire-god in which seven virgins are sacrificed to appease the gods of plague. The doctor-girl is one among them, she dies in her hospital accident ward and it is later revealed that the two protagonists were actually married in the child marriage of the past. The story does not delve into the conflict of the doctor-girl before she decides to sacrifice her life; her decision is rather sudden and appears thoughtless on the one hand but seems the best in keeping with the trauma she would have faced in the future; in love with one man and to lead a married life with another, about whom she does not know anything for he maybe an illiterate.

Urmi- the Story of a Queen presents the social realism of the fin de siècle. *Urmi* a queen is on her death bed, with no one but a trusted servant named *Bukku*with her. She is an educated New Woman who was taught by her father. *Urmi* has been an asset to her husband, but a sworn enemy to the mother-in-law, as she has come between the son and the mother. Her words on the death bed reflect the trauma and suffering a New Woman at the fin de siècle faced, as the society was not ready to accept a woman of her stature. She says,

> You shall tell my father…when I came, how they looked at me, and shook their heads, and said a 'God forbid!' because I read and wrote? And when the king, our lord, favoured me above them all, and sought my presence, and listened to my words, I heard them whisper. 'Bold minx!' they said, 'child of the Evil One!' she knows what it does not beseem women to know, for she reads and writes as if she were some common clerk. And when she talks to *him*, she lifts her eyes and looks upon his face. How know we that in her distant home she did not break her purdah? (59)

In the story titled *Greater Love*, newly married New Woman *Kamala* invites the wrath of the matriarchs' by extending an invitation to the barren, childless *Matha Shri* to her home for a 'kunkun'[*] party (2003:61). Young *Kamala*

[*] Kunkun- a vermilion colour powder, applied in the parting of the hair considered to be the mark of a Hindu married woman.

extends the invitation with an honest intention to offer prayers on her behalf so that *Matha Shri* does not feel alienated. She says,

> "I pray for you! May the gods hear me, and give you (not me) a son!' do you understand, Matha Shri? …I mean it, even if the gods are too busy to give both of us – that which we desire. And I've said the same prayer for you at every *kunkun* party this year. (63)

It is because *Kamala* is educated that she has such outrageous notions according to the matriarchs. They blame the education of *Kamala* for her sincere wishes to pray for the best for a suffering sister.

In the story titled*, Behind the Purdah* Sorabji portrays the contrast between a Western and Indian New Woman. This story is told partly in the epistolary form, letters written by *Miss Rebecca Yeastman*, a Western New Woman to her lawyer friend *Miss Marion Mainwaring*. The present study argues the story's depiction of the Western women's rooms presents a prelude to Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929). The two women are educated, financially independent and with rooms of their own reflecting this aspect. They have all possible conveniences imaginable - paintings by Rubens, Nicholas Poussin, Rossetti, beautiful Madonna's etc., a number of books on topics of interest to the women, a writing table, and a spacious window, softly cushioned seating arrangements, a copper kettle, a pleasantly crackling fire and lot of paper and writing materials.

Rebecca, the lawyer is taken for a ride by the calculative and plotting women of the zenana of a king. The women have plotted to evict the senior *Thakrani*[*]from the zenana, as they are unable to tolerate her interference in the matters of the zenana anymore by claiming that she has poisoned the younger *Rani*. The story is written entirely from the Western women's point of view and depicts the Indian women as submissive, docile and accepting kind, except for the scheming *Parbathi*. It is also a sad picture of a woman who has seen better days suffering in a low life due to the machinations of a few evil women.

The story *A Living Sacrifice* is a terrible real life account of the Sati system in India. It is a heart rending tale of the twin identical sisters, *Tani* and *Dwarki*, of whom*Dwarki* is a widow living on the bits and pieces thrown as charity by *Tani's*mother-in-law. Suddenly *Tani's*husband dies and she is forced by her in-laws to commit sati, which she stoutly refuses. So in a moving contemplated action of sacrifice *Dwarki*performs the Sati by drugging her sister *Tani t*o sleep.This story throws light on the inhuman practice of Sati and raises

[*] Thakrani – senior Queen

awareness among the educated elite to take action.Moved greatly by the tragedy of *Dwarki,* it is an Englishman who offers a way out of the tragic Sati.

The story *The Fire is Quenched- A Sketch in Indian Ink*is the only story of the collection which fictionalizes the Zoroastrian faith's practice of awarding death due to pollution. The female protagonist *Makkhi* is a New Woman for she raises a voice against blind belief in religion. *Makkhi's*child dies in her arms and the faith of the Parsi's accords death as pollution, has been decreed to the person who holds the dead body, in this case the mother *Makkhi.* Even though *Makkhi* is aware of the practice she secretly rebels against it, by holding on to the child, her offspring in its last moments as she does not want it take its last breath on a cold seat in a train. The tragedy is inevitable as *Makkhi* willingly reveals the secret to the family and *Khursud*, her husband and the high priest who has to initiate the terrible punishment of giving ten thousand stripes to the polluted *Makkhi*. It is a true depiction of the conflict faced by *Makkhi* who is willing to die rather than let her child die in a stranger's arms. It is also a questioning of the Parsee faith's inhuman practice of a people who are known the world over for their humanitarian work.

The Indian New Woman writerSorabji has used the novel 'form' and the 'language' which has its origins in Europe with a number of changes made by them to suit the Indian cultural background, thereby reshaping the conventional short story form. The issues of her time and its impact on women is the main concern of the writer –religion of the colonizer, socio-cultural changes brought about in tradition and customs of the colonized and their impact on contemporary women. Sorabji uses the technique of frontloading as a means of presenting cultural information in the text for the intended readers.

The word 'Purdah' in the title is a technique of frontloading for the author has not chosen the English word 'veil' for it, preferring the Anglicized word 'Purdah' for the Indian word 'Parda'.

There are a number of instances of frontloading like the following in the story *The Pestilence at Noonday*

> The street presented a whole spectrum of exquisite colour. There were the graceful draperies of the women and the brilliant turbans of the men – for the sterner sex is , in India, allowed the indulgence of primitive tastes for the attractive in dress; and indeed, to the seeing eye, the little procession was inarticulate history. (16)

The story *Love and Death* has the following lines depicting the scene at the temple, where the virgins consign themselves to the fire for the appeasement of the Gods of Plague

> But the crowd has one manner of encamping. Under each cart is tied a primitive hammock, and into this are thrown the squalling babies, safely out of the way, while their parents water the beasts and cook the evening meal. (54)

The story *Behind the Purdah* has the following lines describing the wily nature of the Senior Rani thus,

> ... you see old Mother Thakrani wear widow's cloth. She cobra-minded, breeze in her brain. She make poison ready. Cook sweetmeats hide poison. Ranee eat sweetmeat; now sick, to-morrow die... Mother Thakrani too much wicked. Doctor-lady give certificate; write Ranee sahib die poison (74)

One can see the use of English language as spoken by a native who does not grasp the nuances of the foreign language, caught and presented by the author in its real style.

Conclusion

The collection of short stories portrays such New Women as *Sita, Piari, doctor-girl, Urmi, Kamala, Matha Shri, Rebecca Yeastman,* the twin sisters *Tani, Dwarki, Makkhi,* who question - religion and blind belief, traditional practices and customs, patriarchy for right to education, be independent earning members of society and choose life partners on their own. As can be seen from the above the protagonists' face a social crisis as they want to better their condition and status in life. Alternately, if these women had simply consented to their male dominant attitudes they would have been happy ones, the individuality of the person would not have risen.

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POEMS

The Learned Man

Dr. N.G. Wale*

At school and college, he strove to reach the goal,
And with determination he toiled all day long,

To gain a name and fame,
He went on building dream after dream.

Impressed by Gandhi, he vowed to be a nationalist.
Inspired by Nehru, he wished to be a socialist.

But in manhood, he gave up the ideal world,
And selfishness prompted him to cherish the luxurious world.

He presumed he would become prefect by getting education,
Having tempted by transitory things, soon forgot his mission.

Using his Knowledge, he thought, he would serve the needy,
But in course of time, he became greedy.

For self prosperity, he exploited the vice,
And led a worldly-life as per his choice.

It was everybody's expectation, the learned man would serve the nation,
But to gain his private ends, he brought about the bomb explosion.

Thus, he presumed he would become perfect by getting education,
Having tempted by transitory things soon forgot his mission.

* Assist. Professor, Department of English, Balasaheb Desai College, Patan

Corruption

Dr. N.G. Wale*

Corruption! Corruption! Corruption!
Has become today a new profession.
Make corruption and get promotion,
The only way to save the nation.

Leaders boast, "We are born to serve India",
But their deeds are contrary to their idea.
Greedy clerks, officers and leaders,
Regard wealth as a sign of success.

Leaders declare, India is secular,
And they instigate people to be communal.
Yesterday twenty killed, today, forty,
Rulers yet claim Indians are in safety.

They create an illusion,
To root out corruption is their mission,
Taking a bribe claim they,
Hard we worked for Independence Day,

Leaders are known for their double-dealing.
To grab power, foul means are adopted, without feeling.
Lawmakers are dominated by mafia-Don,
It is really a very deplorable scene.

No one, in reality,
Cares for India's security
There is, in fact, a call for a great revolution,
To bring about it, youth power is the only solution.

* Assist. Professor, Department of English, Balasaheb Desai College, Patan

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