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## Editorial

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I am very happy to present the first issue of NMIJMS to our readers. The present issue evaluates some prominent fiction writers who wrote in English or have been translated in English; it also evaluates the tradition of Marathi folk arts. The issue consists of eight scholarly articles and nine poems. The writers focused herein are Vikas Swaroop, Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Narendra Jadhav, and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. All these writers are widely recognized and praised all over the world for their contribution to literature and language. The articles in the book address the socio-cultural, mythical, political, economic and other contemporary issues of India.

Dr R.T. Bedre writes on the white politics behind Danny Boyle's film *Slumdog Millionaire*. He locates the colonizers' mindset at work while screen adapting Indian novel into a film. He underlines the differences between the novel and the film and accounts for the probable reason while making deliberate changes in the film.

S.Savitha writes on some excesses in women's writings. For that she studies Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* and Anita Nair's *Ladies' Coupe*.

Neelam Mulchandani studies Divakaruni's fiction work '*Arranged Marriage*' and finds out that the identity woman having of South Asian Diaspora cannot be categorized as simply Eastern or Western, submissive or dominant, but rather it is comprised of numerous consciousnesses that encompass various conflicting characteristics. In her second paper, Neelam Mulchandani, writes on Shashi Deshpande's novel, *A Matter of Time*, and finds out that Deshpande advocates the total independence for women.

Dr. Mahendra Shinde looks at the past, present and future of Indian English protest literature. For that he considers three very important stages of its development. First, the historical circumstances in which English reached India. Second, socio-cultural overtones of its growth, and the third is the common allegations leveled against Indian writing in English. He thinks that the earliest literary expression in English was of the elite class. He finds out strong protest in Dr. Narendra Jadhav's memoir *Outcaste*. His views about protest are outstanding and rather different from other critics. Thus he says, "The very protest is all about standing against the wrongs done to the society, making the oppressor class 'see' their wrongs done to the oppressed class, and at the same time making the oppressed class aware of their own dignity as human beings next to nobody."

Bharat Gugane examines the relations between 'Literature and Science'. He raises a question that why we should continue with the current form of literature? Rapidly growing influence of technology has altered the way in which we live and think. The cultural, social, and

economic life of man has drastically changed. Thus, literature and technology have impacted on each other. He thinks that the current book form will be replaced by a digital form.

I am confident that the issue will be useful for readers, critics and researchers.

I gratefully acknowledge the guidance and help received from various persons during the completion of this issue. I owe much indebtedness to Dr. Ajay Tengse (Dean, Faculty of Arts, SRTMU Nanded), Dr. Smita Lakhotiya (Nagori), Dr. R. T. Bedre and Dr. M.S. Shinde for their guidance and constant encouragement.

I am grateful to all the contributors for their responses. I thank all the members of our advisory board and editorial board. I am also thankful to Mr. Krishna Rajbinde who designed the website.

**-Kalyan Gangarde**

Editor in Chief

NMIJMS

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**1****WHITE POLITICS BEHIND DANNY BOYLE'S *SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE*****DR. R. T. BEDRE**Principal, S.P.P.A.College, Sirsala,  
Dist. Beed. (M.S.).

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**A**llahabad born and 1986 batch IFS recruit diplomat Vikas Swarup rose to fame when his debut novel *Q & A* (2005) became an international bestseller and got translated into 42 different languages. Suddenly the India's present experienced diplomat deputed as Consul-General at Japan (having worked in Turkey, USA, Ethiopia, Great Britain, Johannesburg South Africa) earned an identity of a novelist when his first book was short-listed for the Best First Book for the commonwealth Writers' Prize. It also won South Africa's Exclusive Books Boeke Prize in 2006 and Prix Grand Public at the 2007 Paris Book Fair respectively. He began to be discussed in the media world when the BBC radio play based on his novel won the Gold Award for Best Drama at the Sony Radio Academy Award 2008 and IVCA Clarion Award in the same year. An audio version of the book by Harper Collins voiced by Kerry Shale won the Audie for the best fiction audio book of the same year. Film4 a UK based company brought the movie rights and the famous film maker Danny Boyle released a movie titled *Slumdog Millionaire* in 2008 and the novelist into diplomat Vikas Swarup became a world famous name from India.

*Slumdog Millionaire* released in USA and its journey of collecting award began with People's Choice Award at Toronto Film Festival, British Independent Film Award in 2008. The national Board of Review declared it as the best film of 2008. It swept five out of six awards Critic's Choice Awards and won all the four nominations at Golden Globe Awards. The film knocked at the international level with seven BAFTA awards, finally rocked the Oscar Academy by receiving ten nominations, and made a record-breaking history by winning the second largest total Oscar Awards (8) even won by a single movie in Feb 2009. Only the Lord of the Rings: the Return of the King had won 11 awards in 2004 (Wikipedia, Swarup, p.2). It was the first ever movie related to India to win such a large number of awards and Indians have had a reason to be overjoyed as it has an Indian story behind it, Indian actors and Indian music team having a lion's share in its success.

Overwhelmed and impressed by the film(y) success of the story, Swarup republished the novel titling it as *Slumdog Millionaire* and the book topped the list of holiday's and traveler's book. When Swarup watched the movie for the first time, his response was, "The movie is

usually dazzling and emotionally satisfying and that the filmmaker kept their promise to keep the 'soul' of the book intact" (Swarup, Author's Official Website, p. 9). Even the British scriptwriter Simon Beaufoy who won the Oscar award for the Best Adapted Category for the film, acknowledged credit of the book while replying to the award. He said, "It is a tremendous honour. I thank Vikas Swarup without him *Slumdog* would not have happened. Thanks Vikas Swarup" (Beaufoy, Author's Official Website, p. 8).

Swarup was overwhelmed by the success of the film, but he admits feeling a bit distance from the film and its success. His feeling of being sidelined was exhibited. He put on record when he was not invited to the Golden Globe Award, he felt hurt. He said, "I would have liked to be made to feel a part of it, because after all, without my story there would haveno film at all" (Swarup, Author's Official Website, p. 9). In the success of the film the writer of the original book received a raw deal. He was put aside at the time of award ceremony. The basic question is: Is the *Slumdog* only trans-mediation (to be correct, screen adaptation) of Swarup's novel or an adaptation? If it's an adaptation, is the adaptation of the novel into a film plain one? The present piece of writing attempts to answer these questions.

In the first place, one has to understand that while a trans-mediation retains the original except the requirements of the new medium, an adaptation brings in some changes retaining only the idea of the original. It means in the latter case, more liberties are availed as per the conveniences. There appears to be adaptation of the novel than a trans-mediation. To arrive this point, a comparison between the novel and film is attempted herein in terms of changes, additions and deletions of the original while making the film.

Apart from the changes in the title from *Q & A* to *Slumdog Millionaire*, there are many more changes in the film. The quiz show W3B ( Who Will Win Billion) of the novel becomes Kaun Banega Crorepati in the film because the quiz show anchored by Amitabh Bachhan (which germinated an idea of writing a novel to Swarup on this topic) had made history in India.

A major change in the film of Danny Boyle is that Swarup's likable hero Ram Mohammed Thomas, whose name is borrowed from each of India's three major religions to suit its secular and filmy image, is turned into a full Muslim name Jamaal Malik. Boyle's team made him a Muslim character perhaps Boyle intends to benefit from the image Muslims carry in the world and a significant portion of Muslims in India, as it is a movie about India. The character of the protagonist's beloved also undergoes some changes. Swarup's Nita has become Latika in the movie. In the novel the hero meets her in the Red Light Area of Agra, where Nita is a prostitute. But in the movie, Latika is his childhood friend, separated while his escape from the orphanage of Mamanbhai. He searches her in Mumbai at the prostitute's quarters, which becomes his passion in the movie, and he finds her as a mistress of Babubhai, another new character in the movie.

Another significant change in the movie is the number of questions and the very questions. The 13 questions of novel are reduced to 8 questions. Like any quiz show, the first question has to be simple. In movie also, Swarup's question on a film hero Arman Ali becomes a question on

Amitabh Bachhan in the movie as the film makers and the people around the world know Bachhan. Similarly, Sachin Malvankar the cricketer of the novel becomes Sachin Tendulkar in the movie for the same reason.

Some characters of the novel undergo changes in the movie. For example, Jamaal's friend Salim is neither as criminal as shown in the movie nor does he undergo any change at the end in the original novel. Salim plays a minor character in the novel while in the movie he is a major supporting character. Likewise, the anchor of the quiz show in the novel Prem Kumar is a die-hard criminal. But the anchor in the movie, Anil Kapoor is made sober villain, he only tries to kidnap Jamaal as the part of the conspiracy of the sponsors of the show to avoid the payment of the prize. In the movie, occasionally he tries to discourage and demoralize Jamaal during the show. In the novel he is criminal many ways appearing in the life of the protagonist.

An important change in the characterization in the movie is an expansion of the role of police inspector. The police inspector in the novel is one of the pawns in the hands of the quiz show men. However, in the movie, the inspector played by Irfan Khan, who initially appears rude but later becomes a sympathizer and rescuer to the protagonist. Babubhai the goon is again another addition made in the movie. His role becomes prominent in the concluding part of the movie. He appears as the master of Jamaal's beloved Latika but disappears without any logic in the movie.

The editor and the screen playwright of the movie seem to have played a significant role since so many episodes from the novel did not find place in the movie. As stated earlier, the number of questions is reduced in the movie. Since so many episodes met the editor's cut, the questions naturally got deleted. Some eight episodes of the novel got deleted in the film version. The episode of Shantaram Godbole, whose pet dog's name helps the protagonist know the name of the smallest planet of our galaxy, is deleted. The role of Smita, the daughter of Godbole, who appears as an advocate in the police station to help the protagonist is deleted. Therefore, her role is merged in the role of the kind police inspector.

Another minor episode dropped in the movie is the Soldier's tale, where the protagonist knows the highest Indian military award, Param vir chakra. Same happens with the Shankar-Swapnadevi story. Since this episode produces no question and nor reply, this episode got cut. Arvind Rao's tale is also dropped. He is a drunkard who narrates the protagonist his betrayal against his own brother with the help of the black magic that he learnt from an African girl. In this tale the protagonist learns the capital town of New Guinea. Also is dropped the story of Ahmad, the contract killer, who is interested in betting on cricket. The protagonist gets rid of Maman the goon and learns how many centuries Tendulkar scored in Test Cricket.

The other two deletions made in the movie the Mr. Taylor episode and the Father Timothy-father John episode those are more significant than others. Those deletions do not seem to have been made simply for the cinematic purposes. The Taylor episode is quite lengthy one. Mr. Taylor is an Australian ambassador to India. The protagonist earns an honest name in the good book of Taylor and learns a lot of things about Australian English and life. At the house of Taylor among the diplomats (Swarup seems to have used his first hand experience in this



episode) the protagonist comes to know the meaning of the diplomatic term *persona-non-grata*. But this episode giving an answer to an intricate question is deleted in the movie. Mr. Taylor turns out to be an insincere ambassador buying some sensitive secret defense information from an Indian employee. He is forced to leave country on the charge of misbehavior. Danny Boyle seems to have dropped this episode on the racial ground. The most important deletion in the movie is the Father Timothy- father John episode. In this episode, the protagonist finds an answer to a difficult question about the sequence of the letters normally inscribed on a Cross i.e. INRI. This interesting episode also got deleted from the movie. There appear to be racial and cultural reasons than the cinematic or editorial needs. In this episode, it becomes clear that Father Timothy was living a double life – that of a pious father devoted to the church activities and that of a father of an illegitimate child. He cannot accept publicly the child as his own. At the end, Father Timothy ends his own life.

Father John episode is a sequel to the Father Timothy episode. Father John replaces Father Timothy. Father John is a drug addicted and is also involved in the illegal drug-trafficking. He is a homo-sexual person who abuses the young children of the church to satisfy his pervert sexual desires.

These two deletions in the movie are not simply made for the sake of an artistic purpose but the racial- cultural superiority is at work at the back of mind of the White European filmmakers. The White filmmakers do not want to show any element in the movie that will show any European or Christian in grey shade. They do not like any European or Christian citizen associated with any evil or sinful acts. They showed Shantaram Godbole, the astrologer guilty of incest or Arvind Rao, sinner of fratricide but did not allow Timothy to end up as in an illegitimate father of a child or Father John as to be known to the world as a homosexual or an Australian ambassador faulty in his duty. These episodes could have caused damage to the European image. In the post-colonial present also, the European filmmakers have not got rid of the racial superiority of their race and colour of the bygone times. The racial superiority gets upper hand while it comes to use media power in hands.

Not only this, the White filmmakers have taken care that the traditional image of India as the place of only desperation and misery does not improve. What attracted the filmmakers is in the words of Swarup, “...all of Dickens’ books puts together don’t seem to contain this misery, evil, heartbreak, retribution, and reversal of fortune of the protagonist” (Swarup, The complete review’s Review. Q&A (Slumdog Millionaire) p. 4).

It is said that the works portraying filthy and poor Indian get encouraged and awarded at the international stage. Swarup defends the novel not completely realistic but a “slice of life” (Swarup, Author’s Official Website, p. 9). He further writes about how any thing about India is sought by the curious Europeans. “There is a new hunger for all things Indian, whether it is Indian food or Indian ICT experts or Indian books. Swarup sees this modern-day fable of the underdog beating the odds and winning (the quiz) is the part of renewed global curiosity about India” (Swarup, It all started in Allahabad, P. 4).

To conclude, these changes in the original are made for some effect purpose and some to maintain the racial superiority and to reduce the original writer's credit on the work in the new medium. It seems that the only the idea- that a slum boy wins a billion prize for the questions ordinarily he is not supposed to know- is borrowed from the novel and rest is the filmmaker's imagination.

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SOME EXCESSES IN WOMEN'S WRITINGS: WHAT WOMAN DOES TO WOMAN –  
A STUDY OF ARUNDHATI ROY'S *THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS* AND ANITA NAIR'S  
*LADIES' COUPE*

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**W**e are never tired of talking about the way in which woman is exploited by man and by man-oriented society. One of our favorite themes is the theme of the exploitation of woman as a sex symbol. There is no denying the fact that in today's world woman is made an exhibit in all kinds of compromising sensual contexts. But we should be less than just if we say that only man is guilty of such exploitation of woman. And in talking of this, we must also acknowledge that there are women who flaunt themselves as exhibits in the name of careers and ever so many other excuses. There are writers who use woman as profitable merchandise in their works. Such treatment goes under the pretense of uninhibited writing.

To name a few woman writers who seem to be guilty of this is the intention of this paper. It does not mean that it tries to belittle the literary achievements of the writers. But it confesses to the conviction that minus this defect their writing would gain in moral stature. Women writers across the globe have made their distinctive mark, with their own perception of life be it feminine, or feminist or female.

Arundhati Roy is one of these writers. Her *God of small Things* is a remarkable book in many ways. It is a rare genre in itself in woman's writing: it belongs to the comic tradition of Aristophanes and Rabelais and such others. It is a tradition that does not fight shy of plain and even exaggerated statement of sexual and sensual themes. Arundhati Roy deals with the feminine anatomy with comic exaggeration. That is perhaps not objectionable. What is objectionable is that there is no artistic (even of the comic brand) justification for certain statements. For instance, the first part of the novel speaks of the girl Rahel's recollections of her early days--when she returns from America to see her twin brother Esthappan who is now mentally affected. Her parents, she has learnt through family tradition, separated when the children were quite young. She has heard that she and her brother were born almost on the floor of a bus. The car they came by broke down and they had to take a government bus that came that way. The woman's belly was so extravagantly swollen with the twins in her womb that her husband had to hold it tight so that it did not wobble. This brings a picture to the mind that is unbecoming of a woman to paint about another woman. Why should even a writer of the comic resort to this? This is not just lack of inhibition which has some positive element in it; this is just a flaunting indifference to decencies. There are other such instances in the novel.

Anita Nair is another novelist who made quite some noise even as a debutant. Her *ladies' Coupe* is a novel that moves within a very congested design. It is the story of a woman who in her middle age suddenly decides that she should have her own life: she has spent all her youth as the bread winner of the family thanks to the sudden demise of her father, and even now her family doesn't quite appreciate the idea of her following her own ideas. She decides on going on a long trip, and takes a seat in a south-bound train in the ladies' coupe. There are five other passengers in the compartment and she asks them what they think about the possibility in today's society of a woman living on her own. The five give her their stories and their perceptions. Apart from the artificiality of the design, the stories also sound artificial. Almost every one of them smacks of the weakness of exploiting woman from the exhibitionist angle. One society lady learns that her relaxed ways and flamboyant make up rouse the evil in men. Another woman explains how she became a lesbian and how she was subjected to rape. Yet another woman describes how her husband forced her to undergo an abortion and how she ultimately took her revenge on her. Not that such circumstance cannot be true. But the way in which these incidents are described, the details chosen to describe the episodes, are tastelessly drawn and are unnecessarily compromising to woman's dignity. There seems to be a misunderstanding or a deliberate misinterpretation of other idea of freedom inhibition and primness in these contemporary writers, and it does not seem wrong to call it a commercial orientation to writing. It is a trend that is disturbing.

Going into the Library the other day, I picked up a book that attracted me by the name of its author and its juxtaposition with the title of the book: *Feminism* by Jane Freedman (New Delhi: Viva, 2002, date of original publication not mentioned). It proved interesting, beginning with the highlighting of difficulties in defining the term Feminism. "The title of this book should, perhaps, more properly have been Feminisms, because, as soon as you attempt to analyze all that has been spoken and written in the name of feminism, it becomes clear that this is not one unitary concept, but instead a diverse and multifaceted grouping of ideas, and indeed actions," she begins. (Jane Freedman, p.1.) Her opening section is indeed collection of interesting information.

Any attempt to provide a baseline definition of a common basis of all feminisms may start with the assertion that feminisms concern themselves with women's inferior position in society and with discrimination encountered by women because of their sex. Furthermore, one could argue that all feminists call for changes in the social, economic, political or cultural order, to reduce and eventually overcome this discrimination against women.

...the term 'feminist' seems to have first been used in 1871 in a French medical text to describe a cessation in development of the sexual organs and characteristics in male patients, who were perceived as thus suffering from 'feminization' of the bodies. The term was then was then picked up by Alexander Dumas fils, ..., who used it in a pamphlet published in 1872 entitled *L'homme-femme*, on the subject of adultery, to describe women behaving in a supposedly

masculine way. Thus ... although in medical terminology feminism was used to signify a feminization of men, in political terms it was first used to describe a civilization of women. (Jane Freedman, p.2.)

Historically speaking, there are so many different brands of feminism: starting with “the first wave feminism” and “the second wave feminism” and moving on to liberal feminism, Marxist feminism and radical feminism, psychoanalytical feminism, postmodern or poststructuralist feminism, black feminism, and so on. From a willingness to remain part of the liberal society to the demand for liberation from the entire system of patriarchy, there is a bewildering array of attitudes. “Body politics” is one of the constituents of this ongoing debate.

“Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains,” said Rousseau. The complaint of feminism is indeed that Woman is born free, but is everywhere in chains. Down the ages, and in all climes and cultures, the practice seems to have held sway—the practice of holding woman inferior to man, whatever the theory. In the east, generally, woman is given an exalted position in religion, and ancient society seems to have followed that idea. But though the idea is honoured today, the practice falls short of it. It is so with the west, too. In fact, in all traditions, there seem to be two entrenched attitudes—woman as an exalted being and woman as a debased creature. Diane Hales gives an eloquent epigraph to the first part of her book *Just Like a Woman*:

A woman is a foreign land  
Of which though there he settle young,  
A man will ne'er quite understand  
The custom, politics, and tongue.

Coventry Patmore, *The Angel in the House*. (Hales, p.1.)

One of the basic ideas in female thinking is that society debases woman by presenting her as an object of sensual pleasure, which makes of her a commercial product available for sale. In advertisements of anything from household utensils to the advertisements on purely male concerns, woman appears as an object of sexual interest, often with provocative graphics accompanying them. The natural corollary to this complaint is that there are women who lend themselves to this kind of exploitation not with a sense of helplessness, not with the claim of being victims of inescapable exploitation, but with an arrogant, defiant flourishing of their female sexual properties.

Feminism in the post-colonial context gives “extensive and variable.”

... it is as challenging to define “feminism” as it is to define “post colonialism”. In their introduction to *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism* (ed. Belsey and Moore, Macmillan, 1989) Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore argue that a feminist reader is “enlisted in the process of changing the gender relations which prevail in our society, and she regards the practice of reading as one of the sites in the struggle for change” (p.1). They suggest that a feminist reader might ask of a text questions such as “how [it]

represents women, what it says about gender relations, how it defines sexual difference” (p.1).

In criticism there should be objectivity, and so when woman makes her claims and complaints, she should be willing to look at her own failings. But today’s climate of thinking does not encourage a moral or social acceptance of an acknowledged general framework of do’s and don’ts. So when I present the following ideas, I know that it is the expression of the ideas of a female not too eager to be a feminist of any brand, but who wants to be part of society, enjoying a “normal” life, and yet not exploited as a woman in any form, just being the natural equal of man, etc.. (Call me a cat on the wall, or one who wants to eat the cake and have it too, if you will. I am not reluctant to admit that man is more equal in some circumstances, and woman, in certain other circumstances.) My complaint here is against certain female writers who in their works are not quite fair to woman. My complaint is that they have no qualms against unnecessarily compromising presentations of women, emphasizing their feminine qualities irrelevantly and demeaning, exploiting (as only men are supposed to have done) their sexuality (shall I say) commercially and even comically. But let me emphasize that I have nothing against the presentation of woman as a unit of society, with all her failings and virtues. I do not claim for woman exemption from all unsavory or critical exposure but do claim protection against indecent violation of her privilege to privacy which any self-respecting human being is entitled to.

Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* (1997) is one of my targets. What its virtues are everyone knows. It has already established itself on ever so many syllabuses at the post-graduate and M Phil levels. It may even be that it has got the popularity of the really great: great reputation on the basis of reputation--when people say great things about it without being quite familiar with it. It is the history-through-hear-say of a family of Syrian Christians in Kerala. It looks at everything in the spirit of comedy, and there is a lot of a devastatingly, sardonically, satirical attitude in it. Beginning with the presentation of the ancestor Punniyan Kunju who in 1876 had been taken by his father to see the Patriarch at Cochin and had had the privilege of kissing the Patriarch’s ringed middle finger, to his daughter the eighty-three year old Baby Kochamma, and her nephew and niece, the story does not contain one character who is acceptably decent. The idea behind it seems to be that there is no such thing as respectability; when you go close enough you find that every one has what’s and whatnot, and that every cupboard is full of skeletons. Baby Kochamma’s fruitless love in her ancient days for father Mulligan the Irish monk for whom she force-bathed some poor boy during his visits, and to impress whom she quoted chapter and verse from the Bible for clarifications, is presented as the comedy of the unmarriageable frustrated woman, and it involves the kind and measure of cruelty that entails. (This character has a venerable tradition in English Literature, beginning possibly with Henry Fielding, and passing through Richard Sheridan and Charles Dickens, and coming down to Kingsley Amis and others.) Ammu, the mother of the children, is luckier--and more unlucky--with her love, getting a young husband because they fall in love, though she divorces him at a later stage for quite legitimate reasons, and then falling in love with a Parava in her

native village; and then she is labeled a *veshya* for her unholy love. Chacko her brother falls in love in England, and has to divorce his wife after a daughter is born because his wife falls in love with an old friend of hers. Ammu's children are unlucky in their way. They are less abandoned by their mother's family after the early death of their mother. And their divorced father sends even the son back to his former wife's family when he decides to quit India. The son is haunted by a sense of sin and exclusion and becomes silently and quietly mad. Rahel the daughter marries for love in her listless life. But from her early days she is marked by an intensity of odd questionings. Her mother dies when she is thirty-one, and the family sends her away to a distant boarding school where she bumps into her seniors to find out "Whether breasts hurt." And yet it is the odd absence of her mind and spirit in her love-making that forces her American husband to divorce her. And finally, her bother Esthappen--whose mind has atrophied in a part-enforced and part self-willed isolation--and she end in incestuous adultery:

In those early amorphous years when memory had only just begun, when life was full of Beginnings and no Ends, and Everything was For Ever, Esthappen and Rahel thought of themselves together as Me, and separately, individually, as We or Us. As though they were a rare breed of Siamese twins, physically separate, but with joint identities.

Now, these years later, Rahel has a memory of waking up one night giggling at Estha's funny dream.

She has other memories too that she has no right to have. (*GST*, p.2.)

The novel is a tapestry of cruelly comic memories of different characters-- not one of them finds fulfillment of any sort. It is a sardonic comedy, in the spirit of *Gulliver's Travels*, of Gulliver's visit to the island of the Hoyhnhnhnms. In a novel of that spirit, maybe much is to be accepted as *bona fide* comic salaciousness. In the process, Arundhati Roy permits herself gratuitous sallies on woman.

One of the early occasions is the description of the children's idea of the circumstances of their birth. Their father works in a remote tea estate of Assam, and he has to take his "hugely pregnant" young wife (she is carrying twins) to the hospital, and they travel by car. But the car breaks down, and a crowded bus comes to their rescue.

With the queer compassion of the very poor for the comparatively well off, or perhaps only because they saw how hugely pregnant Ammu was, seated passengers made room for the couple and for the rest of the journey Estha and Rahel's father had to hold their mother's stomach (with them in it) to prevent it from wobbling. (*GST*, p.3.)

This presents motherhood from an unnecessarily exaggerated reality. That the children are not victims of any such thoughts is not good enough excuse. What this leads the reader to visualize is the point in consideration.

Baby Kochamma is a disgruntled character. She is one who never really grows up beyond her adolescence. Her very name is full of irony. She is "Baby" even at 83; *Kochu* in Malayalam

means *little*; and if one looks at the meaning for the honoric suffix *Amma*, it means mother. She is doubly childish but precociously over-sexed: her breasts are enormous. But she is frustrated, and her parents finally decide that she cannot be married off. She is sent abroad for studies, and studies something that is practically useless in her native land--ornamental gardening. And she grows into an embittered and opinionated person who applies to everyone else a ruthlessly strait-laced morality. She cannot forgive Ammu for her marriage--and a love marriage--and an inter-communal love marriage.

One of the memories of the children of their early days is a visit to the theatre with their mother and aunt: and in particular the visit to the toilet. The women take little Rahel into the ladies' toilet, and hold her in the air because she is too short for the pot. And then it is the turn of the ladies to pee. Forgive me for a quotation:

(...Baby Kochamma balanced like a big bird over a public pot. Blue veins like lumpy knitting running up her translucent shins. Fat knees dimpled. Hair on them. Poor little tiny feet to carry such a load!) Baby Kochamma waited for half of half a moment. Head thrust forward. Silly smile. Bosom swinging low. Melons in a blouse. Bottom up and out. When the gurgling, bubbling sound came, she listened with her eyes. A yellow brook burbled through a mountain pass.

Rahel liked all this. Holding the handbag. Everyone pissing in front of everyone. Like friends. She knew nothing then, of how precious a feeling this was. *Like friends*. They would never be together like this again. Ammu, baby Kochamma and she. (*GST*, p.95.)

Yes, Arundhati Roy has a scatological imagination worthy of a swift. (One of the family's ancestors was so obsessed with a gold tooth he had swallowed, that every day he spent time sifting his shit liking for the gold.)<sup>1</sup> The last paragraph speaks of the rare psychological effect of the event: but does it justify all those unsavory details: all the "realistic" fantasy of a girl of that age? The melon in the blouse imagery is repeated just a few paragraphs later: "...Baby Kochamma, weighted down by her melons..." (Pp.97-98.) what is the relevance of this, here or anywhere else?

With similar small justification Arundhati Roy describes a scene when the children come into their bedroom and find their mother sleeping. They intuit that she has been having "an afternoon-mare" (p.218) though in a way Ammu has been happy in her dream, dreaming of a one-armed lover making love to her.

"Estha, look," Rahel said, plucking at the line of soft down that led southwards from Ammu's bellybutton.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines *Scatology* as 1. Study of coprolites. 2. Preoccupation with excrement. 3. Preoccupation with obscene literature. 4. Hence scatological a. [f. Gk *skar skatos* dung+-O+-LOGY]. And *coprology*: **copra-** *comb. form.* dung, faeces, as~lite, (piece of) fossil dung; ~**logy** ... treatment of filthy subjects in literature etc.; ~**phagous** a., (of beetles) dung-eating; ~**philia**, undue interest in faeces and defecation.



“Here’s where we kicked you.” Estha traced a wandering silver stretch mark with his finger. ...

“That’s Estha’s kick, and that’s mine,” Rahel said. “... And that’s Estha’s and that’s mine.”

Between them they apportioned their mother’s seven silver stretch marks. Then Rahel put her mouth on Ammu’s stomach and sucked at it, pulling the soft flesh into her mouth and drawing her head back to admire the shining oval of spit and the faint red imprint of her teeth on her mother’s skin.

Ammu wondered at the transparence of that kiss. It was a clear-as-glass kiss. Unclouded by passion or desire--that pair of dogs that sleeps so soundly inside children, waiting for them to grow up. It was a kiss that demanded no kiss back. (GST, p.221.)

Likewise, in Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Ice Candy Man*, one instantly recognize that Lenny is a far cry from the girl-child whose presence is patterned on ‘submission and subordination’ (Jain, p.78) In Colonel Bharucha’s clinic where Lenny goes for her polio treatment, the doctor announces rather positively: “She’ll marry-have children-lead a carefree, happy life” (*Ice candy Man*, p.15.) Before this meeting, Lenny reports that Colonel Bharucha was “applying stethoscope to the emaciated chest of an infant” who was accompanied by a father and a burka covered mother. Each time the doctor put a question regarding the infant’s health, the husband consulted his wife:

This time the woman addresses the doctor directly looking at him through the netting covering her eyes, “He vomits every time he has milk... five, six times a day”. Her voice is incredibly young. She couldn’t be more than twelve, I think, surprised. (*ICM*, p.12)

One of the important aspects of women’s writing in the Indian subcontinent is the spoken and implied realization of many writers of the changing conditions of women in it. A gratuitous description that compromises a woman’s anatomical privacy, and then, to veneer it with pretentious depth, some philosophical coating. That is one of Arundhati Roy’s usual tricks. Is she taking out on woman some pervert frustration of her own? And children of that age to know that they kicked at their mother while in her womb?

I do not mean this as an indictment of a writer who enjoys an enviable reputation for the sake of a shock effect desirable in a paper. I point to this use of woman and her subconscious and such things as excuses for using woman as an element in deep sexual compromise.

Another novelist of recent times I would like to deal with is Anita Nair whose first novel *Ladies Coupe* (2001) was very favorably received. The blurb of the Penguin India edition of the book quotes part of a review in *India Today* (undated): “[Anita Nair’s] tale is light enough to relieve the tedium of a long journey yet filled with the incantatory power to burn up the tracks, to seek a new destination, to challenge?” Again, for brevity’s sake, (and authenticity’s sake?) I quote from the blurb of the book:

Met Akhilandeswari, Akhila for short: forty-five and single, an income-tax clerk, and a woman who has never been allowed to live her own life--always the daughter, the sister, the aunt, and the provider. Until the day she gets herself a one-way ticket to the seaside town of Kanyakumari, gloriously alone for the first time in her life and determined to break free of all that her conservative Tamil Brahmin life has bound her to.

In the intimate atmosphere of the ladies coupe which she shares with five other women, Akhila gets to know her fellow travelers: Janaki, pampered wife and confused mother; Margaret shanti, a chemistry teacher married to the poetry of elements and an insensitive tyrant too self-absorbed to recognize her needs; Prabha Devi, the perfect daughter and wife, transformed for life by a glimpse of a swimming pool; fourteen-year-old Sheela, with her ability to perceive what others cannot; and marikolanthu, whose innocence was destroyed by one night of lust.

As she listens to the women's stories, akhila is drawn into the most private moments of their lives, seeking in them a solution to the question that has been with her all her life: Can a woman stay single and be happy, or does a woman need a man to feel complete?(Nair, *LC*, 2001)

My complaint against Anita Nair is simple: that she does not understand the difference between the trite and the significant. Her story is contained in a rather congested narration in a rather limited, narrow setting. The protagonist of the story who is forty five undertakes a journey (in search of liberation) to the south of India because she feels that she has never been able so far to do anything for herself. She has had to live for her family and the family has taken everything as its legitimate due and has never thought of her as an individual who might have her own aspirations in life. One question haunts her: can a woman live alone? She proposes the question to the five co-travelers in the ladies' coupe she boards. Each one of them has a different background, and gives her own opinions and perceptions. One of them is a lady fast becoming an aged woman who has found an exceptionally supportive and protective husband; another a woman born into a rich family and married into a richer family, who has experimented with society living and has learnt the hard way how it puts wrong ideas into men's minds and therefore has modified her ways; the third is a teacher in a school who finds how selfish her husband is and then successfully plots to bring him down a peg or two by her physical charms; the fourth is a girl in her early teens who finds out how an ageing and sickening woman loses her self-esteem and the esteem of her own people; and the last one is a poor woman who becomes a servant maid and who is raped by the brother of her mistress; she becomes the homosexual partner of her mistress... Anita Nair tries to accommodate as many perversions and deviations as possible of the contemporary world. But her choice of details for the stories is clumsy and artificial in the extreme. I shall content myself with just a few textural references.

The protagonist's story (given in installments) is based on some of the themes that could grow into significant explorations but which miserably fail in Anita's hands. It tries to explore the impact of the domestic atmosphere—especially the sexuality of the parents—on growing

children. (Significantly, these factors do not have any impact on her siblings as far as the story goes.) What she begins with is the perception that “The children of lovers are no better than orphans.”(p.10.) She seems to think that this is what happens to her in her family.

As a child, her parents’ togetherness did not vex her. She was part of that enchanted circle as well. But as she grew up, their playfulness, their affection, the obvious pleasure they found in each other’s presence made her feel excluded. Latter, it embarrassed her. But they remained completely oblivious to her mortification. And even if they sensed it, nothing would deter or diminish what was practically a life-long love affair. (*LC*, p.10.)

The girl is from early on caught in the idea that a niece couldn’t marry her uncle: she thinks that it is “unnatural” (p.11) and later on when a friend suggests that it is incestuous she acknowledges that it is so. She attempts a justification. Her mother might have pissed in her arms and wetted his back when she was a child. That feeling of intimacy might have made lovers of them. And her precocious nonsense makes her think sometimes this way:

Just occasionally, only occasionally, a sour thought like the aftertaste of a particularly oily masala dosa would rise into her mouth: when will they realize that I am no longer a child? When will they see that inside me flutter desires that I don’t understand? This ache, this wetness, this flooding of nerve ends, what does it all mean? (*LC*, p.47.)

Her mother wants to do everything for her husband who is an honest minor official in the Income Tax Department, bruised by official corruption and humiliated and scorned repeatedly. She seeks to heal his official hurts through her wifely ministrations. On Sundays she cooks for him specially, and takes his head into her lap and caresses him for hours to let him rest himself really. She sings to him and in the evenings cooks something special for him. (Anita Nair does not know Telugu and she need not have presumed to quote a Tyagaraja Keertana: it is sheer impertinent (and faulty) showing off (p46); her factual knowledge of Indian mythology is no better—Hiranyakasipu becomes Hiranyakashyapu to her (p.44) Anita Nair attempts to heighten emotions and fails miserably in her flights, landing in bathos. This is the paragraph on this special effort:

Amma would slice aubergines into half moons, dip them in a batter speckled with finely chopped onions, green chilies and curry leaves and drop them into a pan of hot oil smoking over the kerosene stove. The aubergines, coated with Amma’s need to prove her esteem for Appa, would hiss, splutter and then settle to becoming golden brown relics of devotion. Succulent quivering insides, with just a crunch of spice to tantalize his appetite. Feast, feast, my husband, my lord and master. On my flesh, my soul, my kathrika-bhajis. (p.47.) Milord and master feasting on her flesh and soul and her kathrika-bajis is an unconscious rival to Alexander Pope’s juxtaposition of husbands and lapdogs in *The Rape of the Lock*. And what do phrases like succulent quivering insides and relics of her devotion mean?

A number of our writers seek to become India's Cultural Ambassadors to foreign countries, but without credentials. Their anxiety to make themselves intelligible to their foreign (anticipated) patrons involves them in ridiculous explanations. Akhila's father takes his Sunday siesta on a swing in the hall and how would a foreigner know what such a swing in India is? Anita Nair must help her: "When Appa had belched to signal that he was replete, he would walk to the broad wooden plank that hung from thick iron chains fastened to the ceiling." (*LC*, p.45.)

Akhila's dreams are full of guilt and humiliation because she is ashamed of her sexual fantasies. Her father dies in a road accident and she gets the job on compassionate grounds, and her daily journey to her office on crowded buses introduces her to sexual encounters and she enjoys them. Anita Nair's imagination is crippled by a prosaic ness. This is one of Akhila's experiences:

Akhila wore her sari like all women of her age did; an inch below the navel. Only old women and pregnant women wore their saris above the navel. Between the blouse and the skirt of the sari were almost eight inches of exposed skin veiled by a layer of the sari. And it was here, protected by the cover of the fabric, that the hand chose to gambol and play. (*LC*, p.139.)

She is shocked, but she enjoys it. For a fortnight she enjoys it all, because the hand sends a thousand messages to her heart. "No matter where she stood, the hand would find her. Gentle at first. Then exploratory and finally demanding. So that she knew what it was to feel the ball of a thumb against her lower spine. The bony arc of knuckles as they traced the curve of her waist. The extended nail of the little finger as it skated in circles and figures of eights. The tip of a forefinger as it circled her navel and then plunged into it fleetingly..." (p.140.) From this she plunges into love affairs, and then abandons them. And her complaint against her family is that it does not think of her as an individual who must have her own desires. Her career is an extended and undecided conflict between her desires, and her sense of inherited morality. And that inherited morality is presented as a false and hypocritical morality. And the end of the novel finds this unseated middle-aged woman inviting a road-side Romeo in Kanyakumari, just a college boy, to have an affair with her before deciding to go back to her early love, unmindful of her family. (And he is also much younger to her.) I would leave this theme with just one more quote to highlight the impertinence of Anita's allusive imagery.

When Akhila entrains for kanyakumari, she thinks of the goddess of kanyakumari.

At kanyakumari, the three seas meet. The Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. A quiet male ocean flanked by two restless female seas. Akhila had heard of how it was at kanyakumari, only then it was called Cape Comorin, that Vivekananda flung himself into the churning waters and the salts of the three seas and swam to a rock upon which he sat resolutely, waiting for answers that had eluded him all his life. She had read that at Kanyakumari, the goddess, like her, had put her life on hold. And that the beach there was made up of multi-

colored sand; the fossilized remnants of a wedding feast that was never served or eaten. (LC, p.3.)

I don't think sheer thoughtlessness in comparison could go farther. The Goddess who meditates on her consort and the woman who has wandered sensually across her forty-five years, feeling neglected and unbefriended.

One of the women who bare her heart to Akhila is besotted in love with her husband, and when she becomes pregnant he befuddles her with science and nonsense and persuades her to go in for an abortion—though the woman feels unhappy and is afraid it is sin. Then her husband befuddles her with theology and science. And then Anita must needs go into the formalities of the medical preliminaries for abortion.

I do not want to multiply instances of such unnecessary intrusions into woman and her privacy. The physical details of love and lust and mere physical characteristics are portrayed with what is flaunted as uninhibited realism. But often such exposures are done with no apparent artistic purpose, and they betray only an indifference to acknowledged decencies. A feminist fiction is a work where language and imagery are employed to impart a new vision of reality—a reality perceived from a woman's authentic mode of seeing, feeling and measuring her existence without subscribing to the male cultural codes.

To some extent, times have changed, and values have changed; social, political and economic conditions have changed. The feminists of today challenge the age old concept of female sexuality that confines women to the twin task of child bearing and child rearing. They claim a more active role for themselves and are not satisfied with their parasitical position in the family. Freud's view is that a woman can be glorified only in her femininity. But today's woman asserts the need for autonomy, self-fulfillment, self-realization and independence for women.

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## 3

**WHO IS AFRAID OF PROTEST?****DR. MAHENDRA SHINDE**Head of English Department, Nutan College Sailu,  
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**I**ndian English Literature now has come of age. From the Colonial times to till date the journey of Indian writing in English is quite remarkable. Now it is the time to look back so that we could look a little ahead. To do that I suppose it is essential to take into consideration three very vital points. One is the historical circumstances in which English reached India. The socio-cultural overtones of its growth, the other is the common allegations leveled against Indian writing in English. Cultural inclusivity is the yet another equally important parameter.

English came to India with English tradesmen who easily overturned various Indian states, fighting with each other. For these Indian rulers the first traditional enemy was their immediate neighbor to be got rid of at any price. The British ---- came to their rescue as God sent boon. India wasn't a state then as often, it seems, we forget. Most of the rebellions against the Britishers were not nationalistic in nature but religious. It is only after the advent of Gandhi Indian freedom movement acquired nationalistic bearing. For Indians believed British Sahib is going to defile their religion and the entire social structure as Britishers started enforcing social reforms like 'sati,' education to women and the downtrodden, eradication of untouchability etc. It was under the British that education went beyond the tiny 'centre' and sprawled to the 'margins'.

The elite class easily embraced the language of the rulers for they knew it was to become the easiest ladder to get closer to the rulers. Naturally the earliest literary expression in English was of the elite class. It still is. For there still is not any significant body of writing by the oppressed in English. There are a few translations available from regional languages. We have literature that expresses colonial, post colonial, expatriate concerns and anguish but we have remained blind to the gravest of our issues that have changed India forever and aspired to rectify the centuries old social ills. It's a phenomenon. We chose to be blind to the history. As Indians we always were. The plight, the inhuman treatment of a large section of the society, their struggle for rights to be treated as humans, their anguish, indignation towards the oppressive social order which had religious sanction, their struggle and rise under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar escaped our so called 'creative minds'! Sure 'to write' is a political act, and to choose 'not to write' too!! When somebody from the oppressed classes writes about all this the so called critics turn their back to it branding it 'not pure art'! We, as Indians, have always betrayed history. It is a sin. History never forgives.

There would be creative writers writing about all this in English. One such brilliant literary work is Dr. Narendra Jadhav's 'Outcaste.' It is an autobiographical account of three generations beautifully presented in brief. The father in the autobiography represents the all the lost generations which underwent excruciating inhuman oppression at the hands of the upper caste. The father is still enough more fortunate than earlier generations to see light and hope in the Dalit movement. The next generation represented by the writer who rose to prominence by hard work beating the ills of the oppressive social order and the generation next, writers children and the way they look at the past. Dr. Jadhav lends his voice to the plight of Dalits' life for centuries describing a few incidents which in the process become the metaphors for Dalit life. Other equally important dimension of the autobiography is that it chronicles the Dalit Movement initiated and led by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. The writer has very brilliantly interwoven the major socio-political historical events into the narrative such as Chavdar Tank Satyagraha, Kalaram Mandir Satyagraha, and Conversion to Buddhism etc., not harming the fluency of the narrative and making it the integral part of it.

There is a strong protest in the book that even Dalit critics fail to see. For they want the protest to be direct and overt. They are yet to come to be able to appreciate works of the likes of 'Outcaste'. The so called mainstream critics shy away from appreciating the work wholeheartedly for they think to appreciate the work is to endorse the social stand the writer has taken which they suppose goes against 'their' social, religious values. They actually suffer from guilt consciousness. They don't have to. I think the problem lies in transcendence. At least many of them cannot transcend the labels their birth has attributed to them. However good a work of protest work of art is it cannot command appreciation from the so called mainstream critics.

Socio-historic content and connotations is one element that is invariably found in protest literatures of oppressed minorities. As such literature shows clear signs of wounded sensibility of the oppressed racial, ethnic minorities. And these wounds have a history of its own. These wounds have, however obscure, political financial, religious and ethnic origins in the long history. Such literature, which is to be called protest literature henceforth, is often accused of having this socio-historic content recurrently. But it is not just recurrent but invariable and naturally and even unavoidably so. It is because any oppressed minority is a product of discrimination of ages and ages together so the wounds are very deep and equally vulnerable. The sharpness and bitterness of protest is directly proportional to the longevity of the history and harshness of the discrimination. Many times they, the writers of the protest literature, may not speak of these socio-historic elements, but everything they speak of points to the same. More indirect the pointing, subtler the art.

All minority protest literatures throughout the world are literatures carrying the burden of the past, not by choice but by destiny. By destiny, because carrying the burden of the past is the intrinsic nature of their works. Remove history and the whole edifice crumbles. The very protest is all about standing against the wrongs done to the society, making the oppressor class 'see' their wrongs done to the oppressed class, and at the same time making the oppressed class aware of the their own dignity as human beings next to nobody. All writers, at least most of them, are

aware of the past , the present and the future but it is profoundly more true about protest literature. It is because their material is so acutely concerned with the past, the present and the future. The responsibilities that protest literary artist carries are manifold compared to other writers. The chief of them are: 1) making the sense of history, (2) finding ways out of the oppressive situation and (3) doing all this aesthetically.

The protest writers just write with their socio-historical awareness and it is this very socio-historic sense that the collective guilt-consciousness make the whites feel guilty. And the protest writers themselves are very much troubled by it .They want to make sense of it, to make peace with it and finally and naturally get rid of it. They write with it just because they 'can write only with it", at least in the early phase of their literary expression. They write with it because, that is the most novel thing to the established literary world. Something that is always existed in the society, right before your eyes, but was never thought fit for literary expression, in the general literary texts. All this is because, as they say, past never dies, and protest writers see and rather live both that past and present in a historic ritual continuum.

Indian writing in English terribly lacks the works that probes deep into the socio-cultural aspects of Indian social system and its ills. Rather they prefer to choose subjects far remotely concerned. It is time Indians writing in English approach our history boldly, look in its eye and come out with something that holds mirror to the society to get itself better.





## 4

### **CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *ARRANGED MARRIAGE*: MULTIPLE CONSCIOUSNESS AND SOUTH ASIAN DIASPORIC IDENTITY FORMATION**

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**T**he landscape of contemporary literature has been influenced by the rising tide of globalization; texts are now crossing the borders of nations and cultures as newly emerging authors express myriad voices of those once considered the subaltern. At the crest of this new literary wave is a new generation of South Asian Female writers who have begun to make their unique mark upon the world of the novel. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one of such novelists she has emerged as a ground-breaking novelist in the genre of South Asian Diasporic literature. Her account of the experience of the Diaspora and its effects upon women not only provide the readers with insight into the lives of 1.5 million South Asians who reside in the United States, but also presents a model with which one can better understand the processes through which minority identities are constructed. Though South Asians comprise such a significant (and ever-increasing) portion of the U.S population, still they have not received their fair share of focused attention. The realm of South Asian diasporic literatures though now more prevalent than ever before, is still largely undiscovered in its talents and contents. The experience of the south Asian immigrant woman remains somewhat of a mystery.

In the works of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, one can paint a rough picture of the South Asian diasporic experience in the United States. This experience, common to all diasporic communities, is created by the constant oscillation between contradictory conceptions of race and culture, time and geography. As a result of existing in this “in-between” space, the South Asian woman living in America develops an altered consciousness in order to relate to her South Asian culture while at the same time adapting to her current American surroundings. The women in Divakaruni’s texts are caught between the traditional customs of south Asia from which they have emigrated and their present experiences with the more westernized culture of America. While living in such a “in-between” space, the self perceptions of these women are

dramatically altered, for the manner in which they see themselves changes due to the uncertain nature of their interstitial environment and as a result the characters move towards a condition that is more complex and numerously divided. Thus the women of these texts develop multiple consciousnesses resulting in a self that is neither unified nor hybrid, but rather fragmented. As the women perceive both their race and sexuality through new and different lenses throughout the course of the texts they come to realize that the notion of a singular identity is a fallacy and that the reality of the South Asian diasporic experience is the indeterminacy of multiplicity. This multiplicity is a significant plight for the characters for as their different consciousness contradicts each other the women are left uncertain as to the nature of their identities and not knowing where they fit in American society. Yet paradoxically this multiple consciousness appears ultimately to be a positive psychological element, a possible solution to the tensions that arise from cross-cultural adaptation. The women that Divakaruni create are capable of living in a world in which the individual exists not as a Unified One, but rather as many, bound by no borders and infinite in the possibilities of creating consciousness and inventing identities.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's collection of short stories 'Arranged Marriage' reflects the vicissitudes of the diasporic South Asian women. The underlying theme of her short story collection 'Arranged Marriage' is as the name suggests marital relationships as they are seen in South Asian communities where by and large the practice is that parents arrange marriages of their children. However, immigration has widened the mental horizons of the people from the east, and Divakaruni too questions this practice through these stories. After their exposure to the west in various ways e.g working outside the home, their increased independence, particularly in decision-making, etc., makes them respond differently to the marital situation as well.

As the women of this text struggle to define themselves as South Asian and American, they expect a conflict of consciousness. In the private realm, the traditional Indian culture requires specific duties of women and strict norms of morality are held in high esteem and are transgressed only by those considered daring and depraved. Sandra Ponzanesi in her essay "In My Mother's House" states:

As far as the condition of migration and Diaspora is concerned, women are often called to preserve their nation through the restoration of a traditional home in the new country. The idea of home entails the preservation of traditions, heritage, and continuity; there is even an intense emotive politics of dress for some communities. (245)

The home is the locus of tradition for South Asian diasporic families, and within this domain, traditional gender roles often endure while outside the home, there is a dramatic shift in the nature of cultural expectations. The image of the subservient Indian woman stems from Indian mythology and the manner in which Indian females are represented in it. The image of 'Sita' has a profound effect on the Indian psyche. Her chastity and loyalty to her husband represents the ideal for an Indian wife. This ideology survives even among modern, upper-class Indian women who defer to their husbands in an almost instinctive way. In one of the stories, "Meeting Mrinal" Asha, a divorced mother with a teenage son attributes her attempts at familial perfection to the literary figures that were presented as the examples of what a woman should be.

“I think of how hard I always tried to be the perfect wife and mother, like the heroines of mythology I grew up on – patient, faithful Sita, selfless Kunti”. (Divakaruni, *Arranged Marriage*, p. 298). The image of Indian female identity in the domestic realm is the essence of submissiveness, thus the culture tends to expect similar behavior from its actual women, regardless of time or place i.e whether they are in 18<sup>th</sup> century or 20<sup>th</sup> century, or whether they are in India or America. As a result of existing in such a “in-between” space these women move towards a condition that is more complex and numerously divided. They develop multiple consciousness resulting in a self that is neither unified nor hybrid but rather fragmented. Though there is multiplicity of consciousness and uncertainty of their identities, and the individual exist not as a Unified One, but rather as Many, But on the positive side this situation of no borders creates infinite possibilities of creating consciousness and inventing identities.

Similarly, In another story “Affair”, the central character Meena reconsiders her identity as that of the dutiful wife after suspecting her husband’s infidelity. “Had I ever really been myself? I didn’t think so. All my energy had been taken up in being a good daughter..... And of course a good wife”. (Divakaruni, *Arranged Marriage*, p. 269). But this subservience of Sita contrasts greatly with the feminism of America and emphasis on women’s independence and equality.

Another theme that Divakaruni tackles In ‘Arranged Marriage’ is the clash between culture, and the conflict between family and career. The entire financial structure changes when women leave the home and begin to work thereby changing the traditional power dynamics within the marriage. Indian women see their career as an extension of their roles at home, and not as an alternative. Their family generally takes precedence when there is a clash between career and family. The interplay of gender roles manifested by the development of multiple consciousnesses is reflected in Divakaruni’s texts.

In “A Perfect Life”, Meera first rejects the traditional roles of wife and mother in favor of her career and education. For her, it is not a question of choosing between career and family because she does not desire a family at the moment. “Because in Indian marriages becoming a wife was only the prelude to that all-important, all-consuming event – becoming a mother. That wasn’t why I’d fought so hard – with my mother to leave India; with my professors to make it through graduate school; with my bosses to establish my career”. (Divakaruni, *Arranged Marriage*, p. 76). Yet when Meera meets a six-year old orphan boy, she begins to contemplate motherhood, imagining what it would be like to adopt the child and raise him herself. She envisions his first day of school, trips to Disneyland and baseball games, and she soon comes to see herself as the orphan’s actual mother. “Mother-love, that tidal wave, swept everything else away”.

Caught up in her new role as a mother, Meera begins to function in both the professional and familial realm, and sees herself as fulfilling two distinct roles. When these self-perceptions conflict with each other, Meera responds by separating them, by creating a partitioned consciousness, which is one type of reaction to the conflict of cultural tensions. Watching her “son” play, Meera describes the contentment that she feels: “It made me ridiculously happy,

more than the time, even, when I straightened out the Van Hausen account which had been missing several million dollars". (Divakaruni, *Arranged Marriage*, p. 98). Meera sees herself as both a "working woman" as well as a mother, her ability to juggle both roles symbolized by the juxtaposition of her emotional happiness gained from the "Van Hausen account" with the joy gained from watching the young boy play.

Thus in the above story one finds that Meera's consciousness allows for what are seemingly contradictory self-perceptions to exist simultaneously, and for two separate realms to retain their importance in her life without compromising (or having to choose between) one role and the other. Meera adopts the "dual behavior pattern" in order to reconcile the tension between her roles, creating two distinct consciousnesses for her two different spheres of home and work. In the public realm as professionals, there is freedom of self expression on many levels, but at the same time the pressures from family and career often begin to clash, resulting in one of the increasingly common conflicts South Asian women experience in the process of cultural assimilation. And this leads to the fragmentation of their self.

In the other story titled "Clothes" the central theme is the private realm, conceived as a location where time and space cease to progress or reflect change. When the woman emerges from the private realm and into the public, she experiences a conflict of consciousness, for home comes to feel familiar, homogenous and repressive in contrast with the alien, diverse and expressive culture outside the home. The perceptions that the woman has of herself changes dramatically as she navigates between these two disparate worlds and the character comes to develop different consciousnesses for the private and public realms, resulting in the creation of a fragmentary self. The development of these forms of consciousness is largely an effect of circumstances but it is also a psychological coping mechanism created as a response to the cultural dissonance that surrounds them.

Thus In the story "Clothes", Sumita, the central character moves from Calcutta to California, into a small apartment that she shares with her new husband and his parents. She describes the delineation between an Indian home and the American world outside and the contradictory feelings that emerge from the disconnection between the two spheres. Sumita describes her home as a "world where everything is frozen in place", as if she had never left the India and her friends of her youth. Time and space are motionless, whereas outside, in America, they are "rushing by", constantly shifting and transforming while the onlooker simply observes from a rather removed perspective. The traditions Sumita follows (of covering her head with her sari, serving tea to her mother-in-law's friends, hiding overt sexual activity, and never addressing her husband by his first name) are all signs of respect in India and are strictly maintained in this home in California. Sumita recognizes that she feels resentment toward these traditions and the utter "Indianness" of the home, and she longs to partake in the America that is outside her re-created Calcutta world. She is then plagued by feelings of shame for what she perceives as her increasing yearning for a more westernized self, even while she does not want to ignore her strong desire for change and assimilation. Sumita develops different perceptions of herself in response to this emotional tension: while in the home, she sees herself as the traditional sari-clad

Indian housewife- subservient, meek and modest, living life “the Indian way”. The moment that she entertains thoughts of leaving her home, however, she views herself as independent, confident and progressive. But Sumita is also aware of her conflicting desires and her liminal psychological position, thus she perceives herself as “in between” the guilt-ridden subservient wife and the confident yet claustrophobic woman. While Meera of “A Perfect Life” sees herself as fulfilling two separate roles, Sumita comes to perceive herself multiply, with various self-perceptions existing simultaneously.

Although Sumita has not actually left her home, she has created a romantic vision of her husband’s store, and with it, an entirely new self-perception. “But I have another plan, a secret that I will divulge to him once we move. What I really want is to work in the store. I want to stand behind the counter in the cream-and-brown skirt set .....and ring up purchases. The register will glide open. Confident, I will count out green dollars and silver quarters.....(I have never visited the store-my in-laws don’t consider it proper for a wife – but of course I know exactly what it looks like)...I will charm the customers with my smile, so they will return again and again just to hear me telling them to have a nice day”. (Divakaruni, *Arranged Marriage*, p.24). Since actual physical movement away from the home is forbidden to Sumita she must resort to creating her own picture of that which lies outside and simply envisioning what she imagines America to be, becomes enough to change her self-perception so that she is no longer an Indian housewife only, but also a working “westernized” woman as well as in between these two roles.

Thus the above story reflects the diasporic South Asian woman’s cultural assimilation and identity formation. As the woman struggles to define herself as South Asian and American, she finds that her self-perception and self identification are contingent upon the particular realm that they are occupying and a conflict of consciousness emerges when contrasting self perceptions exist simultaneously.

Jayanti in “Silver Pavements, Golden Roofs”, also provides focus on a similar dilemma of being an immigrant when she migrates from Calcutta to California to live with her aunt Pratima and Uncle Bikram. Their house is no different from the India that Jayanti left. Jayanti within the confines of home feels disoriented because it appears that time and space has not changed for her as she expected from her immigration. Rather, she is in the same world, where the Indian tradition remains the norm, and assimilation is but a distant glance out a window. Jayanti appears totally isolated and “protected from American culture but she soon realizes that the “little India” that has been created is merely an illusion of security”. (Divakaruni, *Arranged Marriage*, 35-36).

As Jayanti and her aunt walk around their neighborhood, they are approached by a group of young boys who attack them with racist slurs. Jayanti does not understand how circumstances can shift so dramatically once she leaves her home. Her entire perception of her own race is thrown into question upon leaving the house. Jayanti who was proud to be an upper class Indian, questions her relation to American race categorization. The harsh words of the young boys have affected her to the point where she cannot help but perceive herself differently. Jayanti has

developed a multiplicity of consciousness in viewing herself. One consciousness with which she understands herself as a minority living in America another with which she sees herself as the upper class Indian girl of her family and third with which she perceives herself as in between the two. Although these self-perceptions conflict with one another, Jayanti comes to understand that this paradoxical condition is her fate. To live in a state of multiplicity with oppositional conditions exactly within a fragment self, is the essence of the diasporic experience.

The identity of the south Asian diasporic woman cannot be categorized as simply Eastern or Western, submissive or dominant, but rather it is comprised of numerous consciousnesses that encompass various conflicting characteristics. The manner in which Diavakaruni's characters perceive themselves is based upon this multiplicity of selves, and the notion that one's relation to one's surrounding space determines the process and outcome of self-perception allows for paradoxical views of the self to exist, thereby deconstructing the concept of identity as unified and perception as singular. For these women, to exist is to be many; it is to embrace the paradoxes of perception that arise as life is lived astride the boundaries of many worlds.

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## **IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT ON LITERATURE**

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Famous Victorian critic Matthew Arnold wrote an essay entitled 'Literature and Science'. The essay discussed the relationship between literature and science. According to Arnold, "literature is the basic for 'knowing ourselves and the world', and science 'it is one thing to just look at literature.'" It means that science is only a part of the literature. Many past writers have written on the relationship of literature and science. D.H. Lawrence, a renowned novelist compared literature with other disciplines like science, medical and philosophy. According to him, science studies human being in its partial form, whereas literature studies a human being in its full form.

No matter science and technology profoundly affected the production and reception of literature. Technology is a major player in this connection. There is a great fear taking the wider impact of technology on written literature. The question is being asked, why we should continue with the current form of literature. Rapidly growing influence of technology has altered the way in which we live and think. The cultural, social, and economic life of man has drastically changed.

Technology, inescapably impacts our lives, even more strikingly than any other discipline. We are related directly to the use of technology and not with the theories and philosophies. As we are aware, literature follows culture. The literature adopted technical changes to keep pace with pressing needs of the time. Since the invention of various techniques in writing i.e. paper, ink, printing press, binding, circulation, literature got changed. The change was not limited to the technical things but also the very production and reception of literature. Various writers either used technology or made it as their subject matter of their creation. Technology becomes the part of the environment within which literature works.

Since the very existence of literature, technology has been remained a subject of literature. The word technology has its root in Greek word 'techne', means 'craft' or 'making'. Literature being a creation, or making something new, has strong relationship with technology. The later part of the word, 'ology' means, 'an intellectual discourse or a system'. The word technology first appeared. Even for Martin Heidegger, technology is, 'a form of consciousnesses. It is evident that technology is a subject of literature.

Chaucer to the Post-Modernist authors shown technology in various forms in literature. These writers depicted technology as their subject matter and same was shown as a service of transformation to the humanity. The transformation technology brought has some positive and negative impacts on society in general and literature in particular.

Firstly, the positive impacts of technology on literature should be discussed. Writing and publishing imaginative literature was not an easy task in the past. It was a laborious work for writers, editors and publishers. However, technology, in recent times made all these things quite easy and fast. The fast and effective communication is a reward of technology. It has offered a platform for writers to reach to the masses. Several books are published online in digital form. The response of readers to the digital copies is overwhelming. Frankfurt book fair in Oct 2010, is an evident of this tremendous response to the new form of books. That fair is characterized by the discussion of 'digital rights. It is agreed, that a book can be available online through e-reader or mobile. The old idea, publication means a 'printed book' is quite embarrassing. Publication is taking place in a virtual form. It has the tremendous potential to reach such readers who do not prefer to read. The online publication of books is attracting a large number of readers due to its presentation.

Giant players of technology taking much interest in the production and circulation of literature digitally. These players include Google, Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Apple. The publication giant, Amazon has introduced its first e-reader as 'Kindle'. There is an astounding experience of Amazon, that people prefer digital books than printed one. The novel, 'The Girl with Dragon Tattoo', published in 2008, turn out to be a bestseller thriller of the year. Around 10 Lakh online copies were sold out. The authors who have earned in a big amount were those who published their books online. These authors include Jamie Oliver, Julia Donnellson, James Peterson, and Jeff Kini.

An idea of publishing book online in India is not popular. Mandar Joglekar is trying to publish books online through his maiden enterprise 'Bookganga'. Book fairs are turning to be a way to propagate an idea that online publication is not only possible task but also a very effective mean to reach to the masses expending less.

Technology and its devices have offered a unique platform for renowned authors as well to the common people. People are easily expressing themselves through means of electronic media like blog and social networking sites. There is a vogue; famous personalities are sharing their views with readers through blogs. These ways to reach to the people have been adopted by politicians, sportspersons, actors, social activists, industrialists and so on.

Technology enabled one to one correspondence between an author and a reader. This new way of communication is adding new dimensions to the literary fraternity. It is providing a healthy discussion about the reception and understanding literature in a better way among scholars, researchers and common readers.

Moreover the online reception of literature in academics is growing day by day. A large number of academic institutions are designing their courses online. These courses consist, course



on literature, language, teaching, creative writing and so on. This availability of designing courses as per the hour will definitely bring fruitful results.

Researchers found a big reservoir of resources in the form of information which is available on internet. Sharing of digital information among researchers has opened a new horizon in the advancement of research. This will attract more scholars toward research.

Technology has opened new prospects to the field of translation. The development of translation was facing several impediments in the past. Non-availability of dictionaries, scarcity of reference books and limited resources were big hurdles in translation. As technology advanced, the process of translation got much easier. Availability of online dictionaries, thesauruses, reference books, and resources made translation as an interesting work. Translation developed as one way of earning for new writers and editors. There are many software and tools, available online, facilitated the painstaking process of translation. This resulted numbers of books are getting translated into several languages.

Most of the successful directors of Hollywood and Bollywood have taken inspiration from several literary pieces. They look toward literature as their muse. Movie is the modern version of drama. Adaptations of classics are frequent. Drama was the leading genre of literature during Elizabethan age and Restoration Period. There was a gradual decline of drama from Augustan Age to the revival of drama by Eliot. Drama gained resurgence in the form of a movie. Movie is an outstanding example of modern technology, which has the capacity to reach even to illiterate ones.

Secondly, negative impacts of technology on literature should be addressed. It is upon us how we use technology. If we use it for destruction, it will bring holocaust as the case of two world wars. Extensive use of technology in Second World War caused great devastation of wealth and human lives. These two events characterized with technology altered the very ways of belief of human being. People were torn and confused due to the damage. The hard realities of contemporary society were highlighted in literature. We can experience the trauma, confusion, despair that technology caused, was palpable in modern literature.

The most admired thing of technology is TV. This is an effective way of communication. Now a day, TV is turning out to be a contaminated form of communication. Sensation, hatred, conspiracy, violence, bloodshed is some subjects which are addressed by TV operas, serials and programmes. There is a shortage of good programmes, which can promote good values among people. Most people prefer to see such filthy programmes than reading. TV is one of the alternatives of modern entertainment turning to be a major way of enjoyment for the people.

Industrial revolution created many problems such as slums, migration, urbanization, displacement, unemployment, identity, exploitation and pollution. This resulted due to the advancement of technology. The contemporary problems and probable solutions to them were taken up by artists. Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Robert Browning addressed these problems through literature. Modern and Post-modern writers are dealing the problems in a wider sense, in terms of race, exploitation, gender, identity, migration, pollution, marginality issues which are the outcome of modern technology.

Increasing pollution is a gift of technology to which we are accustomed. Many scientists and philosophers are warning the level of various forms of pollution. The problem of pollution is described through contemporary literature. An attempt is being made to aware people about pollution. There is a great need to address the problem properly so as to have a sustainable development.

There is a big danger relying more and more on technology. This will cease the power of innate thinking. It will badly affect and corrupt the minds of younger ones. They remain engrossed in the use of technology. They forget the world around them, when they are using a device. Natural process of thinking may be at risk at the cost of technology. This will create many problems for later generations.

Various theories and isms are also the result of technology. An objective approach is developed along with technological advancements. Critics are trying to see literature in terms of language, race, gender, marginality, identity and so on.

The technological advancement is pervasive but the benefits of this are limited to a certain group of people. The group is using technology to strengthen their places. They are licensed to exploit poor people. And the very cultural superstructure is in their hands. Literature being a superstructure is controlled by such people. The problem of dominance of one community over another community is addressed in post-colonial literature.

Thirdly, a discussion of technology as a subject of literature is necessary. Technology is being considered by creative writers as a contrasting force to literature. This can be seen in Romantic poetry. Almost all classic literary texts depicted technology as a sinister. Many Victorian, Modern and Post-modern writers made technology as the subject matter for their literature. Early 19th century published novel of Mary Shelly's, 'Frankenstein', is about a creature produced by scientific experiment. The novel is one of the earliest examples of Science Fiction. Advancement of science and technology in modern period compelled many artists for experimentation. The experimentation took place not only in literature but in various other arts like architecture, painting, music and sculpture. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf experimented in novel, while Eliot, Auden, and Pound produced new kind of poetry and drama was not exception for this. Samuel Becket, T.S. Eliot, Albert Camus, Franz Kafka changed the ways of writing a drama. Technology does not bring only physical change but it changed the ways of thinking and living. Early 20th century decades were known for the unorthodox thoughts of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. These writers changed the set concepts of society, culture, selfhood, identity and so on.

Thomas Pynchon, an American novelist, depicted technology in a bizarre form. He was of the opinion, if we let ourselves as victim of technology, we are creating it's our own predicament. Moreover, his work concerns the strong relationship between technology and society. The use of technology is coupled with psychological dependencies upon technology we develop. Pynchon depicted the essential and reciprocal nature of contemporary society and its relation with technology. He disclosed nature in the continuous struggle between technologies advancement on us and our responses to the same.

Spy fiction treats, literature itself as a form of information whereas Juvenile fiction is the only genre to represent technology affirmatively. The children's literature manifested technology benevolently.

Thus, literature and technology have impacted on each other. Literature has been remained as a witness of various changes since centuries. Many things got changed in the course of time. Literature also changed its means of production and reception. But it is having the same cult which had before wider the impact of technology.

It is not the question that literature will last or not. The imaginative literature always remained an integral part of the society. Despite various changes literature will serve its purpose as it was served in earlier times. However, it is the big question in front of us, in which form literature will last is uncertain. I think the current book form will be replaced by a digital form.

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## 6.

**CLASH OF CULTURES IN RUTH PRAWER JHABVALA'S 'ESMOND IN INDIA'****DR. GHANSHYAM ASUDANI**

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**Introduction: -**

India is a cosmopolitan country. We have had Aryans as well as the Dravidians, the Mongols as well as the Persians, all settled in varying numbers. Similarly, we have the Britishers too. Those who stayed back in India cannot be ignored, just as those who keep on coming back cannot be. This social interaction with the British has led to a conflict in behaviour of the typical Indian who flounders between feelings of alienation and affinity. Affinity for its traditions, for the land its beauty, its complexities, its religion, its people, its humaneness and alienation from the harsh climate, the filth, the corruption, the tenacity of beliefs—the Britisher sees in India.

A Britisher (West) meets an Indian (East) it is relationship that is delicately poised. A very delicate balance has to be maintained throughout. One is merely sensitive and aware of his shortcomings while the other is only too aware of these feelings, tries hard to ignore it and yet behaves in a way, which will slowly finish it. Jhabvala's use of this problem forms one of the main themes in her fiction is perfectly understandable, since she is herself a foreigner, settled in India.

It frequently happens that half-baked knowledge of each other leads to a hasty marriage. But just observing a society is quite different from being a part of it. Social norms, family demands, one's own personal expectations, all lead to a lot of difficulties in a personal relationship like marriage. For young couples, it is not only a question of understanding each other, but of living together in surroundings which are familiar to one and alien to the other.

So, the conflict is two-fold. One is personal, the other is social. Frequently the economic aspect also steps in. The political side is a very rich one for controversy but Jhabvala prefers to leave it

to the politicians and touches upon it in passing.

The British ruled India and are very much here still as visitors, as residents, as interpreters of the Indian scene. The impact of the West can be felt in every aspect of Indian life social, political, industrial. Big cities were naturally more exposed to this air of change and so Delhi is an apt choice for Jhabvala to portray these changes.

### **Eastern and Western Attitudes In Indian Behaviour:-**

Not only in personal relationships but in social behaviour too, the British influenced the Indians. A lot of so-called modern ideas of mixing of the sexes, equality, a separate status for women, meat eating and not performing religious rites, are imported. Side by side the conservative attitude of segregation of the sexes, women's place in the house, abstaining from sex and meat and religion as a dominant factor of life continues. How can reconciliation be brought about between the two? As long as the two exist, there is bound to be a conflict between the Eastern and the Western attitudes in Indian's behaviour. Jhabvala very delicately handles this explosive relationship in mode of her works.

It would suffice to say that anybody who has a genuine affection and concern for the present cultural crisis, which India is going through, would greatly enjoy reading Jhabvala's works. Her vision is simple, straightforward, without any complexes like superiority and alienated stepping in. She is like an artist who utilizes her canvas, revealing scenes and situations as and when seen. The inferences to be drawn are entirely up to the onlookers, to be coloured by their own subjective reactions and analysis. In this sense Jhabvala is definitely a true artist.

### **Clash of Cultures:-**

Ruth Praver Jhabvala is one of the outstanding Indo-English woman novelists. Her novels deal with post-Independence India. While she was living in Delhi with her Indian husband, Mrs. Jhabvala had many opportunities of observing Indians and also foreigners, who came to India, at close quarters. She concentrates on European expatriates and the members of the educated Hindu middle-class families. The major themes of her novels are love, marriage and familial relationships.

In Mrs. Jhabvala's novels, India reacts strongly on her Western characters and transforms them to a large extent. She skillfully describes the experiences of Westerners in India and their interaction with Indians. Her foreignness enables her to deal with mixed marriages of Indians and Europeans in a critical but amused manner. The differences in their life-styles and religions are vividly presented. In fact the interaction between the two cultures, Eastern and Western, forms an integral part of her novels not only this, it is one of her important themes.

'Esmond In India' and 'A Backward Place' present the experiences of an Indian woman married

to a European and a European woman married to an Indian. India, chiefly because of her ancient culture, attracts many Europeans. Some of them, like Esmond and Judy in 'Esmond In India' and 'A Backward Place' respectively, fall in love with Indian culture and life, and want to settle down here. They marry Indians, but the marriage between East and West does not result in harmony. European husbands and Indian wives or Indian husbands and European wives are unable to maintain a co-existence without a clash of personalities.

In 'Esmond In India', Gulab marries an Englishman named Esmond Stillwood. But their relationship is not peaceful. The differences in the life-styles of East and West lead to misunderstanding and discord. Consequently their relations are strained and they drift apart.

Esmond Stillwood is an impoverished expatriate, who earns his living by giving private tuitions to foreign ladies, tourists and Indian elite. He teaches them Hindustani or the History of Indian Art and Indian Literature.

Gulab is so charmed by his speeches that she rejects the eligible Amrit and marries Esmond against the wishes of her mother Uma.

The novelist depicts very convincingly Gulab's Indian tastes and habits and how the very English Esmond resents them. Gulab is lazy and when Esmond is not at home,

'She would stay on her bed for hours and hours.' (EII p. 16)

Esmond hates her laziness. He screams at her and asks: 'What sort of a slut's life is that to lie on your bed the whole day long?' (EII p.202)

Their eating habits are vastly different. Gulab loves eating sweets and oily food. She dwells on the possibility of eating food from her mother's house. On Wednesdays and Fridays, she is very happy because Esmond has early morning classes and her mother brings something to eat. She wonders:

'When would Esmond be away from home during the day and for how long?' (EII p. 17)

She likes to spend time with her mother but Esmond fails to understand the over dependence of an Indian girl on her mother in all matters. He feels left out and neglected.

The married life of Esmond and Gulab deteriorates after the birth of a son, Ravi. Esmond wants to bring up the child in the European way and keep him away from Indian food. He dislikes Gulab for not paying proper attention to Ravi's food habits. He fails to understand his mother-in-law when she suggests to:

'Have his (Ravi) legs rubbed with oil to make him strong and his hair must be shaved so that it may grow luxuriant, and black shadows must be applied under his eyes to shield them from

strong sun, and in the night he must sleep with his mother so that she may comfort him if he wakes with bad dreams.’ (EII p.142)

Esmond gets angry when Gulab applies Indian scent to Ravi. He distastes the smell and says:

‘Why don't you throw the horrible stuff away?’ (EII p. 44)

He feels that she is spoiling the child with caresses and sweets. In Esmond's absence, Gulab kisses Ravi and calls him:

‘My soul, My life, my little tiny sweetmeat who himself would kiss her back again ardently.’ (EII. p. 17)

Gulab stays at home with her son and does not think of Esmond. She reverts to Indian ways in his absence. He asks and checks about Ravi's food when he comes back. The servants also have contempt for Esmond's food. They say he eats grass for his food. He decorates his flat and the furniture is modern way but Gulab finds it a hindrance. He is very particular about keeping the house clean and dislikes Gulab's untidiness. Mrs Jhabvala describes the Cultural Clash between East and West skillfully and in detail. Esmond and Gulab are brought into very close association with a view to highlighting the difference between them. Although a lover of Indian culture and life, he is unable to understand it completely and cope with its oddities.

Esmond can no longer take any delight in Gulab's Indian English. He reprimands her:

‘I don't mind...what sort of babu English you choose to speak—I couldn't, as they say, be careless---but that you might infect the boy with it too, that's what bothers me.’ (EII p. 48)

To his great annoyance, his sarcasm is lost on her. When he shouts and asks:

‘If pressed to the point would you call yourself a slut?’ (EII p. 47)

She does not understand the connotations of his language. The novelist describes the annoyance of Esmond at his Indian wife. Indian ways and life are totally lost on him. Sarcastically he calls Gulab a Model little wife.

The novelist writes of him:

‘He thought of himself as trapped in her stupidity, in her dull heavy alien mind which could understand nothing, neither him, nor his way of life nor his way of thought.’ (EII p. 46)

Esmond says of his marriage that:

‘‘Every man has his Cross’ and finds that ‘his was heavier than that of other Men.’ (EII p. 46)

Gulab shows no response to Esmond's taunts. When Shakuntala visits their house, she finds that Gulab neither drinks nor smokes. Esmond sarcastically remarks:

‘I have tried so hard to corrupt her. But her virtues are too deep rooted for my little arts. Esmond also points out that Ravi has taken after him only in complexion.’ (EII p. 127)

Esmond finds himself neglected by his wife and begins to drift towards Betty who was,

‘So light and modern and airy, being with her was almost as good as being in England, which was the one place where he wanted most passionately to be.’ (EII p. 49)

Gulab has her happy moments that she gets the opportunity of escaping to her mother's house. She disobeys Esmond's orders and visits her mother.

‘She did not want anything to spoil her stay with her mother.’ (EII p. 163)

When she is at home, she tolerates Esmond's taunts, infidelities and cruelties. She behaves in a traditional Indian role of a meek wife. She believes that:

‘She must whatever he might do to her, stay with Esmond, since he was her husband and therefore her God...It was a husband's right, so her instinct told her, to do whatever he liked with his wife. He could treat her well or badly, pamper her or beat her—that was up to him, and it was not her place to complain.’ (EII P. 248)

Gulab's case is strange. She marries Esmond against the wishes of her mother and bears him a son. She stands his insolence, sarcasm and beating to the extent that he even calls her animal. All along she is shown as a weak and lazy woman who is always eating and sleeping. Her mother repeatedly tells her to leave Esmond and return home which she refuses to do. But when the servant tries to molest her, with an innate strength she decides to return to her mother's house with Ravi for as a husband Esmond fails in his duty.

‘It was his duty to see that she was safe in his house and that no stranger could cast insulting eyes on her. Esmond had failed in that duty; so now he was no more her husband. Nor she is his wife, and since she considered herself defiled, she could not remain in his house any longer but had to return, as was the custom, to her own people She does not even care to shut the door of the flat.’ (EII p. 248)

Shakuntala, a romantic girl, straight out of college, throws herself into the arms of Esmond, the Don Juan, fed on Byron and Shelley. She is in love with the idea of freedom. When she sees Esmond, she is attracted to him.

‘She decided at once that he was, yes, very handsome, much more so than any of the other foreigners there. He was slim and graceful, and while they were red and rather raw, he was pale,



with golden hair and a fine pointed chin. He looked so sensitive, she thought, like a poet.’ (EII p. 80)

Hardayal engages Esmond to teach her all about the cultural aspects of East and West. She sees his unhappy married life and feels sorry for him. She wonders, why did he marry her? While on a trip to Taj Mahal he seduces Shakuntala in his hotel bedroom.

Iyengar writes that:

“In Mrs. Jhabvala’s novels the focus is on a trapped married couple”.<sup>1</sup>

In ‘Esmond In India’, Gulab and Esmond are the unhappy couple. They fail to come to a better understanding. Gulab does not understand him when he says,

‘I want a wife who's my friend and companion, not my slave.’ (EII p. 205)

But he also has Betty in mind when he tells Gulab:

‘I regard my wife as an equal and I expect her to regard her as such.’ (EII p. 205)

He fails to get any response from her whether his behaviour is good or bad towards her. People belonging to widely different backgrounds, races and cultures face problems in adjusting themselves with each other. They do not even find a common point of discussion. Esmond feels that their relationship has reached a stage where there is no chance of any happiness. He compares his predicament with that of his friends; finds his state worse than theirs:

‘There were, he knew, many other incompatible marriages; he had much experience of them among his friends. But there was always some neutral ground on which the two parties could meet. They could, occasionally and in between their quarrels, converse about indifferent subjects, if not like friends, then at least like strangers shut up together in a railway compartment or they could sit and discuss their incompatibility and get some satisfaction out of rationalizing their unhappiness.’ (EII p. 206)

The novelist describes in detail the mental make-up of eastern women, who tolerate any kind of treatment which their husbands meet out to them. Ram Nath describes their condition to Uma as follows:

‘So like animals, like cows.....beat them, starve them. Maltreat them how you like, they will sit and look with animal eyes and never raise a hand to defend themselves, saying do with me what you will, you are my husband, my God, it is my duty to submit to my God.’ (EII p. 97)

The impact of India on foreigners is very strong. Initially, they love rich Indian art and culture.

But after living through eternal shabbiness wrapped in eternal heat, they are transformed. Ruth Jhabvala in an autobiographical essay admits:

“I have lived in India for most of my life. My husband is Indian and so are my children. I am not and less so every year”.<sup>2</sup>

Writing of Jhabvala’s Western characters, Meenakshi Mukherjee remarks:

“She sends them back to Europe and America where they would once again live within their own family limits”.<sup>3</sup>

Towards the end of Mrs Jhabvala’s novels, the English seem to be packing their bags and preparing to return to England. Esmond plans to return along with Betty. He cannot carry on with an unhappy marriage with Gulab. He is disgusted with her:

‘His senses revolted at the thought of her, of her greed and smell and languor, her passion for meat and for spices and strong perfumes.’ (EII p. 207)

Esmond also does not want to act as Shakuntala’s lover.

‘Gulab behind him and Shakuntala before him, but all he wanted to be free.’ (EII p. 250)

Esmond decides to get away from Shakuntala and Gulab (not knowing that she has already left him), from India's shabbiness and poverty and from young ladies and cultural sessions. He makes arrangements to sail on the same boat as Betty, responding to her call to Pack up and come along. He imagines himself enjoying life in her company on the ship. He thinks:

‘Everything would be left behind and would be happy all day long and lighthearted. He discovers that ‘life was beginning for him again he was young yet, young.’ (EII p. 253)

The two major female characters of the novel, Shakuntala and Gulab, thus achieve nothing substantial out of their relationship with Esmond. Gulab, who is Esmond's wife, allows him to ill-treat her because he is her God. She makes nothing of Ram Nath’s advice to her that:

‘No person has a right to treat another person in any fashion he likes. Please remember you are an individual being first and a wife only second.’ (EII p. 165)

However, she is fortunate enough to have reached a decision on her own to leave Esmond. Shakuntala in her infatuation begs Esmond to allow her to be his slave. She is so blinded by her love for him that she is unable to see her plight. There can be no future for her with a cad like Esmond. By seducing her, he awakens her to love. But he does not wish to have a long love affair with her. He finds himself trapped in her love for him. He tries to extricate himself slowly by telling her:

‘Your father has called me here because he trusted me, and whatever my feelings for you might be, I have to suppress them as long as I am in his house.’ (EII p. 233)

No one can help her. She herself will have to work out her salvation because Esmond is ready to abandon her.

As Hayden Moore Williams observes:

"By the end of the novel some of the characters—the simple and the idealist—have found a kind of peace: Gulab, Uma, Ram Nath. It is the sophisticated, the highly intelligent, the ambitious, the materialistic, who are fundamentally the lost and the unhappy of Jhabvala’s world".<sup>4</sup>

Shakuntala will have to set right her broken life. This aptly sums up the issues raised by Mrs Jhabvala in this novel:

"The pathetic rootlessness of the foreigner in India and the tragicomic rootlessness of the Indian who has become Westernized to feel at home with his own people".<sup>5</sup>

Esmond and Shakuntala are the examples. Esmond's love for India is mercenary and Shakuntala’s love for Esmond is sentimental.

Various experiences of Indian cultural scene are projected through the attitudes and gestures of Mrs Jhabvala’s Western and Indian characters. Her India is molded by the experiences of the protagonists. The interaction between two cultures, Indian and European, forms an essential part of her novels. She portrays the clash between east and west very convincingly. Being originally a European and later living in India, her country by adoption, she is able to create necessary background to treat the problems of Europeans trying to get adjusted to Indian society. They are unable to come to terms with the Indian ways and customs. They are disillusioned and the Indian sky remains:

‘An unchanging unending expanse of white blue glare the epitome of meaningless monotony which dwarfed all human life into insignificance (EII p. 252)’

The East and the West attract each other and will continue to do so because of their diverse characteristics. Despite the unhappy experiences of Esmond and Gulab, Har Dayal’s younger son, Raj has acquired an English fiancée. In a close encounter, as in the case of Esmond and Gulab, the East and West once again betray their incompatibility.

The differences of manners, customs, attitudes and modes of living, result in discord and confusion. While delineating the confrontation between alien and the native with each other, the novelist focuses our attention on married couples, who ultimately decide to live separately if a man wants to be free and happy, it can also be a woman's prerogative. Throughout the novel,

Esmond feels trapped in an unhappy relationship. In the end he decides to be free and so does Gulab.

The East-West marriage is not the only unhappy marriage in the novel. Married life does not take a smooth course for anyone. All the married couples have their disappointments and unfulfilled desires. There is a lack of understanding and a communication gap between Indian husbands and their wives also.

Mrs. Jhabvala draws our special attention to problems of the couples united in a mixed marriage. They face greater difficulty in adjusting themselves because of their diverse backgrounds and life styles. They do not take adequate steps to come to an agreement and are continually put off by each other's drawbacks and different ways of eating, talking, dressing and so on. As a result, once the initial attraction is lost, there is no common ground left for interaction. The different characteristics, which attract the East and the West, become so intolerable that they are unable to survive together.

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Note:- The primary references from the novels of Ruth Praver Jhabvala have been absorbed within the text.

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## 7.

**लोकगायक वासुदेव आणि त्यांची मौखिक परंपरा**

(संशोधक एस.बी.फुलारी)

महात्मा गांधी विद्यापीठ मेघालय

महाराष्ट्रात समृद्ध अशी लोकगायकाची परंपरा होती हे वरिल अभ्यासावरून स्पष्ट होते. याच लोकगायकाचा वारसा जपणारी ही वासुदेवाची एक लोककला आजही टिकून आहे. मौखिक परंपरेने चालत आलेली गाणी गाऊन आपला उदरनिर्वाह करणारी तसेच चेह-याची ठेवन, कपाळावरिल रेषा, जिवणी, नाक-डोळे कान यांचे आकार इत्यादीवरून स्वभाव विशेष एवढेच नाहीतर भविष्य सांगणा-या सहदेव भाडली, पांगुल, भाण्ड या परंपरेतील वासुदेवाची ही जात आजही तग धरून आहे. “भविष्यपुराणातील 24 व 25 या अध्यायात स्त्री पुरूषांच्या सामुहिक लक्षणांचे वर्णन आले आहे. हि लक्षणे कोने एके काली ब्रम्हदेवांनी कार्तीकेयाला सांगितली होती. असे म्हंटले आहे. त्याला उत्तम माध्यम व अधम या तिन्ही प्रकारच्या पुरूषांची लक्षणे सांगितली आहेत. या दोन अध्यायात पुरूषांची लक्षणे सांगितल्या नंतर 28 व्या अध्यायात स्त्रीयांचीही लक्षणे सांगितली आहेत. हात पाय, डोळे, नखे, पायांच्या पोट-या, कटीप्रदेश नाक, जटरप्रदेश उदर, पृष्ठ स्थन, कर्ण, बाहु, जिभ, ओठ, दात, कपाल, गळा, डोळे, गाल, मस्तक, केश, अंगावरिल केशाच्या पंक्ती, एवढेच नाहीतर बोलण्याचा स्वर, डोळ्यावरिल केशांचे भोवरे, रंग, इत्यादी बाबींच्या अधारे भविष्यकथन करण्यासंबंधीचे आखाडे परंपरेने चालत आलेले आहेत. या आखाड्यांच्या आधारावर भविष्य कथन अपली उपजीविका भागवणा-या अनेक जाती महाराष्ट्रात आढळतात. लोकज्योतिष्याच्या या जाती पैकी काही लोक मौखिक परंपरेने चालत आलेली गाणी गाऊन भिक्षावृत्तीवर गुजरान करतात आशा प्रकारे आपली उपजीविका करणा-या जातीपैकी एका जातीचे लोक वासुदेव या नावाने ओळखले जातात.” (30)

वासुदेव ही एक परंपरेने चालत आलेली लोकगायकाची एक भटकी जात आहे. वासुदेवांना वासुदेव जोशी असेही म्हणत. ते कथाकथनही करतात. तर काही भविष्य सांगतात गाणी म्हणतात नाचतात मौखिक परंपरेने चालत आलेल्या पुरानकथांचे सादरकरनही करतात. जालना जिल्ह्यातील जाफाबाद तालुक्यातील खासगाव येथे वासुदेवाची वस्ती आहे. येथिल वासुदेव समाजातील तुळशिराम खासगावकर यांनी आपला पारंपारिक व्यावसाय सोडून तमाशा कलावंत म्हणून लौकीक मिलविला. तसेच भिका भिमा हे दोघेही तमाशात सौगाड्या म्हणून फार गाजले आहेत. यावरून असे दिसून येते कि गोंधल्याप्रमाणेच काही वासुदेवांनीही व्यवसायांतर करून आपल्या अंगी असलेल्या कलागुणांचे दर्शन तमाश्या लोककलेच्या माध्यमातून समाजाला घडविले आहे.

### वासुदेवाची उत्पत्ती :

वासुदेवांच्या उत्पत्ती संबंधी अनेक विचारवंतानी आपले मत मांडले आहे. वासुदेव या प्राचिन संस्थेच्या उगमासंबंधी श्री.म.माटे यांनी सांगितलेल्या कथांचा संदर्भ हा.रा.चिठेरे यांच्या लोकसंस्कृतीचे उपासक यात आला असून तो पुढील प्रमाणे आहे. “वासुदेव देवकीचा मुलगा वासुदेव हा गाईच्या पाठीमागे राणात गेला म्हणजे तेथे सापडलेल्या मोर पिसांची टोपी करून ती डोक्यावर घाली. त्याचा दत्तक बाप नंद हा घरचा बरा आसल्यामुळे श्रीकृष्णाच्या अंगावर एक सुंदरसा पिवला नाहीतर तांबडा शेला असे. गाईच्या मागे राणात जाणे या शब्दांनी एक हिन धंद्याचा बोध होतो तो कृष्णाच्या चरित्रात तेंव्हा खचितय नव्हता. खाउन पिउन तुंदिल झालेल्या काल्याभोर दोळ्यांनी ईकडे तिकडे पहाणा-या आणि वासरांना आपला पांढा नुकताच पाजलेल्या घरातल्या शेकडो गाई बरोबर घेऊन गोवर्धन पर्वताच्या पायथ्याला जाउन बसावे आणि गाई चरणीस लावाव्य हे श्रीकृष्णाचे घरचेच काम होते. तो एखादया शिलेवर बसला म्हणजे त्याच्या मोरपिसाचा मुकुट आणि खांदयावरचा शेला यांनी त्याच्या रूपाला फार शोभा येई. हातात बासरी घेऊन तो ती वाजवित बसे आणि एकीकडे चारा खाउन समाधान पावत असलेल्या गाई आपल्या बासरिच्या आवाजाचे संथपणे प्राशन करित आहेत हे पाहीले म्हणजे त्याला पराकष्टेचा अनंद होई.

आपले हे वासुदेव आशा या श्रीकृष्णाचे मोठे भक्त आहेत. आणि म्हणून त्यांनी त्यांचाच वेश घेतला व नावही त्यांचेच घेतले.” (31) प्रा.माटे यांच्या मते हे वास्तव वाटते वासुदेवाचा वेश आणि त्यांच्या जनजागृतीचा वारसा पाहीला तर हे वाटते की ही संस्था म्हणजे लोकसंस्कृतीच्या क्षेत्रातील भगवत सांप्रदायाच आहे. पहाटेच्या वेळी आपल्या सुगंधाने मने पवित्र आणि प्रफुल्ल बनवणा-या पारिजाता प्रमाणे रामप्रहारी मने पवित्र आणि प्रफुल्ल बनविणारा सरळ व उदार भगवत सांप्रदाय महाराष्ट्रात प्रसिद्ध आहे. व वासुदेवाची ही संस्था लोकसंस्कृतीतील भगवत सांप्रदायच आहे असेही प्रा.माटे यांचे मत आहे. वासुदेवाची उत्पत्ती हि सहदेव या मुल पुरूषापासून झाल्याचे सांगितले जाते. सहदेव हा एक फार मोठा ज्योतिषी होता. या लोकज्योतिष्याची अनेक कवने मौखिक परंपरेने समाजात चालत आली आहेत. हे आपण माघील लोककलेचा आढावा घेत आसताना पाहीलेच आहे. सहदेव भाडलीचा होरा आणि हवामानासंबंधी तसेच पाऊस पाण्यासंबंधी परंपरेने रूढ असणारे अनुमान आजदेखिल खेड्यापाड्यात सांगितले जातात. सहदेवाशी नाव जोडले आसल्यामुळेच खान्देशात सहदेव जोशी ही संज्ञा प्रचलीत आसावी.

वासुदेवाच्या उत्पत्ती संदर्भात आपले मत व्यक्त करताना गो.म. कालेलकर म्हणतात “एका ब्राम्हण ज्योतिष्यास एका कुनबी बाईपासून झालेल्या सहदेव नावाच्या मुलापासून आपली उत्पत्ती झाली असे हे लोक सांगतात.” या कथेचे सहदेव भाडलीच्या कथेशी साम्य दिसते. या कथेवरून एवढाच एक बोध होतो कि इतर अनेक जाती प्रमाणेच हीही एक संकरज जात आसावी त्यामुळे त्यांना कोणताही उत्पादक जातधंदा परंपरेने चालत आलेल्या गितांचे गायन

यालाच आपली उपजिवीकेचे साधन बनवले. तिच त्याची जिवनवृत्ती झाली.

ज्ञानकोशकार केतकर यांनी वासुदेवाविषयी सांगताना म्हटले आहे कि “हे लोक स्वताला सनाढ्या व सर्व्हेर्या ब्राम्हण म्हणवितात. हे वासुदेवापासून आपली उत्पत्ती झाल्याचे सांगतात. हयांना अंतर्वेदिन कापडीया म्हणतात. कारण हे बहुरूप्याप्रमणे लवकर कपडे बदलतात. यांना हरबोला किंवा जागाकापडीही म्हणतात. यांच्या गंगा, पुत्री, पडुवा आशा जाती आहेत. हे लोक जरि ब्राम्हणाशिवाय इतरास जातीत घेत नाहीत. असे सांगतात. तरि यांच्यात बरेच मिश्रण झाल्याचे दिसते. अशी माहीती संदर्भासह डॉ. चिददावार यांनी कृष्णभक्त वासुदेवाची गाणी त्याच्या भुमी या त्रैमासीकात दिली आहे. वासुदेवाची हि संस्था फार जुनी आहे. कारण या संस्थेचा उल्लेख पाणीतीच्या अष्टायाध्यात आढळतो. यावरून डॉ. द. वि. राव यांनी त्यांच्या प्राचिन भारत इतिहास आणि संस्कृती या ग्रथात असे म्हंटले आहे की “वासुदेव कृष्णाच्या भक्तीसंप्रदाय ख्रिस्तपूर्व दुस-या शतकाच्या पूर्वार्धात पूर्णत्वास होता.” यावरून असे म्हणता येईल की वासुदेवाची ही परंपरा फार प्राचिन आहे. महानुभव साहीत्यात भीडी या नावाने वासुदेव उल्लेख आलेला आहे. याच वासुदेवांनी कृष्ण भक्तीचा सांप्रदाय लोकगंगेत पौहचविला आणि आपल्या पर्यंत आला.



## 8.

## महाराष्ट्रातील लोकगायक पांगुळ :

(संशोधक एस.बी.फुलारी)  
महात्मा गांधी विद्यापीठ मेघालय

पांगुळाची परंपरा फार प्राचीन आहे लीला चरित्रात पांगुळासंबंधीची एक लीला आहे. मटोबास म्हणजे नागदेवचार्य यानी पांगुळाचा वेश धारण करून चक्रधर स्वामीची स्तुती केली. यासंबंधीची लीला आहे. एके दिवशी मटोबासांनी राखेचेच टिले लावले कापडाचे पट्टे बांधले आणि अगदी अलाप घेऊन संगीताच्या माध्यमातून चक्रधराची स्तुती गाऊ लागले. ती लीला अशी.

“आगा एका श्रीचक्रधरा राया: दुरध्यानी ब्राह्मयणु

निले वृक्ष : पांढरी देऊले कमुनि आला: पांगुळा पाये देसी: आंधलेया डोले देसी: मुकेया वाचा देसी बहेरिया कान देसी: अपक्षा पाख देसी : ऐसी तुझी किर्ती आईकोनी आलां श्रीचक्रधरा राया “मराठी वाडमयाचा इतिहास: खंड पहिला पृष्ठ 142-143”

पांगुळ हा लोकसंगीताच्या शैलीत गात आसावा असे उपरोक्त लीलेवरून लक्षात येते. जति, धवले, ओवी, पांगुळ, फागडा, हे रचना प्रकार लोकसंगीताचे वाहक ठरतात. त्यावरून 13 व्या शतकात लोकसंगीत आणि अभिजात संगीत या दोन्ही परंपरा अस्तित्वात होत्या. या विषयी खात्री पटते. श्रीधर रंगनाथ कुलकर्णी यांना महाराष्ट्रातील समाजमनसाच्या संगीतविषयक अभिरूचीच्या जोपासनेत 13 व्या शतकापासून धार्मिक पंथ आणि लोकसंस्था यांचा मोठा हातभार लागला असल्याचे स्पष्ट केले आहे. याविषयी ते म्हणतात “देवतापुजनाची मंगलाचार काकडाआरती, धुप-आरती, शेजा-आरती हे आरतीचे प्रकार स्तोत्रे आणि धावे यांच्या रूपाने रूढ आसलेली गानपदधती धार्मिक संस्थानचे देन मानल पाहीजे. तसेच जोगी, कुडमुडे, जोशी, डौरी, पांगुळ, वासुदेव, भोपे ईत्यादी.

नी ग्रामसंस्थेच्या आश्रयाने लोकसंगीत जागते ठेवले लीलाचरित्रातील उल्लेखावरून पांगुळ सौम्य संपादणी करित आणि गाणे हे अलापित असत हे स्पष्ट होते.

महाराष्ट्रात अबलणारी ही एक मटकी जमात असून ते प्रामुख्याने अहमदनगर नाशिक



पुणे जळगाव औरंगाबाद अकोला आणि यवतमाल या जिल्हामध्ये पसरलेली आहे. एथनोव्हॅन यांनी त्यांचे वर्णन एक भिक्षेकरि जात असे केले आहे. ते कुठुन आले ते सांगता येत नसेल तरि फार वर्षापासुन ते महाराष्ट्रात राहत होते असे म्हणतात. केवळ भिक्षा मागणे हाच उदरनिर्वाहाचा व्यावसाय आसल्याने ते सतत भटकत असत. त्यामुळे त्यांचे निश्चित निवासाचे प्रदेश नव्हते. मात्र घरोघरी किंवा दारोदारी जाऊन भिक्षा मागत नसत. एका झाडावर बसुन ते बासरी वाजवत आणि झाडाखाली एक कपडा पसरवुन ठेवीत. त्यावर लोकांनी पैसे टाकुन भिक्षा दयावी आशी त्यांची अपेक्षा असे. त्यावर गोला होना-या पैशावर दोन चार दिवस निर्वाह करून नंतर ते दुस-या गावी जात असत. पांगुल हा शब्द पांगला या शब्दापासुन झाला असला तरी ते शारिरीक दृष्ट्या अपंग नसत ;परंतु अन्य कोणतेही काम ते करित नसल्यामुळे त्यांना विशेषण म्हणुन त्यांना पांगुल हे नाव देण्यात आले असावे.

पांगुल या एकाच नावाने ते ओळखले जातात. त्याच्यासाठी दुसरा शब्द नाही तसेच तत्सम जाती पन नाहीत पांगुल मध्ये पोट जाती किंवा पोट विभागही नाहीत. पांगुल हा सूर्याचा प्रतीनिधी मानला जातो. सूर्य हा पांगला आहे. अशी समजुत प्रचलीत आसल्याने त्या प्रतीनिधीला पांगुल असे म्हणतात. आपल्याला पांगुल का म्हणतात असे विचारल्यास त्यांच्या कडुन असे स्पष्टीकरण मिलते कि कधी काली सूर्याला वाहीलेल्या एका पांगलया मानसापासुन आमची निर्मीती झाली. असेच हे लोक सांगतात. पांगुलांना कोणताही वंशपरंपरागत चालत आलेला व्यावसाय नाही. त्यामुळे त्यांना गावोगाव भिक्षा मागतच फिरावे लागते. व हाच त्यांचा व्यावसाय आहे.

पांगुल हा सूर्यदयापुर्वी येतुन एका झाडावर बसुन धर्मजागरणाच कार्य करतो. देवदिकांचे नवे घेउन 'त्याचे सदैव स्मरण करा' 'त्यांच्या विषयी मनत भक्ती बालगा' 'सत्याने वागा' 'लांडी लबाडी करू नका' आसा उपदेश करतो

' राघवांचा धर्म जागो ! अधर्म रे भागो !! अज्ञान निरसुनिया विज्ञानी लक्ष लागो!! 'असे पांगुलाचा धर्म जागविण्याच्या कार्यासंबंधी समर्थ रामदासांनी म्हटले आहे. पांगुल या संज्ञेचे स्पष्टीकरण करताना समर्थ रामदासांनी अध्यात्मिक परिभाषा वापरली आहे. ते म्हणतात

“ मी पणाचे मोडले पाय ! म्हणुन पांगला जालो !!

तुपणाची किर्ती जेई ! ऐकुणीया शरण आलो !!

पांगुलावर जवळ जवळ सर्वच संतानी रूपके रचली आहेत. यवरून परंपरेने इतर भटक्या

जाती जमाती प्रमाणेच पांगुलाचे सोंग देखील ललीतात आणण्याची प्रथा असावी असे दिसते .

पांगुल हा भल्या पहाटे गावात येतो आणि भिक्षा मागतो.एखादयाने पै पैसा किंवा धाण्याच्या रूपात भिक्षा वाढली किंवा दान केले तर तो स्वतःभोवती एक गिरकी मारून तो उडी मारतो.आणि दिलेले 'पाऊड' किंवा दान देवाला पोहंचते करतो.दान देना-याला शुभेच्छा आणि आशिर्वाद देऊन देवाच्या नावाने दान पावल्याची पावती देतो.ही पावती रूढ अर्थाने लेखी नसते तर पारंपीरक पद्धतीची देना-याचे भले चित्तून दिलेली असते.पांगुल हि संस्था फार जुनी आहे.मराठी साहित्यततर अगदी 13 व्या शतकापासून या संस्थेचे उल्लेख आढळतात.महेंद्र भट्ट किंवा माहीमभट्ट यानी लिहीलेल्या चक्रधरांच्या लीलाचरित्रात पांगुलचा उल्लेख आला आहे .

“पांगुलची सोंग संपादणी 'नागदेवाचार्यानी कशी केली याचा तपशील लीलाचरित्रात पुढिलप्रमाणे आला आहे .

“ राखेचे टिले लाविले पायी पाटे बांधीले ,

मग आलाप पांगुलाचिया येसे करिती”

वरील लीलेवरून असे स्पष्ट होते की जाती ,धवले ,ओवी ,पागडा या पदप्रकाराप्रमाणेच पांगुल हा देखील एक पदप्रकार असून तो गाईला जात असे संताच्या मारूडात जोशी ,डैरी ,वासुदेव ,भोपे यांनी ज्याप्रमाणे लोकसंगीत जागते ठेवले .त्याचप्रमाणे पांगुल यानी देखील लोकसंगीत जागते ठेवण्याचे कार्य केले आहे आशी नोंद कुलकर्णी यांच्या “ ओवी ते लावणी ”या ग्रंथात नोंद केली असल्याचा उल्लेख यापुर्वी आला आहेच . यावरून पांगुल हे लोकगायक कलावंत असल्याचे दिसते.याच ग्रंथात ते पुढे म्हणतात “ आवी फागडा ढवले पांगुल (भरूड) आणि गटप्रबंधक हे रथुल मानाने लोकसंगीताच्या मीडणीत बसतात.येथे पांगुल हा एक पदप्रकार असल्याचे त्यांनी सुचविले आहे.पुढे “ चक्रधरांनी फागडा गाखिला तसाच नामदेवाचार्यानी पांगुल आलापीला आहे ” असा त्यानी उल्लेख केला त्यावरून पांगुल ही एक भिक्षेक-याची जात त्याचप्रमाणे एक रचनाप्रकार दोन्हीही अर्थानी पांगुल ही संज्ञा वापरण्यात येते हे स्पष्ट होते .

महानुभव पंथाचे पहिले आचार्य नागदेवाचार्य यानी एक प्रसंगी पांगुलाचा वेश धारण केल्याचा उल्लेख यापुर्वी आला आहे.त्यात नागदेवाचार्यानी कपालावर भस्माचे टिले लावले अंगावर साधारणपणे ज्या ठिकाणी शैव पंथाचे लोक भस्माचे पट्टे ओढतात तेथे बोटांनी भस्म लावले.पांगुल घालतात तशी वैशिष्ट्यपूर्ण टोपी उंच अनुकुचीदार तयार करून ती घातली.पायाला कापड गुंडालले आणि काखेत झोली व हातात काठी घेऊन महानुभव पंथाचे प्रवर्तक व त्यांचे गुरू

स्वामी श्रीचक्रधर यांच्या समोर आले. चक्रधरांनी या सोंगाचेही कौतुक केले अशी कथा आहे. यावरून तेराव्या शतकात महाराष्ट्रात पांगुल या संस्थेला बरिच लोकप्रीयता होती असे दिसून येते. यामुळे विठ्ठल भक्त संप्रदायातील किंवा वारकरी संप्रदायातील जवळ जवळ सर्व संतानी पांगुलावर रूपके रचली आहेत.

ज्ञानेश्वरांनी पांगुलावर एक रूपक लिहीले आहे.

“मृत्युलोका माघारी गा एक सदगुरू साचार !

त्याचोनी दर्शने तुटला हा संसार !

पांगुला हस्तपाद देते कृपालू उदार !

यालागी नाव त्याचे वेद न कळे पार ||1|

आशी सुरवात करून शेवठी गुरूकृपा झाल्यावर रिदधी सिदधी आपोआप प्राप्त होते. पंगु झालेली बुदधी ब्रम्हरूपी लीन होते असे म्हंटले आहे.

