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Kalyan Gangarde

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LOVE AND SEX IN LIFE AND LITERATURE

AJU MUKHOPADHYAY

Srīngara Rasa, the sexual impulse, a strong emotion as in Indian aesthetic theory propounded by the ancient dramatic theorist Bharat Muni, is one of the primary motivating force of ordinary life. Very few can escape this strong inherent force in living creatures; no wonder that this has been part of literature from the ancient time. Trace of it can be found in epics like *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It is in many other works of later generations. The great Indian poet and dramatist, Kalidas, writing in Sanskrit, has shown plenty of such emotions in his plays. The great Vaishnav poet Jaydev, writing on Krishna and Radha theme, profusely described such scenes in his *Gitagobinda*. We find traces of it, limited generally up to kissing, in Tagore and Sri Aurobindo. There is no dearth of it in world literature. Sure it is that the existence of sex does not always signify love. Though sex may be an aspect of love, it is not so always and there are examples of love without a touch of sex as in Indian Bhakti literature and such others. Above all, love for the divine is the purest love untainted by sex. Though it may be emotional it is hardly sensual.

Usually some fiction writers use it in details, poets do rarely though not in details as in fiction. It is in some modern prose works that elaborate sex scenes appear. There are of course such poems like that of Kamala Das and Sylvia Plath. Some well discussed but now out of touch sex scenes in a modern novel, almost a pornographic work, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by D. H. Lawrence draws our attention as the paedophilic emotive work, *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov. Some more names of this genre are associated with writers like Kim Corum, S. Redfern, A. N. Roquelaure and Sherrilyn Kenyon, as we find from records.

Maxim Gorky just put the question of love from another point of view, "Love- that means: concur, condescend, disregard, forgive. That's all very well, when you love a woman. But the people- can we disregard the people's ignorance, concur with their delusions, condescend to their every baseness, forgive their brutality? Can we do that?" (Gorky/432)

It is a different aspect of love; here the distinction is between the indulging weakness of a lover in a man-woman situation and the duty of a lover of people. But it is a going out of the basic question of love between a man and a woman. It does not include the same sex love also as

are spreading in modern societies. That is an aberration for our purpose. The main thrust of our discussion is the age old love-sex relationship between man and woman; a heterosexual situation.

In many discourses it has been held that true love is separate from physical or vital love. Pure love is for the sake of love only when one gives whatever he has to the lover without any expectation of return; it is free from carnal desire. While it is usual for lovers to express their feelings and emotions physically, it is neither essential nor it is the only channel to express deep love. There may be love without sex. Physical and vital expressions are often not connected to true love situations between man and woman. Often it is mechanical; a channel to release one's pent up vital-physical force. Often we see in modern novels the enactment of such scenes not deeply connected to love between established lovers. This topic for discussion is very vast with examples galore across the countries and their literature. I have chosen some fictional works to throw some light on the subject of sex almost without love, sex in combination with love and some other situations where love is the upper most element of relationship. While delving deep into them we find certain strange aspects of love. Somewhere love is beauty, somewhere it produces bitter results full of perversion, jealousy and revenge, somewhere it imposes self-torture.

Situations where Sex activities do not emanate from Love

John Updike is a writer who usually loves to have sex scenes in his novels and short stories. His novel *S* is based on the once existed but later abolished Ashram of Acharya Rajneesh in Rajneeshpuram, USA. The name of the Guru in the novel is Arhat. Surrounded by some remarkable ladies Arhat performs yoga with different combines of ideology and practices culled from different yoga systems like Buddhism and Tantrik rites. He and his ashram performed some sexual activities as reported in newspapers, towards reaching some of their goals or may be just as a way of life; there was no restrictions.

The book is a mix of such ideologies and practices based on different spiritual or religious systems. Here the introduction of such a scene is quite suited to the theme of the novel but such activities are not based on any real love between the actors. Apart from the religious rites which may be said to be a quoting over the crude pill, a scene of enjoyment between over mature man and woman is depicted with all fanfare. While the man shows himself as *Purusha*, acting stage by stage, totally eight stages and beyond according to shastra, the woman is worshiped as *shakti*. She is named Kundalini by her Guru. In the cover of religion the writer takes the liberty to describe the sexual act elaborately. While the man, Guru Arhat, enjoys the status holding himself in perfect poise in *vajrolimudra* and further higher techniques of *ujjana sadhana*, *samarasa* and *sahaja*, the shakti or the heroine named Kundalini, relishes as *sambhogakaya*. They act as *vajra* and *padma* or *Shiva* and *Shakti*. (Updike/159-162)

Saadat Hasan Manto was an Indian by birth, ideally Indian until death, living in Pakistan after partition. He bitterly detested the partition of the country. He was a writer, unlike most others, especially interested in woman; from her motherhood to daughterhood but mostly he was

interested in her womanhood as a heterosexual object. Most of his stories are concerning the women, usually the women who were tortured and raped or loved physically. He is famous for his partition stories like “Khol do”, “Kali Shalwar”, “Boo” and “Toba Tek Singh”. His stories written in Urdu were stories of woman, about woman but generally not love stories.

Khushwant Singh is another famous Indian writer who is known for his interest in woman. While he wrote a novel telling about the serious effect of love on the lovers we may say that the writer rejoices till now, nearing his hundredth year of life, the sexual aspect of woman and her body. In the Author’s Note to his book, *The Company of Women*, he writes, “As a man gets older, his sex instincts travel from his middle to his head. What he wanted to do . . . but did not . . . he does in his mind. I started writing this novel when I was eighty-three. I finished it at eighty-five.” (Singh/Authors Note)

The fact is, he has all along been carrying and pursuing his main idea, an insatiable thirst for sex in his mind, besides what he did or did not, could or could not. The story of the novel is about the sexual life of Mohan Kumar who, along with related perversions, was mad after his obsession, from early youth till the end of his life.

He had interesting encounters and rendezvous with his counterpart as depicted in different chapters of the novel which is a garland of such meetings and temporary satisfactions without any other essential link to the novel. It is a story of such stories. After his first marriage was broken even after having children, he gave an advertisement in the newspaper, “Forty-year-old product of an Ivy League College (USA) living separately from his wife and two children. Divorce petition filed. Seeks a live-in companion for a mutually agreed time-duration. Willing to pay air fare to Delhi and back and Rs.10000 per month for expenses. Free board and lodging” (Singh/9)

Before the appearance of a suitable candidate he was engaged with his ever ready sweeper woman and then that happened with other candidates who agreed including call-girl in hotel. In his memoir he wrote about his pre-marital adventures. So his life was full of such activities without any bond of love. He decided to commit suicide when sure of slow death by venereal disease. This he did by gulping 30 pills, reciting a Gayatri Mantra after each pill.

“Then he resolutely composed himself and took the first Calmpose; as he gulped it down with a sip of water, he recited the Gayatri Mantra. He did the same with the second, and the third, till the last: thirty Gayatri Mantras with thirty pills. Then he put his head on the pillow and closed his eyes.” (Singh/232)

This was the ultimate adventure of his life for meeting not a woman as heretofore but death, after finding so many Gayatri Mantras from his personal record, as if they were meant to be the death-vows of the patient. Needless to say, the book is made of series of such stories, without any pull of love.

Amitav Ghose’s *The Glass Palace* and other novels have occasional depiction of sex scenes, sometimes abrupt, sometimes as a natural sequence of events as in *Hungry Tides*. Usually they

are incidents of indulgent attraction between man and woman, not the result long standing relationship of exulting love. There are some variations which may be focused if and when I discuss his novels in detail.

Jhumpa Lahiri's stories are not usually sexy but sometimes it is there as part of life, very much a part of the story as in "A Choice of Accommodations" with a suggestion of closely weaved man-woman relationship. In "Going Ashore": "She felt him pressing up against her, felt his breath and his lips on the back of her neck, and she turned to face him, gave him her mouth. He could be aloof in bed as he could be in general, focusing on some part of her body to the point of seeming to forget her. But that distance no longer threatened her. It was only in bed that he uttered her name, the hot word filling her ear." (Lahiri/317)

The heroine had a yearning for love at her first encounter with him when they both were teenagers which did not fructify. At this long distance of time she was not carrying it. Love is fugitive here as the lovers are. Their love actions at this point do not have a sure basis. Their meetings, remembrances of the past and physical union are chance occurrences, not deep rooted love sequence, as if meeting on the death-bed of love.

Upamanyu Chatterjee's filmed work, *English, August*, is a novel about a young IAS officer who is a fledgling in his service and the world around. Not being able to move with the bureaucratic world with all its vices and norms he finally comes out from the place of his posting submitting resignation. He is a bachelor and lives either in hotel or mess. He expresses his male erotic desires in crude languages mostly in soliloquies thereby bringing his heart, vital desires and unreformed mental ideas out in the open. It has been hailed by the critics as funny, serio-comic, etc. He neither encounters any significant woman nor falls in love with one nor has any sodomitic tendency. So this quite known work is neither a romantic novel nor marked by heterosexual act. It represents a world of futile obsession with sexual urge, auto-erotism expressed in words and acts sometimes as it may happen in the private world of a bachelor as he was.

Sasthi Brata is highly erotic and satirical in his otherwise entertaining fictions but they are apart from serious love treatment.

Shobha De's *Starry-Nights* and such other works may prompt one to feel like going to a corner, away from others' gaze, to enjoy perversions and other sexual innovations. *Starry Night* tells the inner tale of the participants of cinema industry in the area which is popularly known as Bollywood. She is highly recognized as a novelist of her genre. All the Indian English writers discussed above are known for their highly effective crispy language and storytelling capacity.

Love between man and woman takes different turns, expresses in diverse ways in life as well as in fiction. We find love twisted to its opposite end in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. In Arundhati Roy's *God of Small Things* we find lovers in desperate situations of life. With great dangers ahead they fulfil their love meeting physically. In Khuswant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* we find the lover to sacrifice his life for his loved one, to save her life crossing over the road to

impossibility. And in a story written in the background of the great Bengal famine, “They came Back”, written by Ela Sen in her book *The Darkening Days*, we find a man and a woman loves each other to live only. Love for life induces them to care for each other’s life and love blooms in a situation of dependence. Below is a story of love which is not devoid of physical love making as an essential attraction between the two lovers but such a physical bond transcends the corporality and reaches another height convincing the lovers that they would meet again as lovers beyond death.

Eternal Bond of Love Keeps them United even after Death

Here is an example of man-woman closeness as an essential expression of their true love. In Mikhail Solokhov’s *Quiet Flows the Don* love between Grigory and Aksinya, the neighbours, is so genuine that the sex scenes are less vigorous but so natural that their impact in our heart remains as indelible mark of love, forever. Aksinya was married to Stepan who treated her cruelly. Aksinya who loved Grigory declared before her unwilling father-in-law, as he was taken to be, that “Grishka’s mine! Mine! Mine! I own him and I’ll go on owning him!” (Sholokov/V.1/56) She chased him away who came to warn her that her legal husband would come soon and take action against her and that he would get his son married to his chosen bride. Grigory was married to beautiful Natalya against his wishes by his father. He straight away declared that he did not love her.

The novel is about a tumultuous activity of continuous warfare between the communist forces and the imperial power, between the different fractions of the revolutionary groups. It was a deadly fight with incidence of killing at any moment even out of slightest suspicion. From the jaws of death when Grigory came back home after very long absence, “Aksinya stepped across the threshold, uttered a barely audible ‘Good evening to you!’ and untied her kerchief, breast heaving, radiant eyes fixed on Grigory. She walked to the table and sat down beside Dunyashka. Snowflakes were melting on her brows and lashes, and on her pale face. Closing her eyes, she wiped her face with her hand, took a deep breath and then, recovering herself, again fastened her fervent gaze on Grigory

“Aksinya did not stay long only a few times, and swiftly, did she glance at her beloved. Grigory caught only that one direct glance from the threshold, full of love and devotion, but it told him everything that mattered He accompanied her to the gate and asked, ‘Well, how are things Aksinya?’

‘Oh, there is too much to tell Will you come tomorrow?’

‘Yes.’” (Sholokov/V.2/723-724)

But Grigory was under close scrutiny and was almost sure to be imprisoned and then treated by other communist enemies as usual. He would flee the scene to fight further on the way. In between the hide and seek he again visited her. “She scarcely touched her food; leaning forward a little, she watched Grigory chewing hungrily, and with her misty gaze caressed his face, the brown neck enclosed by the high stiff collar or the tunic, the broad shoulders, and the hands

resting heavily on the table She drank in his smell, the mingled smell of astringent male sweat and tobacco, a smell that she knew so well and that was his and only his. Even blindfolded, she could have picked out Grigory from a thousand other men by that smell alone. . . . That evening she could not be attentive hostess because she had no eyes for anything but Grigory.” (Sholokov/V.2/745-746)

They slept a hungry sleep that night but when next morning he left, “Aksinya heard the sound of his feet crunching through the snow and every step stabbed pain into her heart. The footsteps died away and the fence creaked. Then all was quiet again, but for the wind murmuring in the forest across the Don. Aksinya strained her ear for some other sound besides that of the wind, but there was nothing. Feeling cold, she went into the kitchen and put out the lamp.” (Sholokov/V.2/751)

Life was full of strain, death at every step. Grigory came again and slightly tapped on the window. “He climbed on to the coping. Her bare arms twined round his neck. Those dear arms, they trembled and throbbed so violently on his shoulders that he began to tremble with them

“She wiped her face and pressed Grigory’s cheeks between her wet hands. Smiling at him through her tears, unable to take her eyes off her beloved, she said quietly, ‘I won’t cry any more’” (Sholokov/V.2/826)

They could finally come out of the village and ran armed, both on horseback. But that was the ‘Last ride together’. A floating bullet killed her at dawn. “He buried his Aksinya by the bright light of morning He had bid her farewell, firmly believing that they would not be parted for long” (Sholokov/V.2/835)

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WUTHERING HEIGHTS AS METAPHYSICAL ROMANCE

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Emily Bronte as such was not writing a romance in the genre of Austen or her own sister Charlotte Bronte with concerns of social mobility and class issues or even gender inequality being at the forefront of her concerns, the romance she conceives is of a grander, transcendental and metaphysical nature, the idea of the self being fulfilled in existence only in and through another being, the self realizing itself only in embracing alterity and difference through another being to become one and the same. The immortality and intensity of the passion between Heathcliff and Catherine is what stands out, and the tragedy of doomed and forbidden desire for that which is dark, evil, sinful and degrading in the manner of Heathcliff brings out existentialist depths to this romance which is far from Austen's comedy of manners or even Charlotte Bronte's notions of genteel romance. Heathcliff and Cathy cannot conceive of a life without each other, it is this metaphysical complementarity which the novel highlights and the fact that their respective selves can only be realized in and through each other, a longing that can only be realized in death since there are so many worldly and practical obstacles to them being with each other in their mortal lives.

Wuthering Heights may be conceived as a tale in which the passion is of a metaphysical force, where Catherine declares that "I am Heathcliff" she may be construed as declaring she is his metaphysical complementary or opposite, they are complementary as male and female, light and dark, civilized and savage, property-bound and dispossessed. Indeed their passion may be described as transcendental and ideal, something which exceeds the worldly and the necessities of class propriety and sexual union. Catherine marries Edgar Linton because it is the proper and worldly thing to do as a woman of her time, to marry a man with good looks and an inheritance, but in so doing she represses her true passion for Heathcliff, her ideal Other, whom she has been inseparable from since childhood. Catherine and Heathcliff are thus depicted as metaphysical contraries or opposities who find fulfilment in their complementary polarity, indeed, metaphysical opposites such as light and dark have no meaning outside their relation to each

other, light gains its definition on through its distinction from darkness and vice versa, hence Catherine and Heathcliff are metaphysical contraries who are realized in wholeness only in and through each other as they derive meaning from life only in relation to each Other as the metaphysical opposite which forms a complementary whole.

From the beginning Heathcliff is depicted as wholly Other. Originating from unknown and gypsy lineage Heathcliff is frequently associated with the devil and the demonic. To the end as Charlotte Bronte puts it, Heathcliff is unredeemed. Indeed the bitterness with which Heathcliff exacts his revenge on Catherine for marrying Edgar Linton and destroys her confirms this. Their passion is thus fiery but also destructive, both Heathcliff and Catherine are destroyed by their obsessive passion for each other and can find peace and reunification only in death. One critic has described *Wuthering Heights* as a tale which unfolds entirely in hell, and indeed, the darkness, violence, pathology, extremes of hatred and revenge seems to confirm this view. Heathcliff's attraction as a tragic hero is precisely this daemonic nature of hellish extremes and fiery passion that sets him in stark contrast with the bland and cowardly Edgar Linton. Raised in luxury and comfort, Edgar Linton evinces none of the strength and intensity of Heathcliff, which is probably what draws Catherine to him as the far more masculine and powerful of the two. The lure of Heathcliff is the lure of that which is forbidden and repressed, pure sin and desire, in Freudian terms Heathcliff is pure id, representing the darker repressed sensual desires of human nature that the ego keeps in check. It is this darkness, sinful and sensual nature that draws women to Heathcliff as he comes across as powerful, masculine and sensual as a result, while Heathcliff is demonic and evil this proves to be his attraction, as Edgar Linton seems sterile and effeminate in comparison to Heathcliff.

In creating an attractive demonic figure in Heathcliff Emily Bronte seems to imply that evil, passion, destruction, extremes of love and hate exist on a plane of greater depth than the good. In so doing she has created a character akin to Milton's Satan and Shakespeare's Macbeth. Yet while romanticizing evil Emily does not shy away from exposing its destructive nature. Indeed it is his obsessive passion and revenge of Catherine that kills her and destroys the Linton household while he usurps the property of the Lintons and the Earnshaws. Evil is shown to be a destructive force which asserts itself over goodness and usurps its rights, but which dissipates in the end as Heathcliff fails to thwart the romance of Cathy and Hareton Earnshaw after causing the death and broken romance of Linton Heathcliff. In the end Heathcliff is unable to prevent Hareton Earnshaw from inheriting *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange* through his death. Thus while evil triumphs and oppresses the good for a while, its power dissipates and Heathcliff's revenge is thwarted as he is destroyed by his own actions and has destroyed his love object Catherine in the process.

The demonic Heathcliff is thus depicted as seductive but also destructive, indeed he has singularly usurped the properties of the Earnshaws and Lintons and wreaked destruction on both families but has in no way redeemed his own 'selfish, Unchristian life' as Nelly puts it. Yet the universe of *Wuthering Heights* is not distinctly Christian though it does subscribe to a belief in the afterlife as Heathcliff believes, as Catherine does that they will be reunited in death. The intensity of the passion in particular, is what sets *Wuthering Heights* apart from other romances. Indeed what sets *Wuthering Heights* apart from the run of the mill romance is the height and depth as well as the intensity of the passion that is depicted, where Catherine declares she and Heathcliff are the same, this implies that they are parts of an organic whole and are only made complete in and through each other, as we raised earlier in the idea of Heathcliff and Catherine being metaphysical contraries who are fulfilled and completed only in and through each other's existence. The stereotype and cliché of soulmates who fulfil each other's being comes to mind, but it is the ferocity of desire and the utter dependency of realizing a meaningful existence only in and through each other that sets this romance apart. Indeed the peculiar nature of the romance is that it is ideal and transcendent without the usual needs of other romances, such as class equality and sexual consummation, it transcends sexuality and class, it is of a primal and fiery nature that harkens back to Cathy and Heathcliff being childhood partners and as such lovers for life in a peculiar all consuming passion which haunts both of them throughout their lives.

Emily Bronte as such was not writing a romance in the genre of Austen or her own sister Charlotte Bronte with concerns of social mobility and class issues or even gender inequality being at the forefront of her concerns, the romance she conceives is of a grander, transcendental and metaphysical nature, the idea of the self being fulfilled in existence only in and through another being, the self realizing itself only in embracing alterity and difference through another being to become one and the same. The immortality and intensity of the passion between Heathcliff and Catherine is what stands out, and the tragedy of doomed and forbidden desire for that which is dark, evil, sinful and degrading in the manner of Heathcliff brings out existentialist depths to this romance which is far from Austen's comedy of manners or even Charlotte Bronte's notions of genteel romance. Heathcliff and Cathy cannot conceive of a life without each other, it is this metaphysical complementarity which the novel highlights and the fact that their respective selves can only be realized in and through each other, a longing that can only be realized in death since there are so many worldly and practical obstacles to them being with each other in their mortal lives.

The passion of Catherine and Heathcliff is thus a transcendent and otherworldly passion that exceeds the word of the normal, it transcends moral, physical and sexual limits through its intensity and ferocity of the ardour they experience for each other. Indeed it is Heathcliff's obsessive love for Catherine that will drive him to exact revenge on her and her family after losing her to Edgar Linton in marriage, to be reunited with her in a mystical and metaphysical

manner when he commands that he is buried with Catherine and is certain of their meeting in the afterlife. Their passion thus exceeds the world of the physical, temporal and moral, it is class boundaries that kept them apart in their lifetime but all this is duly transcended when Catherine longs for her childhood flame Heathcliff after he returns with a fortune and groomed. Their passion exists on a metaphysical plane that exceeds the worldly and temporal, and can only be consummated in the afterlife as there are so many obstacles to them being together in their worldly lives. The key to understanding the romance between Catherine and Heathcliff is its obsessive and all consuming nature, a ferocity of desire that exceeds even the realm of the sexual, it is a profoundly metaphysical longing in which Catherine cannot conceive of herself without her metaphysical Other Heathcliff, they are two parts of a whole as Catherine declares that "I am Heathcliff". Life without him is futile and meaningless because she is only completed as a human being in and through her existence with Heathcliff. While Heathcliff is dark, destructive and brutal, one is brought to admire the intensity of his desire for Catherine as an all consuming passion that will haunt him throughout his life and bring him to long to be reunited with Catherine in death. The single-mindedness of Heathcliff's pursuit of Catherine, its unrelenting and forceful nature, being driven by a pure metaphysical longing that exceeds the physical and temporal, is what differentiates the romance of *Wuthering Heights* from Austen's comedy of manners and Charlotte Bronte's genteel romance. It is the sheer intensity and ferocity of desire and a longing that exceeds the realm of the worldly and temporal which is what distinguishes *Wuthering Heights* from the more mundane social climbing romances of Austen and Charlotte Bronte. This is seen through the pure metaphysical nature of its conception of love which is seen to exist on an otherworldly plane which exceeds the physical, temporal and sexual, it is literally a longing unto death which brings the metaphysical opposites Catherine and Heathcliff together.

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WHISPERS OF FALLEN WOMEN IN T.S. ELIOT'S *THE WASTELAND*

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The Wasteland has been hailed as Eliot's master piece- the supreme triumph of poetic art in modern times which depicts the sterility of modern civilization of post- World War I Europe. Throughout the poem Eliot's use of recurrent images to depict the downfall in every sphere makes the poem too appalling. At such a juncture, his use of women characters as a metaphor to stand for the downfall of values aggravates the perversity of wasteland scenario. In my paper, I have attempted to explore this unanticipated aspect of women, who are represented by Eliot as solely responsible for the catastrophe of mankind. Of course, my findings turn out to be pertinent in the modern time.

Eliot's *The Wasteland* is one of the most popular poems of the 20th century. It has been hailed as Eliot's masterpiece-the supreme triumph of the poetic art in modern times. The poem focuses on the deadness and sterility of modern civilization of Post-World War I Europe. Isolate Wasteland scenario is the dominant symbol of the poem which has been depicted in different ways-as a physical, natural desert as well as a socio cultural, intellectual and moral wasteland. Throughout the poem Eliot has used recurrent images to depict the downfall which has occurred in every sphere. Reference to the meaningless pleasures of the world, draught women, fire, water, pollution refer in an oblique way to the corruption of sex in modern time. The sordid pictures of Mary, Sweency patronizing Mrs. Porter's bawdy house, the encounter between the typist and the clerk in a seedy London flat categorically are striking to bring to the readers the wasteland scenario.

The presence of the most of the women characters in the poem refer to the situation of apocalypse. They are dangerously seductive threatening to masculinity. Women in the poem serve as a metaphor to stand for the downfall of values, represent the perverted form of sex and their functions as well. They are fallen women who are blot on the name of women.

In my paper I have attempted to explore this unanticipated aspect of woman where instead of playing a positive role to tame ghastly situation, rather she herself has got stuck in the

quagmire of contemporary uncontrolled situations and thus, brings curse on herself. Woman is the beautiful creation of God. She has been assigned in our myths the status of Devi and has been presented as the paragon of beauty, sacrifice, patience and love. But as it is said even the moon has a spot on it, and it is very difficult to retain the sanctity; women have also been presented in our scriptures as solely responsible for the misery of man. In *The Old Testament of the Bible*, Eve has been held responsible for the fall of man. It is she who is said to have enticed Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, and thereby incurs the wrath of God, which ultimately leads to their expulsion from heaven. Original sin of man brought death in this world. So, Eve has been presented as seductress who seduces Adam for the rebellious deed. She herself proves to be a rebel as she revolts against the command of God who is her creator. Greek myths also facilitate us with a number of examples of fallen women who led to the much catastrophe. Helen and Clytemnestra are such examples. In this context Maud Bodkin observes:

“The tyrannous grasp upon man’s emotion possessed by the dynamic image of woman in its aspect as cherishing, satisfying, exalting, adds to the terror of its other aspect as enslaving betraying.”

Northrop Frye in *Anatomy of Criticism*, under the theory of archetype describes women as object of desire, a hetaera. Coleridge in *Kubla Khan* describes about the mermaids who misled the travelers and ultimately killed them. T.S Eliot in *The Wasteland* has also described the women characters that have got deviated from their fixed duties and roles and have stooped to the lowest level. Whole poem is hoarded with a number of such examples. Mary, Sweeney, Madam Sosostriis, witches in the epigraph, typist in the *Fire Sermon* modern Cleopatra, Lil three girls in *What The Thunder Said*, are all such fallen women characters, through whom we hear the whispers of their fallen state. These women are culturally fallen and symbolize profound irrationality.

Primarily we listen about these whispers through Tiresias, the protagonist of the poem who has led the life of both males and females. He has been bisexual and has undergone through the experiences of the lives of both. The intricate experience of Tiresias has been presented in the following lines:

I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dogs.
Perceived the scene and foretold the rest
I too awaited the expected guest.
He, the young man carbuncular arrives,
A small house agent’s clerk with one bold stare,
One of the law on whom assurance sits
As a dark silk hat on a Bradford millionaire.(228 - 34)

Tiresias in the poem is a device used by Eliot for fusing different times, different spaces and different genders. In every gender his experience sounds pertinent in the Modern context.

Entire poem is worked in the pattern of a collage which ultimately creates the impression of “a heap of broken images” (22). These broken images hint at the desolate and dismal scenario of the modern wasteland which is physical, sociological, intellectual and moral. *The Wasteland* reveals the nations that the archaic depictions of romance have fallen into despair and disrepute, waiting to be replaced by the inchoate ideals of a new age. The degenerated and infertile society is represented through broken relationships between men and women. Eliot has utilized women as a window to show the dissolution and distortion of love and desire.

Several women characters in the poem though differ from one another and belong to different groups of society, but a similarity lies at the surface level. They all connote decadence and perverted values.

Mary is the first woman in *The Wasteland*. She feels depressed at the arrival of the month of April and calls it “the cruelest month”.

April is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain. (01-04)

Mary misses the warmth of winter and the way it kept the earth covered with snow. She intends winter to prolong and dislikes spring season which traditionally is the time of rejuvenation and rebirth. She misses her sledging experience with her royal cousin.

And when we were children, staying at the aechduke’s
My cousin’s he to me out on a sledge
And I was frightened. He said, Marpe
Marie hold on tight and down we went. (13 - 16)

In the above lines, the words of Mary’s cousin “Marie hold on tight” reflect the prospect of sex in a negative light. The purpose of sex has deteriorated. It has lost its purpose of creativity. Instead of giving birth to new generation Mary is busy in her own epicurean pleasures. She is a failure as far as fertility is concerned. She is one of those fallen women who just waste away their time in sensuous pursuits and indulge in recollection rather than doing anything worthy and prolific. Mary embodies sterility, fear, inactivity and superficiality. Even her statement “I come from Lithuania and I am not a Russian” (12) also reflects her rootlessness and lack of belongingness. Eliot has used Mary in association with flight, thus creates the ironic vision which is painted by the poet with the grey strokes of desolation and death.

Eliot’s reference to Tristan and Isolde in the poem also refers to the same situation. In R. Wagner’s opera which is a story of tragic passion, Isolde becomes a symbol of unfulfilled love. Tristan waits for his beloved Isolde but his words “waste and empty is the sea” refer to the sterilized and impotent love of Tristan. Woman again gets associated with death and sterility.

Character of Madam Sosostriis has also been portrayed by Eliot with the same strokes of desolation and perversion. She is a “famous clairvoyant” and embodies perversion and fear

pervading the milieu. Her character represents the vulgarity of contemporary Europe. She is a fake fortune teller and illegally carries out this practice keeping herself concealed from the police. Cleanth Brooks observes if the original source of *The Wasteland* is Miss Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* in that work "Tarot card were originally used to determine the events of the highest order of the people." But ironically, Madam Sosostrius has fallen a long way from the highest function of her predecessor. The pictures which appear on the cards metaphorically imply the cultural disintegration and decay of values. E.g. the female character Belladonna is the 'lady of Rocbs' and the 'Lady of Situations'. Belladonna literally means a beautiful lady. But in the modern context she has polluted not only name rather she has become a powerful symbol to signify the decayed Christian values. Even her name is a parody of Madame Blavatsky, a popular occultist among literary circles in the early 90's. Her name also is a parody of the Egyptian name 'Sosostrius'. Eliot has probably borrowed this name from the character 'Sosostrius', the sorceress of Ecbatan in Huxley's novel *Crome Yellow*. So apparently, Madame Sosostrius association with a Sorceress apparently reflects her fallen status.

In order to depict the cancerous scenario of boredom, ennui, corruption of sex, Eliot has used women as a tool through whom the poet has presented the marsh of the contemporary scene. Cleopatra in the beginning of *A Game of Chess* represents modern European womanly spirit. The images created around modern Cleopatra in the beginning of the poem represent the milieu of waste and boredom. Her inertia is compensated with the help of artificial glory knit around her. She can recreate herself only by indulging in the frivolous activities and can't do anything for her spiritual upliftment. Hugh Kenner points out in this context that the modern Cleopatra lacks nerves, forgetting after ten words its confident opening to dissipate itself among glowing and smoldering sensations.

Eliot has depicted in the poem a brittle era, deteriorated both spiritually and physically, inwardly broken, dried and dusty. There are implied allusions in the poem to Cordelia and Ophelia- Shakespearean heroines- who embody strong emotional exuberance, but the woman in *A Game of Chess* is reduced to a disharmonized mechanical identity. She is a frustrated, overly emotional but not terribly intellectual figure, oddly sinister, surrounded by 'strange synthetic perfumes' and smoking candles. She can be seen as a counter part to the title character of Eliot's *Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, with whom she shares both a physical setting and a profound sense of isolation.

The two women in this section represent the two sides of modern sexuality. While one side of the sexuality is a dry, barren, interchange inseparable from neurosis and self- destruction, the other side of the sexuality is associated with the lack of culture and rapid ageing. The woman is explicitly compared to Philomela, a character out of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* who is raped by her brother- in law, the king, who then cuts her tongue out to keep her quite. She manages to tell her pitiable tale to her sister through a piece of embroidery work, who helps her avenge herself by murdering the king's son and feeding him to the king. The sisters are then changed into birds,

Philomela into a nightingale. This comparison suggests something essentially disappointing about the women in this section as she is unable to communicate her interior self to the world. The woman and her surroundings although aesthetically pleasing, are ultimately sterile and meaningless, as is suggested by the nonsense song that she sings.

Representation of two types of women from two different sections, the upper and the lower sections describes the neurosis, psychosis and such disorders prevailing in the society.

My nerves are bad tonight; yes bad, stay with me.

Speak to me, why do you never speak? Speak. (111 – 12)

These lines refer nothing but the irrationality of the modern couple. Woman's harsh, abrupt, repetitive questions describe her neurotic mental state and her dissatisfaction with her marital status. In the second part of the section, reference to Lil's experience, as she updates herself before the arrival of her husband just to entertain him, refers again to the fallen status of woman in the contemporary time. The suggestions of her friend

Now Albert is coming back, make yourself a bit smart.

He will want to know what you done with that money he gave you

To get you some teeth..... You have them all out

(He will say) I can't bear to look at you. (142 - 146)

Lil has lost her beauty at the crucial age of 31 only. Her complete surrender to her husband when he comes from the army to have nice time reflects her indifference to her own self. She cannot rise against the physical exploitation inflicted on her by her husband just for the fear that he would go to some other woman and would desert her.

The most undesirable thing about Eliot's women characters is that they inherently subjugate to males and remain incapable to define themselves. They fall a prey to the lust of males and consequently suffer physically and mentally. Marriage in the modern time has lost its sanctity. Its only purpose is procreation. Mary and Lou ask Lil 'what you get married for, if you don't want children'. Eliot in the wasteland has revealed the notions that the archaic depictions of romance have fallen into despair and disrepute. The charm is over and the residue is depressing and disappointing.

The *Fire sermon* instead of being inhabited by the pure woman and nymphs is inhabited by the prostitutes and sex- seekers. Mrs. Porter in the poem symbolizes vulgarity and immorality. She runs a brothel to cater to the physical needs of the males and plays a negative role in the poem. Hence she symbolizes degradation of values and perversion of sex. We realize from the poem that all women figures in the poem melt into one as they have a close affinity with one another as far as their existence and function in the poem is concerned. Another woman character, the typist's relation with a man is akin to a rape. Without being indifferent to what happens with her, she lets the man assault her and doesn't resist him. Her attitude reflects the situation of lifelessness. Love in the modern society is not really love. It is merely the fulfillment of instinctive desires.

Since time immemorial, women have been presented as seductress of males with their feminine charm. Rishi Vishwamitra couldn't control his passion and fell a prey to the beauty and charm of an Apsara. Ultimately he was doomed and faced an irreparable loss due to his unbridled lust. In the *Rape of the Lock*, Belinda entices males by her bewitching beauty. Eliot's representation of Sweeney and her daughter is also very close to the depiction of such type of women who care more for their external appearance, rather than being concerned with the spiritual upliftment. The lamentation of the three maidens after their rape also reflects the disintegration of the values in the modern time. Women lack vision to realize about their predicament.

The whole poem is replete with the number of examples of modernity and antiquity to describe the deadness and utter sterility of modern civilization. In order to enact the theme of cultural disintegration, women have been used as a metaphor. Although on the basis of Eliot's treatment towards women in the poem, he appears to be misogynist. But after a crucial analysis of Eliot's poetry, we come to know that he was writing at such turbulent times when he needed labyrinth of meanings and messages to depict the aridity and desolate prospects of the post world war era. So women become a tool in the hands of Eliot to delineate the contemporary scenario in a pertinent manner.

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CHEKHOV'S *THE CHERRY ORCHARD*: EVOCATION OF COMIC EXPERIENCE WITH SPECIAL RESPONSE TO MINOR CHARACTERS

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*To avoid everything petty, everything illusory, everything that prevents one from being free and happy, that is the whole meaning and purpose of our life . . . we have fallen at least two hundred years behind the times. We have achieved nothing as yet; . . . If you have the household keys, throw them in the well and go away.*¹ (Chekhov 124)

Trofimov pronouncing these words to Anya in *The Cherry Orchard* appears as a mouthpiece to reinstate Chekhov's vision and the above mentioned lines here appears like a conglomeration of the various personal, social and literary ambitions of both the dramatist and the characters.

Anton Chekhov's Russia in the nineteenth century after the Emancipation Act of 1861 brought changes in the life of landed gentry and aristocrats and slowly swept away their earlier autonomous power as most estates due to neglect, handling by incompetent hands or monetary crisis had to be transferred to smaller entrepreneurs. This forms the backdrop to Anton Chekhov's play *The Cherry Orchard* where Madame Ranevsky's estate is auctioned and bought by their ex-serf Lopakhin. Chekhov's play anticipates with this singular theme

¹ Chekhov, Anton. *The Cherry Orchard*. Trans. George Calderon. *Two Plays By Tchekhof*. Edinburgh: Riverside Press Ltd. 1912. eBook. <<https://archive.org/details/cu31924063792307>>

All subsequent direct references from the play in this paper are from this edition only.

almost the whole phase of decline and collapse of Tsarist Russia and influence of new industrialization and social advancement.

The history and the theatrical exposition behind the play is full of conflicting arguments but notwithstanding a varied literary representations and only confining to the whole act wise revelation will enable us to comprehend the comic or tragic overbearing of *The Cherry Orchard*. At one level, the play thus seems to emulate as a complete representation of the binary of comic and tragic elements, more inclined towards the tragic aspects after the established enactment of it on stage. The Moscow Art theatre under Stanislavsky in the year 1904 binds it as a play of realist genre depicting the socio- economic shifts occurring in the nineteenth century Russian society, and this remains till date as a well known fact. Along with it, the most obvious issue of enquiry i.e. analysis of tragic vs. comedy remained pertinent.

This paper is an attempt to unfold the comic aspects of Chekhov's last play depicting why it is mostly with particular emphasis on the minor characters, we get a glimpse of certain preconceived ideas of Russian society; and the major characters although given emphasis fails to project themselves on a grand scale. One significant line of enquiry that needs to be addressed is whether it was a truthful projection by Chekhov of his times or only a theatrical manoeuvre for artistic creation. This aspect will be unfolded by reconstructing Chekhov's approach to his own ideas of humour reflected from instances of the play. At the same time, it is necessary to take into consideration, owing to the broad social aspects and numerous approaches to the playwright's literary craft, this paper shall be limited in adopting such connotations and cite only those instances which would help in arguing the comic undertone more glaringly reflected in the minor characters and lower-class characters of the play, *The Cherry Orchard*. But the main thematic status and action of the play concerning the sale of the estate remained stable without any fractures or diversions. In an introductory note to Chekhov's plays², George Calderon states at once directly the play *The Cherry Orchard* as being "very Russian"(7) in its nature and evaluates on the "centrifugal tendency"(8) of his plays in general. The overall emphasis thereby remained to the enlarged vision of the dramatist on large scale issues and not on individuals' inward sensitivities inviting readers and spectators to indulge on their speculations. Chekhov was indeed a visionary not only in his five major plays but also in his short stories that illuminates us on social issues through a comic undertone.

By seeking the well acknowledged critical assumptions of *The Cherry Orchard* we may easily shift our attention to the characters justifying Chekhov's artistic skills but there remains a tendency to ignore the reason behind such assumptions. Mostly the major character

² Calderon, George. Introduction. *Tchekhof. Two Plays By Tchekhof*. Edinburgh: Riverside Press Ltd.1912. eBook. 13-14 <<https://archive.org/details/cu31924063792307>>

developments and their deliverance of dialogues as the play progresses engrosses our attention making us ignore that it is the minor characters whose underlying significance helps in pressing the social realities to be more prominent throughout the text. The whole plot relies for comic outcome by centring on the various efforts to halt the auction, and trivial responses to such serious situations and efforts ironically. The ludicrous actions of the aristocratic nobility directly ensues reaction from the servants and minority section as they also recall their struggling past. Comic elements are thus rendered by Chekhov with pathos, highlighted by instances of how each defines their misfortunes, and repressing the reality of situation focus more on romantic indulgences. These different perspectives arouse our attention, to observe and analyze the plurality of meanings rendered to simple situations. Chekhov's dramatic technique thereby needs to be justified here which allows the characters much desired space collectively and not individually to accommodate and adjust themselves to the change. The transitions occurring in nineteenth century Russian society, i.e. the shifts occurring from traditional modes towards modernization and industrialization, further jostles the established rule of the nobility. This aspect is well adequately reflected in Madame Ranevsky's character whose eloquent style, impractical attitude ignoring the graveness of the situation enables in creation of a wider gap. She and her daughter recall childhood memories spent in the nursery instilling an air of childlike frenzy to the whole decorum of the household. They also look forward constantly to Paris and Europe more than the crisis in their Russian ancestral home. For instance Anya recalls about the weather conditions and the splendid aura of Paris in Act one; Yasha, their newly appointed servant that we will later witness in Act III is seen self consciously interested in improvement of his own situations and wants to go back to Paris, requesting Mrs. Ranevsky:

Let me ask a favour of you; be so kind; if you go to Paris again, take me with you . . .
You can see for yourself this is a barbarous country; the people have no morals; and the
Boredom . . . (Act III; 185)

This depiction rendered by Chekhov however fails to evoke laughter as a farce ought to, for the distorted dialogue deliverance and irregularity in their thought process curbs the usual tendency of readers and spectators to consider it as amusing. Anton Chekhov's aim remained more or less to make us aware of "ordinary daily life", "everyday life in Russia" (Calderon,17) and most ardently not just give a critical glance or expound as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky had done in their literature; he went one step further in delineating several possibilities to a single situation as in *The Cherry Orchard*.

Memory and imagination incongruously serves as an intimate accompaniment to these people as we find them constantly referring to their deplorable condition, and their past as tormented and future uncertain. So question arises in our mind what is so comic about it. It is therefore the foolish and farcical protagonist whose actions and approach to that situation which ironically renders the comic effect. Many critics have also pointed out to the infantile and

childlike behaviour of characters like Anya, Gayev and Madame Ranevsky at times which evokes humour and analyses this childlike behavioural pattern quite distinctly noticeable in Chekhov's characters and relates this characteristic to justify how a serious affair like estate-auction can be a mesmerizing experience for a viewer or reader.

After focusing so much on the playwright's skills of humour, it would be perhaps biased if we ignore the gloomy and melancholic atmosphere lend to the whole play for creating the necessary tragic effect as the play after all signifies some kind of loss and detachment. The already awaited auction of Ranevsky's estate since Act One nullifies the tilt towards comic tone on a certain level; the serious discussion between Trofimov and Lopakhin in Act II adds to this dimension. George Calderon justly defines Chekhov's dramatic work, stating: "His plays are tragedies with the texture of comedy."(13)

The majority of characters' mental space is preoccupied by the tension and uncertainty centred on the upcoming sale of the ancestral property of Madame Ranevsky and their moods, perceptions and emotional tendency is a reflection of that estate's unstable status of ownership and also the physical and symbolically significant cherry orchard which directly or indirectly affected their lives and thoughts. However, it is the servants who are outrightly concerned for their loss of means of livelihood as the abolition of serfdom had already hampered their stable life. The declining glory of Ranevskaya property propels a cast of shadow on the lives on Ephikhodof, Dunyasha, Firs, Charlotte and even Trofimov. However, Trofimov remains the least affected and unscathed of all by the issue of the estate in the play. We encounter him propagating his views and ideologies that appear as a truthful projection of Russian society.

The initial conversation of the play is a direct evidence to assert how servants and lower class withstands the aristocratic nobility in Ranevsky's household. We get a glimpse of the role reversal of the class system as a result of emancipation of serfs and consequent changes in Chekhov's Russian society; Dunyasha, a maid and Ephikhodof, clerk of the estate anticipating the arrival of their mistresses seem only more involved in their own personal appearances. Even, Lopakhin, the ex-serf is awaiting the arrival of the owners in his new attire stating in detail about his "white waistcoat", "brown boots" and "silk purse"³. Ephikhodof too in between do not fail to mention about "a new pair of boots" he had bought two days before. Again, we find Lopakhin saying to Dunyasha in Act One of *The Cherry*

³ Chekhov, Anton. *The Cherry Orchard* . Trans. George Calderon. *Two Plays By Tchekhof*. Edinburgh: Riverside Press Ltd.1912. eBook. Act One. pg 9

<<https://archive.org/details/cu31924063792307>>

Orchard: “You dress yourself like a young lady, and look at your hair! You ought not to do it; you ought to remember your place.”(9) This statement hints us at once to re-imagine the power status attributed to bourgeoisie and lower classes and the slow transitions occurring in society which renders these individuals to rethink their stature and position even within the Ranevsky estate and then society at large. The decline of aristocratic nobility in the Russian society must be then not a tragic affair for the dramatist who considered such a deviation with a positive outlook. Certain assumptions different from this said idea may remain, however, we ought not to keep Chekhov in an idealist position. Perhaps Chekhov’s critical and comic disposal of his own aristocratic characters at large is a realistic depiction of the twentieth century Russia.

In comparison to any other character, it is Lopakhin who is slightly portrayed in a more sympathetic light even in comparison to Fiers who is left behind alone in the estate unknowingly at the end of Act IV. Ironically despite neglect it is only Fiers who acquiesces and serves his mistress with dedication and emerges amongst the rest to have clearly comprehended and witnessed the social transitions. He recalls the old days and asserts serfdom to be a privilege for people like him, not the emancipation. His integrity and humility arouses pity in us more in comparison to character like Varya whose constant weeping and self fashioning as in Act II appears as a useless indulgence and foolishness. Almost all characters collectively arouse comic effect also in Act III when the whole gathering enjoying collectively resorts to foolishness and contradicting thoughts. Amidst incertitude these residents of the estate tend hard to make a last attempt to rejoice; it is only Fiers who shows us the true picture; unlike old days when distinguished guests were persons of high ranks and position in society and their contemporary scenario is quite the opposite:

“In the old days it was generals and barons and admirals that danced at our dances, but now we send for the Postmaster and the Stationmaster, and even they make a favour of coming.” (Act III; 184)

Again, a burlesque is created in between in the same situation when Dunyasha is self-admiring and reinstating herself with compliments: “Like a flower! I am so ladylike and refined, I dote on compliments.”(136) Ephikhodof is seen repeating same lines over and over again, and appears irritating to Varya. Lopakhin gets the beating instead and this small comic episode appears like a complimentary burlesque scene to lighten mood for the subsequent tragic closure in Act IV.

Chekhov’s earlier plays like *Uncle Vanya* and *The Seagull* also utilizes the setting of an estate at its backdrop to dwell on the unhappiness or melancholy nature of its characters. But the most outstanding projection of this aspect becomes visible in *The Cherry Orchard*. These

unhappy gestures due to social and monetary crisis according to Edward Braun in his essay⁴ on *The Cherry Orchard* can be imaginatively linked to Brecht's theatrical exposition who conceived social and economic changes in his plays. (116) But we must be aware that Chekhov did not insist on galvanizing the transitions or lamenting the decline of aristocrats rather focused on the trivialities of everyday life of these Russian people who are affected by social change. From the above mentioned statements, it is clear that Russian dramatist's last play *The Cherry Orchard* ensued debate about its generic conception since its inception on stage. Critics and reviews have since then argued either in favour or against the common established notions despite historical records claiming Chekhov's personal insistence to certify his play as a 'farce'. We can reconsider that many instances of the play avowedly insist on its depiction of a mockery or comic imitation of a crisis and tragic situation that is sustained in fickle nature of most of the characters, mode of dialogue deliverance, conflicting statements made in return to otherwise serious enquiry and lastly Chekhov's repeated insistence to enlighten his audience about it in a jocular manner.

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⁴ Gottlieb, Vera and Allian, Paul, Ed. *The Cambridge Companion To Chekhov*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. eBook. In his essay on *The Cherry Orchard* from this book, Edward Braun analyses the social conditions in detail and mentions about Brecht's plays depicting social change.

INCORPORATING MOBILE LEARNING AND TESTING POSSIBILITIES TO ELT CLASSROOMS

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The ubiquitous use and hi-tech compatibility of mobile phones for fast and easy browsing have made them potential tools of instruction in English teaching and testing practices. The presence of numerous mobile applications, dexterously customized to meet instructional needs, have redefined the traditionally held perceptions of mobile phones as a distracting device to a supportive tool. The paper examines the potential benefits of incorporating two popular mobile applications, earmarked for their user friendly interface and device compatibilities, into ELT classrooms for interactive digital learning and administering regular in class tests.

Introduction

The pervasive presence of information and communication technology (ICT) has revolutionized the teaching learning process so much that the perceptions and paradigms held/practiced for long have been redefined. The role of the teacher from a disseminator of information and a commanding center of focus has been relegated into the background. The past buzzwords in teaching and learning were imitation, memorization, passive listening and blind obedience have been replaced with autonomy, independence, guidance, self -pace and task based learning. The boundary of formal four walls has withered away and learning and teaching, on the wings of technology, has become non-spatial, a-temporal and readily accessible anytime anywhere.

Though these shifts have had their good share in pedagogic practices, the area of English language testing still seems to be reluctant to go beyond the traditionally practiced framework. Studies on language assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) show that administering one/two formal test at the middle/end of a course is unreliable and unauthentic as language skills tested within a span of two/four hours of exam can never be a valid evidence to testify to learner's real skills in the language. Moreover, the learner's performance, under an unnatural setting, depends on a lot of emotional and physical factors. So studies (Marie, 2011) on language testing propose the idea of continuous/alternative assessment in which the learners' competence in the actual use of the target language is assessed comprehensively on a regular basis with minimal emotional stress and employing a variety of tools.

The ubiquitous use of cell phones, their mobility, connectivity and high-tech compatibility have turned them into potential tools of learning and testing in ELT. The advanced level of digital literacy of a generation that our learners belong to can better be exploited if mobile learning (m-learning) possibilities are productively integrated into teaching and testing. The availability of numerous mobile applications, dexterously customized and educationally designed to meet pedagogic and educational needs, can easily be incorporated if the 'digitally immigrant' teachers are effectively up-skilled. So, the paper examines the possibilities of integrating some select mobile applications (m-apps) for teaching/testing and the potential benefits of this digital testing in maximizing learning outcomes and aligning methodology and testing strategies along with the technical knowhow of a digitally well exposed learners. The relative advantage and disadvantage of m-testing, in comparison to the traditional paper pen tests, will also be discussed.

M- Learning and Testing

The emergence of handheld or hybrid devices like *phablets* /smart phones has paved the way for round-the-clock access to the internet with ease and speed and it seems to have reduced the world into palmtop globe. The fact that most of the learners in many countries possess a smart phone and are well exposed into its educational utilities/applications makes it easy to use it as a great pedagogic tool to extend learning beyond the formal framework. The integration of mobile technology and educational apps into teaching and learning English has numerous advantages. It transforms learning from a teacher dominant process to learner-based interactive process and leaves ample space for independent pace. It can effectively cater to learner levels and differences as these apps offer a variety of options for customization or personalization.

The key plus of m-testing is the feasibility of immediate feedback as correction is done automatically. The teachers are relieved of the laborious task of grading and tabulating learner's scripts meticulously. Since m-testing takes care of marking and tabulating tasks, the assessment strategies can include a series of continuous tests to measure learners' achievements in language skills on a regular basis. Moreover, providing learners with feedback on a regular basis motivates them well and helps them know of their strength and weaknesses in the target language. In addition, both teachers and students get considerable chances to revise/review their teaching/learning tactics to maximize learning outcome and better level of skill acquisition.

In short, the favorable opportunity of ubiquitous use of cell phones and the advanced level of our learners' digital literacy and booming emergence of apps for educational purposes have to be utilized to revamp learning experiences in a way the digitally native generation looks for. Integration of m-testing tools into the traditional framework of paper and pen can tremendously enrich and enhance the validity, efficacy, comprehensiveness and authenticity of language assessment. Two of the m-testing applications that I have successfully used for teaching and regular in-class tests on reading skills, vocabulary and grammar are the following. They offer a simple user interface, easy account creation steps and reasonably good customization options at absolutely free of cost. Feedbacks from my learners and their experience with m-testing have been much great.

Socrative Student/Teacher

Socrative (<http://www.socrative.com>) is a free e-learning platform which works both on computers and mobile phones and has an amazingly simple user interface. Only the teacher needs to create an account in Socrative and it takes seconds because the only detail needed is an active email. Once a teacher account is created, a room number is generated which the students have to type in to log on to the room. The teacher himself/herself can test all options of the app if (s)he has two devices, one for student log in and the other for teacher log in. It helps engage the entire classroom with educational exercises and games while capturing student results in real-time. Moreover the quizzes created by a teacher can easily be imported/shared by others using a code generated for each quiz. In addition to grading the results of tests/quizzes automatically, Socrative has also effective options like real time group games, exit ticket and short quizzes.

Most Popular Activities:

Short Answer Questions: Ask an open-ended question. Students respond and all their answers populate your screen for projection. Then ask students to vote on their favorite and watch the results come in.

- Quick Quiz: A teacher paced or student paced activity with multiple choice and/or short answer questions. Results can be viewed question by question and exported to a report that is automatically aggregated and graded.
- Create a Quiz: Design your own Quick Quizzes with our built in feature or import them with our Excel template. Share with your community!
- Space Race: Teams of students answer multiple choice questions in this fast-paced rocket race game. First team to get their rocket across the screen wins! You'll get a graded report!
- Exit Tickets: Get a quick, paper-free pulse-check at the end of class. All answers are aggregated into a report!
- Multiple Choice: Ask a MC question, and see student responses on the projection screen as a bar chart.

Figure:1 screenshots



Infuse Learning Application

Infuse Learning (<http://www.infuselearning.com>) is a free student response system that works with any Internet-connected device like computer/tablet/mobile phones on Android/iOS platforms. Infuse Learning allows teachers to push questions, prompts, and quizzes out to students' devices in private virtual classrooms. It has a highly user friendly interface and students can log in using the room number given by the teacher. This e-learning platform helps teachers and learners interesting/assessment as it accommodates a wide variety of formats like standard multiple choice, true/false and short answer

questions. But Infuse Learning also offers an option for students to reply by creating drawings or diagrams on their iPads, Android tablets, or on their laptops.

Unlike Socrative, it offers more customization options. Teachers can choose to enable translation for questions, prompts, and answer choices that students see on their devices. Another advantage is audio narration for questions, prompts, and answer choices. The result of the quizzes can be immediately downloaded/emailed to the mail address associated with the account. Since the results are recorded in excel format, tabulation and editing are made much easier.

Figure-2. InfuseLearning



The m-learning and testing can't be a replacement for the traditional mode of instruction but making use of its educational potential and integrating it as a supplementary tool will work wonders in maximizing teaching and learning efficacy and achievement level of our learners. Like any form of digital learning, this mode too has inevitable practical hurdles as it necessitates good connectivity, signal strength, device compatibility, application availability etc. In an era of digital literacy and technical innovations, these limitations are definitely surmountable.

Conclusion

The pervasiveness of internet use and round-the-clock connectivity seem to have boosted up the prospects of an emerging shift from e-learning to m-learning. Though the transition will take its own course of time, it will be a reality in the future due to factors like high level compatibility of mobile phones, ubiquity of its use and high speed wireless connectivity. The promise of instant access to learning anytime and anywhere will open up tremendous

benefits , both for teachers and learners. To cope with massive changes taking places in instructional tools, pedagogic practices and the expectations of the future generations, educators have to explore the green pastures of integrating ICT into teaching and testing practices.

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POST – INDEPENDENCE INDIAN ENGLISH POETRY: A STUDY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIP IN THE POETRY OF A. K. RAMANUJAN

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Introduction:

Indian English Poetry forms a major chunk of common wealth poetry. It is known for its originality and authenticity. C. D. Narasimhaiah classifies the Indian poets in English before Independence into two groups. “neo-Symbolist” and “neo-modernists” The former group of poets dives deep into mysticism and the vision of the latter group of poets is coloured by humanism. C. D. Narasimhaiah glorifies Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo in his well – known book.

The Swan and the Eagle

A good deal of poetry of our time can be highlighted without denigrating the poetry of our predecessors or taking a parochial and what George Wood – Cock calls “literary incestuousness” attitude to recent Indian poetry in English.

Serious English poetry came to be written not immediately after Independence but in the 1960s and after. R. Parthasarathy, a well – known modern Indian poet in English, says “Indian verse in English did not seriously begin to exist till after the withdrawal of the British from India”.¹

Modernity in recent Indian English poetry has three identifiable manifestations: (i) a past oriented vision associating with a sense of loss and hopelessness, a kind of cultural pessimism.

(ii) a future – oriented vision, associated with a desire to remake the world; (iii) a present oriented attitude, a historical, a moral, neutral, stoic, ironic, ambivalent, absurdist. This modernity has two modes of “expression” First; it might result in one’s turning inward, going on

one's *Voyage Within*". Secondly it might result in an ironic observation of reality, a *Voyage without*".

The 1960s and 1970s have indeed witnessed the birth and development of new poetry in India. Nissim Ezekiel's volumes of poems, A.K. Ramanujan's *The Striders* (1966) R. Parthasarathy's *Rough passages* (1975), kamala Das' s *summer in Calcutta* and Jayant Mahapatra's *A Rain of Rites* have given a new direction to the writing of poetry in India.

These modern Indo-Anglian poets have discarded the incipient romanticism and rapid narcissism of the early Indian poetry. Visualizing the direction of Indo- Anglian poetry in future, R. Parthasarathy talks of "Indian reality" as the major preoccupation of Indo-Angilan poets. The realities of life and being are stressed with definite accents by these poets.

These poets brought about a complete change in the matter of themes, forms, techniques and attitudes. More than the content it is their members of expression that these poets have scored over their predecessors. They take their art seriously and to them the profession of poetry is a consecrated endeavour and an exacting discipline.

When the need to acclimatize English language to an indigenous tradition to write poetry effectively arose, R. Parthasarathy rose to the occasion and gave a clarion call to Indian English poets to return to their respective linguistic traditions. He asked:

How long can foreign poets
Provide the staple of your lines?
Turn inward, scrape of the bottom of your past.
(*"Rough Passage"*)

Post-Independence Indian English poetry is genuine because it is deeply felt and addressed to the whole community and Indian situations form a vital part of it.

Born into a well to do family in Mysore in 1929, A. K. Ramanujan, along with Ezekiel and Kamala Das helped to give Indian English Poetry "a local habitation and a name". He was a great poet, a brilliant translator and above all a remarkable folklorist. He was a unique writer who wrote poetry in three languages: English, Tamil and Kannada. Translation was his forte. He was attention to Indian literature through his numerous translations and creative writing in English all over the world.

The double impulse of being an expatriate writer, who had to satisfy the natives of both the countries of birth and domicile, seemed to have worked upon him. He states:

"English and my disciplines (linguistics and anthropology) give me my 'Outer forms' linguistic, metrical, logical and other such ways of shaping experience, and my first thirty years in India, my frequent visits and field-trips, my personal and professional pre-

occupations with Kannada, Tamil, the classics and folklore give me my substance, my “Inner” forms, images and symbols. They are continuous with each other, and I no longer can tell what comes from where”.²

Ramanujan published four volumes of poetry. The striders (1966), Relations (1971), Selected Poems (1976) and second Sight (1986). In his poetry there is an encounter of past and present, of the East and the West. Poem after poem, he goes back to his childhood memories and experiences of life in India. In his poetry one may discern a Western trained intellectual man who looks at oriental things with a detached interest.

Most of the poems of Ramanujan have their origin in recollected personal emotion, and hence, family becomes the main focus of his poetry. They deal with the family life in an ironic tone. His poetry reveals how an Indian poet in English derives his health from going back to his roots-childhood memories. One has to agree with Parthasarathy who rightly observes: “The family for Ramanujan, is in fact, one of the central metaphors with which he thinks.”

Poems such as “Small-Scale Reflections on a Great House”, “Obituary” “Looking for a cousin on a swing”. “Love poem for a wife” and a few other poems deals with the family theme. In a poem: “Self-Portrait”, his own resembles-

the Portrait of a stranger,
date unknown
often signed in a corner
by my father.

The obsession with the family theme finds its fullest expression in Ramanujan’s three important poems of the last volume titled Second Sight. In a poem called Extended Family, he recalls his grandfather and his own great-grandson. In Love poem for a wife, he imaginatively perceives three generations of women-Mother, Wife and daughter in linear progression. Trying to discover his roots, but finding it difficult, he wants to extricate himself from this bondage, he says:

Suddenly, connections severed
as in a lobotomy, unburdened
of history, I lose
my bearings, a circus zillaspun
at the end of her, dizzy
terrified.
and happy....
(“Looking for the centre”)

In “Small-Scale Reflections on a Great House” the poet nostalgically looks into his past and family. A large traditional Hindu joint-family is emotionally projected or depicted in this poem. There is pathetic and grim picture of a traditional middle-class South Indian Brahmin family. There is pathos/tragedy when the poet mentions the fact that daughters return home as widows. Lack of money is a stumbling block which prevents the young daughters getting suitable husbands for them.

The manner in which Ramanujan juxtaposed the two short but opposite words “Small” and “Great” is indeed very striking. The “House” is great but its inhabitants are petty-minded. The house is great as it accommodates everything that comes by. The poet’s use of irony pricks us when he says in an ironical tone:

in a copper pot
for the last of the dying
ancestors’ rattle in the throat.

The basic tension in his poetry is between memory-of his familial past, with the predominant figures of father, mother, wife, cousins and brothers and his immediate environment. But whatever the original emotion, Ramanujan never offers a mere versified description of a language or a nostalgic recreation of the past. He succeeds in objectifying his emotion through the corresponding metaphor and symbol.

The poem ‘Obituary’, in this regard is a significant example of Ramanujan’s poetry. This poem is a comic-serious evaluation of a dead father. The central irony in the poem stems not only from its overall ironic tone but also from the fact that there are two obituaries in the poem: The one published in the newspaper as a routine matter of personal history and the other, the aesthetic recreation.

The poet estimates in this poem what his father meant when he was alive and what he adds up to now that he is dead. The poem is, of an intensely personal emotion that the death of the father is neutralized by the continuing link with the father - the changed mother:

And he left us
a changed mother
and more than
One annual ritual (53-56)
 (“Obituary”)

“Looking for a cousin on a Swing” is a short narrative poem which recollects childhood experience of the poet’s close relatives. Visiting often his native village in South India, he collects his early experiences of persons and places. There is a beautiful metaphor when the poet describes the young girl’s exciting emotional experience in the following lines:

“With every lunge of the swing
She felt him
in the lunging pits
of her feeling” (5-8)

In Tamil there is a cultured way of describing things in a polished manner. It is called “**ilai marai kaai marai**”. The poet here writing in English adopts this method of Tamil culture.

The texture of Ramanujan’s experience is typically Indian rendered or recorded through a Western medium. His is poetry of memory where the past becomes disturbingly alive. Memories constitute a large section of Ramanujan’s interior landscape in “Small-Scale Reflections on a Great House”, “of Mothers, among other Things”, “obituary” and “Love poem for a Wife”.

The poem “A River” recalls the memory of his visit to Madurai, and of the flood in the river Vaigai. He vehemently protests against those Tamil poets who remain indifferent to the destruction and tragedy caused by the same river. In summer the famous Vaigai River presents an unromantic and unpoetic picture. As a humanist the poet sympathizes with the people and cattle destroyed by the floods. He feels sad that the new poets follow the old poets and glorify the floods.

Ramanujan’s greatest contribution to Indian English poetry lies in his use of imagery. Though his thematic range is limited, his craftsmanship is remarkable. His use of Indian English idiom at once sets him apart from other poets writing in English William Walsh says:

“Ramanujan’s poetic idiom is very pure, personal and cultured affected by his Hindu endowment his mastery of several classical languages, and literatures by Indian and British uses of English during the first half of his life and by American in the second. His idiom presents an appearance of contemplative detachment, an unruffled surface which is, however capable of implying depths of energy and even violence. It is an idiom which itself composes a metaphor of the poet’s complex attitude to experience.”³

Ramanujan is modern in his choice of variety and complexity of themes. As Durvdi says, “The greater part of complexity in Ramanujan’s poetry proceeds from the amalgamation of the two cultures. His formative Indian experience repeatedly appears in his verse, but his long stay in the West also leaves its marks upon it.”

His fastidiousness as an artist accounts for the thinness of his poetic output. He is also modern in the use of colloquial and conversational style. In most of his poems, he tries to assimilate the native tradition into English language for the benefit of the foreigners. For instance in the poem “A River” he uses the word ‘diapers’ which means napkins in America for the sake of his American readers. He has won the admiration of all his contemporaries and peers like Nissim Ezekiel, Parthasarathy, Keki N. Daruwalla and Jayanta Mahapatra.

Hovering between the land of his birth and the country of his work and domicile, Ramanujan accepts both and does not abandon one for the other. His poetry is Indian in sensibility and content but English in language. It is strongly rooted in and stems from the Indian environment.

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THE TREATMENT OF LOVE IN KAMALA DAS'S POETRY

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Kamala Das as “a poetess of considerable talent”¹ established “her reputation as the *femme fatale*”² of Indian English poetry. Kamala Das stormed into popularity with the publication of her collection *Summer in Calcutta* in 1965. Her frank outpourings often jolted the readers and attracted their attention for her bold writings. It was this bold, open, clear, frank and straightforward expression that paved the way to Indian women poets as far as her sincere, unsentimental, uninhibited expression of love, sex, emotional sterility in marital relationships, failures, frustrations, disillusionments and extramarital sex are concerned. Nevertheless, her following volumes such as *The Descendants* (1967) and *The Old Play House and Other Poems* (1973) have widened the thematic range of Indian English poetry. Her poetic journey begins with poet’s vehement desire for sincere and true love and ends with loneliness, vacuity and death-wish. The present paper is a humble attempt to peep into the poetry of Kamala Das where she mainly deals with the concept of love and takes a shift from physical attraction to eternal bliss.

Kamala Das’s poetic work represents the sensibility and sensitivity of a modern Indian woman. She, though not directly influenced by the feminists of sixties and seventies, takes up the causes of women with all the zeal and vigour at her command. In this respect she is essentially different from the rest of her contemporaries. She deals with the trials and tribulations of the woman who is struggling hard to find a place in the male - dominated society. “The crux of the matter is that from the very beginning, human society has been dominated by the male, otherwise literature of the world would have been very different. However, it is perhaps worthwhile to mention here that the attitude of literature to love and sex is opposed to that of religion and ethics. And in this context, a female poet like Kamala Das takes advantage of her poetry to undo this historical imbalance in the society.”³ She chooses to write freely on the subjects that have never been discussed before. In her poetry she not only expresses her feminine sensibility but the unfulfilled desires lying dormant in the unconscious mind also take part. Her sincere and frank outbursts sometimes jar and jolt the reader who is not habituated to such utterances. Her candid

confessional revelations give a new dimension to her poetry. In addition to all this, she explores her self through self-introspection and self analysis. Her search for true love is untiring and unending which takes her from one place to another.

The poetry of Kamala Das has been examined and interpreted from various ways by a good number of critics. Hari Mohan Prasad rightly observes her poetry as “an autobiography, an articulate voice of her ethnic identity, her Dravidian culture.”⁴ M. Elias also holds a similar view: “Kamala Das is quite unique in exemplifying an allegiance to Dravidian Indian”.⁵ While E.V. Ramakrishnan labels her as “ a confessional poet” and says “she has always dealt with private humiliations and sufferings which are the stock themes of confessional poetry”⁶ and Eunice De Souza forwards the same view: “Kamala Das writes incessantly about love or rather the failure of the love, her unhappy personal life, her unsuccessful sexual encounters and relationships.”⁷ But I.K. Sharma walks on a different track and says “Beneath the explosive poetry of Kamala Das... there flows a subterranean stream of *bhakti* heading towards its own destination to have an ideal lover, to attain higher truth like Mira.”⁸

The above stated views show how critics after interpreting Kamala Das’s poetry from different angles come to a certain conclusion. Hari Mohan Prasad and M. Elias see ‘the ethnic identity’ in her poetry because there are certain life incidents of the protagonist in her poetry which tally with those of Dravidian life pattern. Das’s poetry has a woman protagonist and the use of the personal pronoun ‘I’ or the study of the self is a predominant factor in her poetry. This makes E.V. Ramakrishnan and Eunice De Souza catch hold of this view that Kamala Das has presented love and suffering of her personal life and that such love and pain and suffering of the protagonist animates I.K. Sharma to identify her with Mira. Such observation makes its scope narrow and leaves no impression on reader’s mind. Kamala Das’s poetry is experientially deep and psychologically complex. To some extent her poetry suffers from the problem of obscurity. Hence, to understand her poetry in its true form, it is essential to examine it through some more sound and solid approach.

A close reading of Kamala Das’s poetry reveals the fact that she intensely craves for love. It seems that she has an intense desire to love and to be loved. As Priya Pathiyan in her article on Kamala Das writes:

Love is the only ritual I believe in,
It makes everything legitimate.⁹

To Kamala Das, “Love is beautiful, whatever four lettered name the puritans call it by. It is the fore state of paradise. It is the only pastime that involves the soul.”¹⁰ The poet has clearly admitted that love is the main theme of her poems. As Keki N. Daruwalla observes: “Kamala Das is pre-eminently a poet of love and pain, one stalking the other through a near neurotic world. There is an all pervasive sense of hurt throughout. Love, the lazy animal hungers of the flesh, hurt and humiliation are the warp and woof of her poetic fabric. She seldom ventures outside this personal world.”¹¹

Love is a central point round which Kamala Das's poetry revolves. Her poetry encompasses a woman's longings, hopes and fears. Her repulsion for physical love and lack of sincere love occupy a very significant place. She craves for union with man for the fulfillment of love but she is disillusioned and frustrated when it degenerates into sheer lustfulness and bodily pleasures. Such beautiful love gets spoiled without getting solace and comfort from a being. In *An Introduction* she tells about her marriage and her initiation in sex. She boldly reveals how loveless sexual assaults are committed on a woman in the name of marriage:

I asked for love, not knowing what else to ask
 For he drew a youth of sixteen into the
 Bed room and closed the door, He did not beat me
 But my woman body felt so beaten
 The weight of my breasts and wombs crushed me.¹²

Kamala Das deals with the quest of a woman for love in general terms. It is her deep desire to find fulfillment in love:

I met a man, loved him. Call
 Him not by any name, he is every man
 Who wants a woman just as I am every
 Woman who seeks love. In him... the hungry haste
 Of rivers, in me... the ocean's tireless
 Waiting. (*An Introduction* 59)

In *the Dance of Eunuchs* Kamala Das adroitly presents the sterile, arid, exploitative and dehumanized world of "vacant ecstasy" of dancing eunuchs which reveals the sharp sense of anguish hidden under the whirling movement and extended frenzy of the dancing eunuchs. The rainfall is also not sufficient to bring calm and coolness to them. She uses apt and suggestive images to visualize this world of a "vacant ecstasy." A.N. Dwivedi has rightly pointed out: "The poem is powerful and bold indeed and displays an admirable sense of proportions in the use of imagery and metaphor."¹³

In the *Dance of Eunuchs* Kamala Das finds a close parallel to her own loveless life - a life of emotional vacuity:

Their voices
 Were harsh, their songs melancholy; they sang of
 Lover's dying and of children left unborn....
 Some beat their drums; others beat their sorry breasts
 And wailed, and writhed in vacant ecstasy. (7)*

To her, love is a far cry. K.R.S. Iyengar rightly says: "Lip-love prattles like the bones in the anatomy, laboratory, words and feelings trip "idly over puddles of desires," and love-where is love?"¹⁴

In her poetry Kamala Das boldly and frankly expresses her ardent desire to experience love to its very depth. She in *Freaks* presents a glaring contrast between women whose mind willed “to race towards love” where the mind of men only trips “idly over puddles of Desire”. He always satiates “skin’s lazy hungers”. In such a callous and loveless atmosphere the heart of a woman is

An empty cistern, waiting
Through long hours, fills itself
With coiling snakes of silence...
I’m a freak. (*Freaks* 8) *

Kamala Das’s intensity for love “Loved, and loved, and loved, until/The bold gray mornings burst in”¹⁵ shatters when she realizes:

...these men who call me
Beautiful, not seeing
Me with eyes but with hands

and thus she falls into man – made world where this “strong man’ plans

...to tame a swallow, to hold her
In the long summer of your love so that she would forget
(*The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* 1)

This resentful attitude of Kamala Das reveals her love for freedom but she finds herself in the cage like a bird. Her urge to fly and her pre-occupation with self is reduced gradually for she becomes the victim of male lust.

The concept of love in Indian Tradition is a feeling where lover and beloved both merge into one and enjoy eternal bliss. However, the protagonist of *The Old Playhouse* is far away from this kind of reciprocated love. The poet protests here showing her hatred and rejection of male body:

You were pleased
With my body’s response, its weather, its usual shallow conversions
You dribbled spittle into my mouth, you poured
Yourself into every nook and cranny, you embalmed
My poor lust with your hitter- sweet juices.
(*The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* 1)

What Kamala Das advocates in her poetry, is the concept of true love, to say “*Shringara Rasa*”, the Rasa of Love which she finds missing in her life. The quality of “losing oneself” in the enjoyment is the distinctive feature of the Rasa of Love. “It is not pleasure or joy or even ecstasy as such but the state where one loses one’s identity. This is exactly a feeling that distinguishes sexual experience. This particular feeling in literary appreciation is called ‘Rasa’ a word which has no equivalent in English. It is no surprise, in view of the origin of the

conception, to find that Rasa of Love (*Shringara*) is called the king of all the Rasa. Sex experience is at the Root of the conception.”¹⁶

Nevertheless, in such a situation a woman has nothing to do except surrendering her body to a hungry hawk. Kamala Das sarcastically remarks that the woman should accept the cruel reality that she is merely an object for the satisfaction of man’s lust. That is what she expresses in *The Looking Glass*:

Only be honest about your wants as
 Women. Stand nude before the glass with him
 So that he sees himself the stronger one
 And believes it so, and you so much more
 Softer, younger lovelier.....Admit your
 Admiration. Notice perfection of his limbs., and the jerky way he Urinates.
 All the fond details that make
 Him male and your only man. Gift him all,
 Gift him what makes you woman, the scent of
 Long hair, the musk of sweat between the breasts,
 The warm shock of menstrual blood, and all your
 endless female hungers. (*The Looking Glass*) *

To her, a woman should derive satisfaction out of her sexuality by challenging traditional social norms. This could be by standing “nude before the glass with him” or by watching “the jerky way he urinates”. Such poetry really shocks the readers when she talks of gifting the man “the warm shock of menstrual blood.” Raveendran rightly says that this gives the reader a “vision” of an “illegitimate” sex experience with a legitimate partner.¹⁷

Apparently there is nothing negative in the approach of Kamala Das as far as love is concerned. To her, love is not only physical union of bodies but also of minds and the souls. Emotional and spiritual fulfillment required in love or it becomes merely a “skin - communicated thing”. It is true that Kamala Das expresses her need for love, a sense of urgency and fulfillment with a frankness and naiveness unusual in the Indian context. Embarrassing questions are ignored by us because we can not face the truth. C.V. Venugopal remarks: “The poetry of Kamala Das is full of questions that are rarely answered. They are queries about truth. But truth, in general, is unbearable. And Kamala Das, the seeker after truth feels betrayed. The wise ones live in a blue silent zone, ‘unscratched by doubts.’”¹⁸

Kamala Das in her poem *Gino* expresses a sense of disgust at male habits and treatment. The poem reveals the terror of sex:

You will perish from his kiss, he said, as one must
 Surely die, when bitten by a krait who fills
 The blood stream with its accursed essence.
 (*The Old Playhouse* 13)

The lover is like a reptile who keeps on sucking the female body. Love as it is manifested in her life causes a sense of death, thus one feels that it is very difficult to draw the demarcation line between life and death as well as love and lust. There is a desire to experience true love but in turns poisonous even outside marriage.

When Kamala Das's discontent reaches its climax her thoughts turn suicidal. Her utterance becomes painful in the following lines:

Bereft of soul
My body shall be bare
Bereft of body
My soul shall be bare (*The Suicide* 34 from *The Old Playhouse*)

Physical maturity is destructive and its suppression or even its fulfillment does not give her any mystical experience. This creates a kind of conflict between the world as it is and the personal experience. The poet cannot synthesize, the inner and the outer i.e. the soul and the body. Thus love is the essence of her life but in real life she has to wear the mask of a happy woman and wife in the male-dominated Indian society.

It seems that Kamala Das does not ignore the physical aspect of love. She wants to experience eternal bliss in her marital relationship. But what she experiences is frustration and disappointment in it. Sex is an outer grab for her inner and outer world of emotions and feelings. She does not derive physical mental satisfaction. For driving full satisfaction she steps out of the legal orbit of marriage by challenging traditional and social norms. Love is some sort of reciprocation gets a severe jolt when it discovers that

Life is quite simple now-
Love, blackmail and sorrow. (*Substitute*) *

As the thought develops in the poem she finds that lovers have become a nameless, faceless crowd and the speaker a harlot:

After that love became a swivel door,
When one went out another came in
Then I lost count, for always in my arms
Was a substitute for a substitute?
Oh, what is the use explaining -
It was a nameless faceless crowd. (*Substitute* II, 43-48)

However to observe this kind of an attitude on the part of a female poet is something unheard of before. In some of the love poems Kamala Das strikes an entirely new note. In the poems dealing with extramarital love she does not justify adultery and infidelity but she justifies the search for an ideal relationship which gives love, solace and peace. She identifies her love outside marriage with mythical love of Radha who broke up the ties of marriage for Lord Krishna

Vrindaban lives on in every woman's mind,

and the flute, luring her
 From home and her husband,
 Who later asks her of the long scratch on the brown
 Aureola of her breast, and she shyly replies, hiding flushed cheeks,
 It was so dark outside; I tripped and fell over the brambles in the wood...

Love is not only physical union of bodies but also of minds and the souls. Kamala Das has an earnest desire to experience love to its very abstruseness: "Her poetic corpus configures an inner voyage, awareness beyond 'Skin's lazy hungers,' to the hidden soul. It enacts her quest, an exploration into her self and seeking of her identity."¹⁹ Physical love for Kamala Das only brings frustration and humiliations. She gets disappointed. For attaining perpetual love she steps out of the so-called established legal institution of marriage but every time it brings unrestfulness in her life.

However, she takes all the things at ease and without bothering much about anything she tries to unite her physical love with the eternal one. Without feeling any shame or guilt she continues her journey of search for true love for experiencing eternal love:

...Even my soul,
 I thought, must send its roots somewhere,
 And, I loved his body without shame
 On winter evenings as cold winds
 Chuckled against the window panes.²⁰

Some poems of Kamala Das are the unique examples of her love where she forgets all the pains and sufferings of her sexual exploitations given by her partner. It is not earthly love but beyond it the love of a mother experiencing a great joy on the birth of a child. In *Jaisurya* the child's cry gives her all the comfort and pleasure:

Love is not important, that makes the blood
 Carouse, nor the man who brands you with his
 Lust, but is shed at end of each
 Embrace. Only that matters which forms as
 Toadstool under lighting and rain, the soft
 Stir in the womb, the foetus growing.

The poem *Jaisurya* exhibits the ecstasy of the child birth and the poet like Kamala Das wisely merges the personal with the universal. Her maternal love for the child is beyond imagination how happy she is, becomes clear from the following lines:

Out of the mire of a moonless night was
 He born, Jaisurya, my son, as out of
 The wrong is born the right and out of night
 The sun- drenched golden day.

Her search for love is part of a larger quest for motherhood and home which cannot be understood by the commercialized urban sensibility. City knows no real love. It reduces everyone who seeks love to a beggar.

The theme of dual relationship in love is also discussed in the poetry of Kamala Das. A woman craves for complete union with man for the fulfillment of love but a great shock to her; it degenerates into sheer lustfulness and bodily pleasures. For realizing true love a woman, even though married, runs from one man to the other:

Another's name brings tears, your's
A calm, and a smile, and yet Gautama.
That other owns me: while your arms hold
My woman form, his hurting arms
Hold my very soul. (*An Apology to Gautama 18*) *

In *The Testing of the Sirens* a sense of belonging to one and uniting with other is strongly communicated:

I'm happy, just being with you. But you...
You love another,
I know, he said perhaps a handsome man,
A young and handsome man. (66) *

But she feels frustrated and disappointed for not getting sincere partner.

Kamala Das is preoccupied with the theme of love. To her, love is a beautiful thing and it is a *tapasaya*. She starts seeing her relationship with the divine love of Radha - Krishna and tries to find the image of Krishna in her lover. Without any hesitation she accepts the fact that Krishna is the ultimate lover: "I grew up reading Geetha- Govinda, about Radha - Krishna. Which Hindu girl has not been interested in Krishna, the great lover? So to us Krishna has not been Vulgar at all. To us it has just been normal."²¹

At times Kamala Das begins to visualize herself to be Radha who is waiting & standing on the bank of the river Jammu for seeing her lover Krishna. In the image of Lord Krishna, she seeks her true and ideal love. It is this sincere love that unites Radha and Krishna.

Kamala Das deftly portrays the feelings and emotions of Radha who is in love with Krishna. She depicts the ecstasy of Radha for Krishna in the poem *Radha*:

The long waiting
Had made their bond so chaste, and all doubting
And the reasoning
So that in his first true embrace, she was girl
And virgin crying
Everything in me
Is melting, even the hardness at the core
O Krishna, I am melting, melting, melting,

Nothing remains but

You. (*Only the soul knows how to sing 67*)

It is the love that unites the souls of lover and beloved. Through our legendary tales we know that Radha loved Krishna but married to another man continued to love Krishna. When Krishna embraced Radha she realized first time as if her entire self began to melt. In Krishna's arms Radha felt that her own individuality was lost. Only Krishna, her eternal lover and Radha - the oneness was there.

In depicting the relationship of Radha and Krishna, Kamala Das's concern here is not religious. In the poem *Radha*, she tries to express the intensity of human sexual relationship. This totality of human relationship or fusion "offers contrast to the *ardhanareeswara* concept where woman is fused to man but (sic) yet remains distinguishable" (Raveendran 87). In a disguised form, the poet herself is dissolving away and losing her identity with her lover. She praises Lord Krishna and her concern deepens more stronger for Krishna: "But illogical that I am from birth onwards. I have always thought of Krishna as my mate. When I was a child I used to regard him as my only friend. When I became an adult, I thought of him as my lover.... Now in middle age, having no more desire unfulfilled I think of Krishna as my friend, like me grown wiser with years, a house- holder and a patriarch. And illogically again, I believe that in death I might come face to face with Him."²² To say, Kamala had always cherished one image in her mind and soul and it is the image of Lord Krishna.

Kamala Das's earnest longing to merge with Krishna becomes intensified in the poem *Krishna*:

Your body is my prison, Krishna,
I cannot see beyond it.
Your darkness blinds me,
Your love words shut out the wise world's din.
(*Only the souls knows how to sing 67*)

Her intense love for Krishna is pervaded in the poem. Her eternal lover – Krishna brings the rain of solace and mental peace and she realizes the eternal bliss at that moment. She feels intoxicated under the spell and charm of Krishna and own identity is merged with him. Only the presence of Krishna is realized all around. Nothing is heard except the voice of Krishna and the mortal world has no meaning to her.

Kamala Das suffers intensely of not getting solace and emotional fulfillment in her marital relationship. For seeking emotional support she turns to the other man but it makes no different. With the maturity of her life she realizes the fact that the happiness lies not in the mortal but in the eternal world. Such feelings are expressed in the poem *The Maggots*. Here the poet sees some similarities of her life in Radha. Radha loves Krishna but after getting married she performs her household duties forgetting her love for Krishna. She accepts her husband's love. To Radha, it

doesn't matter whether her husband loves her physically as her soul is dedicated to Krishna. Here Radha is reminding Krishna with great pains:

At sunset on the river bank, Krishna
Loved her for the last time and left
That night in her, husband's arms
Radha felt so dead that he asked what is
Wrong do you mind my kisses love,
And she said no, not at all, but thought,
What is it to the corpse if the maggots nip.
(*Only the soul knows how to sing 42*)

Radha considers the physical rapture insignificant because her soul is intact and devoted to Krishna.

Thus, Kamala Das's attitude towards love in her poetry has been discussed here from different angles. The poet wants to attain fulfillment in love in her marital life i.e. the time honored institution of marriage but instead of experiencing such fulfillment and deep pleasure in physical love, she feels frustration and humiliation when love is denied to her. In order to seek complete pleasure in love she breaks the social norms and turns to the other man's door. But to her great surprise, she receives the same shocks to find that the man is only "a hungry hawk". At last in a situation of tension she discards the earthly love and epitomizes her love in the form of divine love of Mira for Lord Krishna

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'MODERN' INDIA THROUGH THE PAINTINGS OF M.F. HUSAIN

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This short paper purports to explore the politics of identity in 'modern' India that becomes apparent in M.F. Husain's paintings done in the 1970's when the Emergency added to the challenge that the heterogeneous nature of identities in India was already facing as an aftermath of Partition. The paper shows how even a (seemingly conscious and) continuous erasure of Husain's own Muslim identity coupled with a celebration of the markers of 'modernity' and 'progress' of the Nehruvian vision of India are unable to protect Husain from charges of causing hurt to certain communities. It is in this context that the emphasis on the Hindu identity of the women figures and the growing sensuousness with which they are endowed in the paintings is analysed.

Maqbool Fida Husain, with an oeuvre of about 60,000 paintings done over a period stretching both before and after Independence (1947), seems to be a just choice to analyse his engagement with the rhetoric of 'modern' India and what he brings to it through the medium of his paintings. From a reading of biographies and interviews, it seems that Husain has been as conscious and anxious about the progress of India as he has been about finding an 'authentic' Indian way of expressing Indian reality which he thought was "as obscure as it is obvious" (Husain quoted in: Pal, 98). In this search for an authentic Indian voice, Husain experimented widely and thus his influences range from the tribhanga principle of Indian sculpture (which influenced his human figures), the Basholi paintings of seventeenth and eighteenth century Jammu (from which he adopted the use of strong bright colours), Pablo Picasso (from whom Husain learned to use strong yet lyrical lines of modern art) and Paul Klee (by whose insistence on including movement in paintings Husain was influenced), Rajasthani paintings (at a later stage in his life) and among others perhaps most significantly, Amrita Shergil (whose paintings suffused with a modernist melancholy were a source of inspiration for Husain). Though it will be nearly impossible (and perhaps not fruitful) to chart out how all these influences play a role in Husain's

huge oeuvre, I will here focus on Husain's paintings of the 1970's (and some earlier paintings for the purpose of comparison) where I think a relatively developed personal idiom of expression makes it easier for us to analyse what is gained and what is lost by adopting this particular idiom of expression.

It will be my argument that these decades are marked by Husain's overt endorsement of the Nehruvian vision of 'modern' India on the one hand and simultaneously on the other hand, by an erasure of or hesitation to express his Muslim identity in his paintings like he did in the earlier decades. The imagery and the subjects become increasingly Hindu as particularly the female figures are made much more identifiably Hindu by the use of greater symbolism and either flatter colours or monochrome. This erasure of his personal identity, and in these two decades also the erasure of tribal identity, might have worked well with the ongoing Nehruvian concept of 'modern' (Hindu) India (crudely put, this vision was marked by industrial progress; nuclear progress; flourishing agriculture; and culturally: female purity and male prowess) had it not been for the sensuousness with which Husain treats his female forms and most controversially, female Hindu goddesses. Some comments and thoughts on why these paintings hurt and what it means for the 'Hindurashtra' will form the last section of this short paper. b

For a study of the growing sensuousness in Husain's paintings I turn to three versions of the painting 'Between the Spider and the Lamp' that were painted respectively in the years 1956, 1973 and 2000. In the first version of 1953, between the lamp on the top left corner and the spider in the centre on the bottom are four figures all of whom have either an air of seriousness about them or a pensive expression. The central figure (seemingly a matriarch) has a very manly form, the old woman on the left is fully clothed and though the woman on the right either has no clothes or has skin-coloured clothes, there is nothing sensuous about her figure. The palette of this painting has mostly flat colours, highlighting the differences between these figures with the red solid space in the middle further adding to this. On the other hand, in the second version of 1973, both the lamp and the spider are held by women one of whom (the one holding the spider) is most certainly nude. Even though the figure of the nude blends due its earthy colour with the background in an expressionist way, her athletic thighs and round-ish bosom are highlighted through the use of firm yet lyrical lines that form the outline of her body. The central white figure in the painting holding the lamp, though clothed, sits in a suggestive elegance as she converses with another woman and seems to be conscious of an onlooker that is the viewer of the painting. In the third version of 2000, the two figures in the foreground are painted in solid flat colours and each one has a rounded body highlighted through a contrast with the solid background. Receding into the background is another figure whose nearly backless top and fitted lowers give us a view of her voluptuous body. Thus women in Husain's vision of India seem to be increasingly objectified under the male gaze (as the nudity in these paintings seems to be

serving no other perceptible purpose) and at other times are needed for their productive and nursing roles (as an analysis of some other paintings beyond the scope of this short paper could show). At the same time, the women, through a greater use of symbols like the 'sindoor' (vermillion) and the big round red 'bindi' on the forehead, become more identifiably Hindu in many of Husain's paintings of the 70's and later.

Husain seems to have wholeheartedly endorsed the Nehru-Gandhi family's vision of modern India as is evident from the huge number of enthusiastic portraits he made of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi (sometimes alone and pensive and at other times nursing her child like she apparently nursed the nation) and most of all, 'The March of Durga' that he painted in 1971 which has been almost unanimously seen as a representation of Indira Gandhi as Durga as she had proved her valiant nature in the war of 1971 that led to the creation of Bangladesh. The expression is jubilant and the torso bent backwards gives a sense of victory but she is naked. However a more certain endorsement of the vision of 'modern' victorious secular India comes in the painting 'Lightning' which Husain did in 1975 during the Emergency and was used in a Congress public rally in Mumbai. It is from a comparison of this painting with an earlier one 'Zameen' (1953) and some others that I derive my first evidence of the gradual erasure of Husain's Muslim identity in his paintings and also in 'progressive' India's modern present and future. As critic K. Bikram Singh points out, the four unequal panels of 'Zameen', among other images derived from rural India like the cartwheel, women winnowing and so on, have also the symbol of an open palm or 'panja' which is a subtle reference to the holy family of the Prophet- his daughter, her husband, their two sons, and the Prophet himself. This symbolism of the panja and the other images of the cartwheel, bullock cart, tribal faces and horse carrying load done in earthy colours, signals a 'modern' India that is progressing but is in touch with its roots at the same time.

On the other hand, 'Lightning' has symbols of progress without the symbols of inclusion. Though the painting was used in the Congress rally, Husain says this was not a commissioned work and that he had done it spontaneously to record the progress of the country (Husain as quoted in Vora, webpage). The painting shows eleven white and unblemished horses in eleven panels (representing the eleven years of Indira Gandhi's Prime Ministerial rule) with what Husain sees as fierce fronts and elegant behinds. The background is endowed with symbols like a tank (depicting, in Husain's own words, India's "struggle for freedom"⁵ and perhaps also military protection that the State provides us), a red triangle (which had been associated with the

⁵ Husain as quoted in Vora, webpage.

family planning campaign during the Emergency years), some crops and farmers (reminiscent of the government's encouragement to Punjab to increase food production), the structure of an atom (symbolic of nuclear energy which India hoped to get for all its cities) among other markers of modernity. However two things are significant to me here first, as pointed by Swapna Vora, the fact that the red triangle is inverted makes it a symbol of "female power, the descent of grace, for Hindus" (Vora, web) and second, the symbolism of the 'panja' that Husain had deployed in 'Zameen' to subtly include Muslims in his vision of India is completely absent from 'Lightning'. Absent also are the images of tribal faces (like in 'Zameen) or village folks except some farmers whose produce was expected to add to the country's progress. Those not adding to this narrow vision of progress seem to have been forgotten and excluded. This might not be a conscious exclusion by Husain but it helps us analyse what Husain's response really was to the 'modern' India that was being constructed.

It seems to me that it is this combination of growing sensuousness of the female body and the increasing Hindu symbolism that proved fatal for Husain when he applied it to paintings of Hindu goddesses like Saraswati, Durga, Lakshmi and others whom Husain painted naked in the 70's. Not only did Husain face controversies over these paintings, his self-erasure seems to have gained him nothing. Most of the naked goddess paintings are in monochrome and that, in the absence of vibrant colours to distract the viewers, seems to have added to the hurt these paintings apparently caused to the sentiments of Hindu viewers. Yet several questions remain unanswered- why are these paintings, done in the 70's, claimed as sources of hurt to Hindu sentiments not once before 1996? What role does the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 and the endowing of the Padma Vibhushan upon Husain in 1991 play in this outrage in 1996? Are claims of hurt purely political in nature? Why are male figures conspicuous by their absence in Husain's paintings? And how really does monochrome play a role in determining how a painting is received? It seems to me that these are the questions that can be fruitfully analysed further.

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PIND, PUNJAB AND PEOPLE: THE NEO-COLONIAL SUBTEXT OF POST-COLONIAL DELHI

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If as post-colonial cultural critics one of our primary functions is to contextualise the historical forces which shape identities to be what they are, then as critics resident in the National Capital Territory of Delhi we cannot but turn our critical gaze to Punjab and Punjabis when examining the forces which make Dilli Dehli and then, simultaneously, Delhi and *Saadi Dilli*. The Punjabification of Delhi, if one may be allowed the term without the unnecessary connotation of derogation, is inherently connected to the partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan and the resultant emigration of much of the Sikh and Hindu population of what is now the Pakistani Punjab into much of North India, including the national capital Delhi. The partition, as so many of us have now established, was more a cultural rupture than a cartographical one and so what it brought to Delhi was not as much as thousands of homeless, clueless Punjabis as a bitter, determined and intensely nostalgic community the results of whose efforts to be are now everywhere to be seen.

This paper will analyse these, i.e. the changes effected in Delhi's culture post-partition by the coming of age of a motivated and near-Zionistic migrant Punjabi community. In doing so, it will consider the text as constituted by larger contexts and so, without ascribing too fixed a notion to identity, conceptualise Delhi's identity as a city pre-partition, immediately post-partition and post-colonially post-partition with the help of both archived and anecdotal evidence. It will then

argue that the shifts in these markers of culture and identity and the consolidation of existing markers/identities into an overwhelmingly Punjabi and Punjabified whole behoves a certain nuanced colonisation wherein the oppressed, the so-called margin, comes into its own and takes on the sites of that oppression, and not necessarily the oppressors, to alter their self-conception. It will conclude by suggesting this as a larger motif for understanding neo-colonisation today as both a nationally external as well as an internal process of socio-economic change.

As a city, Delhi's identity has always been both fixed and fluid simultaneously. It has been a seat of power, more often than not subcontinental power, for more than a millennium now; yet, the contours of that power, the founts from which it streamed and the idioms it manifested itself in, all of these have differed immensely from each other. Consequently, then, it has been a citadel of Rajputs, the seat of five Sultanates, the throne of Mughals, the jewel of the British and now continues as the nerve centre of Indian democracy – and all through this its identity, though of power and the powerful, has changed with change of rulers to nuance farther and farther to be a heady, historical, multi-cultured mix of mores and manners from across space and time.

Each of these, if one were to stretch ever so slightly the lay sense of the concept, counts for colonisation. Indeed, for each successive change of ruling power was premised on blood and war, on conquest by invaders from varied cultural consciousnesses and the subsequent grafting of new socio-political norms and mannerisms on an existing, much nuanced cultural ethos. This is not, true, cultural colonisation in the extreme sense of the phrase as critics like Ngugi wa Thiongo have used it, but it is nonetheless a form of colonisation wherein local languages and ways of conceiving oneself modify in accordance with standards set by ruling powers, powers which happen to have gained ascendancy over a people from without and not come into power from within.

This is crucial and merits further consideration. Is colonisation only a larger than life process, a movement of global powers, a manifestation only of great games? Does it necessarily have to involve great armies and grand designs, mighty machines of wars designed to enact the writ of the few on the many? Cannot colonisation, specially cultural colonisation, be located, rooted in communities, be regional and involve not armies and great powers and simply be concomitant upon the will of a people to change, to be and, being so, leave a mark?

Such is the case this paper wishes to comment upon. Indeed, for the so-called Punjabification of Delhi is but a case of this particular dynamics, this coming into its own of one community amongst many and of the gradual dominance and acceptance of its mores and manners over those of almost all others.

Of course, this is not simply so. To understand how this came to be so and also the various, distinct and differing strands of culture which nuance the situation, it is necessary to contextualise.

To begin with, before 1947, Delhi had never really been a Punjabi dominated city. It had multiple identities with multiple ethnicities and communities living in it, as part of it, but never was it singly dominated either numerically or culturally by a single community, or groups of communities identifying and identified as a single community. With the influx of refugees from West Pakistan, mostly Punjab, into Delhi in the aftermath of the partition of India, the scenario changed to completely alter the demographics of the city: estimates reckon the addition of some ten lakh refugees in Delhi in an year or so following the Partition and the establishment of numerous camps, later built up into residential colonies, across the immediate hinterland of the city to accommodate these people. Ever since then, Delhi's population growth rate has remained higher than that of the rest of the country.

That, of course, is just one of the factors which contribute to the dominance of the Punjabi community in Delhi, that the refugees who were rehabilitated in and around what was then Delhi settled to grow further in number and become, numerically, the most populous segment of the city's population. Before we further comment upon this and examine the affects it had on the city and its culture, it's necessary first to attempt a flexible definition of these three operative words: migrant Punjabi community.

Migrant may be briefly and easily dealt with. Those who have been displaced from areas identified by them as their ancestral homelands or who have left these same for whatsoever reason(s), these may be regarded migrant. Community, a bit trickier, may be thought of as a collective of persons sharing a set of markers of identity, race, skin colour, religion, speech type, occupation, wealth and so on. What makes this difficult, and after an extent frankly undesirable, to define is the fluid nature of these so-called markers of identity, their propensity, race and skin colour included, to vary.

Moving on, Punjabi may be said to stand as a generic term for all those people, customs and cultural manifestations which may be said to have their source in Punjab, Punjab here the unified Punjab of pre-Partition India. Of course, in thinking so we must avoid the all too easy assumption that Punjabi equals Sikh: besides Hindus and Muslims, Punjab, Partition or not, is home to followers of other religions like Christianity and Jainism and so the term itself Punjabi must be taken to encompass all of these and their myriad differences of caste and mode and/or orientation of faith – Shia/Sunni, Akali/Nirankali and so on – instead of being just regarded the prototype of a Sikh.

Prototypes, however, cannot be brushed aside and so in considering Punjabiness, better called *Punjabiyyat*, we cannot but consider Sikhism and the recent history of the land – and not the state – to better understand what Punjabi culture implies. As a religion, Sikhism is premised more upon a sense of community and brotherhood than exacting, divinely originated codes of conduct. Of course, codes there are, but these are unequivocally man-made and reflect the needs of the times wherein they were made – if, for instance, the Sikhs are stereotyped as a martial race then it's because they needed to be war-like in order to preserve their freedom. This was particularly so in the last three hundred years or so of the last millennium, a time of great political unrest in the subcontinent with regular invasions of Persians and Afghans from across the Khyber Pass. Sikhs, and by extension the Punjabis over whom they gradually came to rule, have a strong sense of fellow feeling and communal welfare owing to the tribulations they faced over a protracted period of time from all possible quarters.

It is precisely this spirit, the legacy to overcome and survive no matter what, that characterises the coming of age of the migrant Punjabi community in Delhi, a community with an already historically entrenched sense of displacement and wrong as well as the determination to overcome these. If from the 1950s to the 2000s Delhi's identity changed to acquire an overwhelmingly Punjabi tinge, then we may safely assume that it was this which made it so.

Yet, before assuming so we must consider, again, what Delhi's identity, particularly pre-Partition, was. Writers like Percival Spear give an idea of what the city was like in the 1940s: the establishment of the Imperial Capital in and around Raisina clearly divided the city into three broad clusters, the walled city of Shahjahan, the bungalow and barrack town of the English, the Civil Lines, and the New City, New Delhi, built as the Imperial Capital. Sites like Mehrauli, Badli, Tughlaqabad were distant outposts of sorts, part of the historical framework of the city yet clearly outside the tangible, everyday dynamics which made it. The stereotype, of course, was of a languishing, diluted centre of all that was Mughal about Hindustan; languishing and diluted because of the catastrophic events of 1857, an year which marks an explosive rupture in the cultural timeline of the city, putting a violently sudden end to an entire civilisation.

The ninety years from 1857 to 1947 marked a period of slow, superimposed transition from a disintegrating feudality to a mixed modernity. For most the City was still the Walled City and the adjacent Civil Lines and Delhi still the vanquished seat of Mughals and all their mighty predecessors, the Rome of the East as fond Englishmen used to put it. Being Delhi, Dilli, was being seeped in the past, in the age old customs and traditions of the inhabitants of the Walled City – many of whom themselves were migrants who moved in after the population was massacred after 1857 – and in the slow, steady movement towards the modernity which the

Imperial British created both physically and psychologically in the edifices they constructed to the Empire. The railroad, the new imperial city, the university, these were catalysts of the modernity Delhi was slowly coming to embrace.

It was at this juncture that the Partition happened, coming as yet another massive rupture in the evolution of the city. While before its growth had been slow and it itself a backwater of sorts, the influx of lakhs of refugees from West Pakistan made it imperative for large scale rehabilitation to be initiated. Thus the residential colonies of Karol Bagh, Roop Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Vijay Nagar, Nizamuddin, Mukherjee Nagar, Lajpat Nagar, Rajendra Nagar arose, areas to house both the refugees who had migrated to Delhi as also the now increasing urban middle-class which served the functions of an expanding state bureaucracy. Anecdotes supported by statistical data and the tangible evidence all too evidently there for anyone to see report the near-Dickensian, rags to riches rise of the migrant community, of how from being utterly destitute many a Punjabi family made its way up the social ladder to come into wealth. If nothing else, the case of Gurudwara Sisganj stands as a prime example of the fulfilment of these communal great expectations: built huge and strong, right in the centre of the prime avenue of the Mughals' Dilli, exactly where Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded, Sisganj today is emblematic of the reversal of fortunes the Sikhs have always dreamed of – a place in the heart of Delhi, the land of their erstwhile oppressors finally their own to claim.

With what name should these dynamics be considered, how this history categorised? Categories, after all, are necessary, and the utopian sophism of no categories is in itself a category. Delhi today is more *Saddi Dilli* than *Humari Dilli*; its brash-and-brawny tag comes precisely from the grit and determination of Punjabis to find wealth and status, to enact rituals of upward mobility over and over again and thus exorcise the lurking ghosts of Partition. In its big roads, big cars, big houses and ever so big *bhature*, Delhi shows an aspiration to be 'big' which the self-contained Delhi of Spear and the Lalas would never have known. The restlessness, the activity, the particular sense of movement, development, towards big goals, international goals, all of these reflect that typical desire to make it huge, to show to the world that we have arrived, the city has arrived.

Arrived where, of course, is a separate matter for debate. What concerns us here is this intense, motivational drive; a drive, true, not exclusively Punjabi, being in the larger sense a manifestation of middle-class aspirations, but a drive imbued in this context with an extra grit and determination all too clearly Punjabi. Further, the desire for great expectations this drive manifests itself as in context of Delhi is not too dissimilar from the desire for control and glory which a colonising people have: present here is the acute, inexhaustible belief in oneself as a community; present too are dreams of glory, visions of a grand future rooted in a troubled past;

present also are notions of pride and destiny as a chosen people. No wonder, then, that the Punjabi are *aalleeshaan* – they believe themselves to be so and leave nothing unturned to be so.

Yet, the *Punjabiyaat* which the Punjabis enact in Delhi is not quite the *Punjabiyaat* of Punjab. After all, Delhi is an adopted homeland, and in adopting one need must adapt as well. The *Punjabiyaat* of Delhi, much like the *Punjabiyaat* of Bollywood and popular culture, is a mix of so-called Western cultural capital, the colonial legacy of *Angreziyaat* inherent in much of India, middle-class aspirations which have shaped the migrant peasant into the self-made bourgeoisie and, of course, the sense of loss typical to any displaced community.

This model of regional/communal colonisation may be considered as a model for better understanding post-colonial cultures today. Again, what is at play in this case are a series of interacting, interdependent cultural consciousnesses, each tracing its origin to a distinct source. While India as a whole is inerasably culturally colonised by the English language and the Englishness which it embodies, India in the twenty-first century is increasingly influenced by that distant second cousin, America, to be just the same in economic growth, education, criticism and mannerisms. These are the external forces which in our context form the overseas cultural colonisation all too readily acknowledged. What is neo-colonial, however, in this post-colonial ethos of Delhi, what perhaps makes Delhi both post-colonial and neo-colonial at the same time, is not as much as this as the colonising impulse of the Punjabis, of their filtering social aspiration through the lenses of this *Angreziyaat* and evolving a new, aggressive brand of *Punjabiyaat* that is rooted in the lost *Punjabiyaat* of the fields but yet ruthlessly self-confident in its dreams for mobility and making it big.

Thus, the Punjabis not only brought a strong sense of the proud native into the erstwhile colonial capital and so strengthened the nationalistic feeling which is essential in any colony to overcome the complex of being colonised, they also gave by the virtue of their being such an impetuous to the growth of the capital that changed its physical, emotional and psychological contours forever. Had the Partition not happened, had Independence come later, Delhi might well have become *humari dilli*, an organic city rich with legacies of the past and grown into the spirit of a modernist future; the Partition, and the influx of *Punjabiyaat*, make it the restless, energetic, eminently big cosmopolis that it is today.

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PINTERESQUE JOURNEY: FROM THE 1950S ONWARDS

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This paper discusses the 2005 Nobel Laureate Harold Pinter's style of writing, often referred to as Pinteresque. Many scholars and critics alike have cited that Pinter has derived his literary style from his predecessors such as Samuel Beckett's Absurdist style and Frank Kafka, whose surrealistic mode of writing is termed as Kafkaesque. But apart from drawing this similarity, what really has been Pinteresque and how far has the writer himself utilized this literary style to make an impact on his audience and readers? This paper explores the journey that Pinter has made with his theatrical writings and the paradigm shift that has occurred in his many phases of writing.

Nobel Laureate Harold Pinter (1930–2008) was recognized by the Swedish Academy for his outstanding contribution to literature in the year 2005. Apart from being a theatre director, screenwriter, actor and poet, Pinter is most notably remembered as a renowned playwright. The Academy, in its citation, described him as “the foremost representative of British drama in the second half of the twentieth century.” During his span of more than 40 years as a playwright, Pinter's audience/readers have witnessed a shift in his writing style towards his later years. His early plays such as *The Room* (1957), *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Caretaker* (1959) and *The Homecoming* (1964) are standing examples of the famous Pinteresque style, while his later plays starting from around the 1980s, such as *One for the Road* (1984), *Mountain Language* (1988) and *Ashes to Ashes* (1996), saw him diverting his attention more towards creating a political awareness through his works. However, his Pinteresque style of writing can be seen even throughout his later phase. This paper will therefore look at this transition in Harold Pinter's writing by analyzing the three plays, namely *The Room*, *The Birthday Party* and *One for the Road*.

Having experienced the fear and consequences of the world's two most devastating global wars, Harold Pinter was left with indelible traumatic memories. He remembered one of his wartime incidents in a 1967 interview with *The New Yorker* magazine in the following words:

On the day I got back to London in 1944, I saw the first flying bomb. I was in the street and I saw it come down ... there were times when I could open our

back door and find our garden in flames. Our house never burnt, but we had to evacuate several times. (qtd. in Esslin 12)

Such an agonizing history and experience remained with him forever, and they eventually became the founding stone which created his much known literary style referred to as *Pinteresque* – a writing style which the playwright adopted right from the beginning of his literary career. Pinter's theatrical works, mostly those from the 1950-60s, are generally psychological dramas which contest the insecurities, fears and suppressed sexual desires that are constantly lurking outside our apparently secure spaces. Part of these dark brooding characteristics of Pinter's work may be the result of the precarious lives and perilous world that inhibited the immediate post war-years. Adding to this was also the trauma of living in a place and wartime that constantly put an anti-Semitic threat hanging over their heads. Pinter's English parents were of Jewish descendants from Eastern Europe (Gussow). The audience/readers, therefore, often witness the Pinteresque style to depict a circumstance or situation which is pregnant with unknown menace. It is sensed through speeches, silences, pauses, and irrelevant dialogues which are often exercised as a means to evade the unknown impending predicaments. Sometimes words become camouflages to the underlying tension in the plays or one that exists among the characters in these plays. These dark elements suffocate the characters to such an extent that the façade that they play to hide their guilt and avoid possible horrifying consequences comes tumbling down, and strip their banal lives to expose the truth that lurks underneath of it all.

The two outstanding earlier plays *The Room* and *The Birthday Party* stand as the ultimate examples of the Pinteresque style. As evident in almost all of his early plays, one of the most iconic common features that we see in both these two plays is the typical presentation of a room, a seemingly comfortable haven. It stands in contrast to the unknown darkness that lies outside. In his first play *The Room* – a one Act drama, the audience have two main characters – a couple who goes by the name Bert and Rose, but as typical of Pinteresque style, no information on the background of these characters or events leading upto the present circumstances occurring on the stage are provided. As the play opens, the audience/readers find that Rose has a nagging worry about the apartment at the basement and the person occupying it. Though, at first, it appears as an innocent enquiry, it gradually unfolds that things are more layered than it seems to be. Her restlessness and the fear of something/someone is slowly revealed through her constant gazing through the window and trying to figure out what/who could be outside as though it were to harm her in some way or the other. Right from the very beginning, Pinter establishes the polarizing contrast of our supposedly safe space vis-à-vis the unknown that lies outside this space. The very nature of Rose wondering how cold and uncomfortable it must be outside, especially the basement, instantly draws up a mental picture of the two differing sides. But, just as the sense of comfort and security gets ready to settle down in the minds of the character as well as the audience, Pinter abruptly introduces an outside force which pulls Rose out of this comfort

zone. In one of the subsequent scenes, Rose is suddenly exposed to the horror and fright of seeing unexpected people standing outside her door. Here, the writer makes us realise that we all stand on the brink of unknown danger, which can shatter our apparent security at any time.

Harold Pinter himself once confided his thought on the concept of tussle between this apparent inner security and the menace lurking outside, waiting for the moment to exhibit its control and claim the inner space. He was quoted saying:

I am dealing a great deal of the time with this image of two people in a room. The curtain goes up on the stage, and I see it as a very potent question; What is going to happen to these two people in a room? Is someone going to open the door and come in? (qtd. in Burkman 66)

The very presence of a door signifies the existence of a menace. It tentatively shelters us from the probability of being a victim to whatever is lying outside. The universe outside is unknown and dark. This mysterious eeriness of the unknown always rattles our consciousness. But, the ever-present underlying fear is that at any moment the door might open, and one does not know who or what might enter. In short, Pinter was overwhelmed by the unpredictability of situations – the threat which we all face at one time or the other. It is this uncanny, uncomfortable feeling that is dramatized in both his earlier plays *The Room* and *The Birthday Party*.

In *The Birthday Party*, Pinter again demonstrates this fear of the unknown in a more detailed manner than his previous play. Unlike *The Room*, this one is a full-length drama with three Acts. The single room in *The Room* that represents the safe hideout from the cold intriguing menace of the outside world is replaced by a seaside boarding house in *The Birthday Party*. Like Rose and Bert in the first play, *The Birthday Party* also has a married couple, Meg and Petey, who own the house. Just as it is Pinter's style not to elaborate on much details regarding background information of the play or the characters, the audience get to understand from their dialogues that the couple have a tenant by the name Stanley Webber who has been staying for a year with them, and has developed a close bond with Meg – a bonding which borders somewhere around being mother and son as well as something sort of incestuous by being flirtatious lovers. Everything seems to be going on well with the characters with seemingly banal daily lives which revolve around laughter, teasing, concerns and irrelevant questions and responses amongst them. But the sudden shudder or change in this everyday concern surfaces when Stanley's demeanour exhibits uneasiness and anxiety when Meg mentioned that two men came to enquiry about rent. Stanley's suspicious behaviour informs that the audience that something is not quite right and that an element of imminent trouble is hanging around the otherwise daily banality. This disturbing outside force disrupts the balance of safety offered by the house. In a recurring Pinteresque style,

Stanley is thrown off guard by the presence of a dark menace that is about to enter the room/house which had otherwise been a secure protected space for him.

Other recurring prominent characteristics of Pinter's literary style are the use of long pauses, silence and irrelevant dialogues which offer no concrete communication between the characters. We very often get into such meaningless and irrelevant conversation in our daily lives in order to escape the feeling of void that sometimes overtakes the human mind. But another reason, according to Pinteresque, for such meaningless incoherent give-and-takes is that it provides us a temporary relief, a tentative feeling of safety from the fear of the unknown. But while doing so, the undercurrent of the possible terror that could at any time take away the apparent normalcy becomes very pronounced. In *The Room*, the scene where Rose exchanges a few words with Mr. Kidd, the landlord, it can be clearly seen that the two of them are unable to connect to one another.

Mr. Kidd: Look here, Mrs. Hudd, I've got to speak to you. I came up specially.

Rose: There were two people in here just now. They said this room was going vacant. What were they talking about?

Mr. Kidd: As soon as I heard the van go I got ready to come and see you. I'm knocked out.

Rose: What was it all about? Did you see those people? How can this room be going? It's occupied. Did they get hold of you, Mr. Kidd?

Mr. Kidd: Get hold of me? Who?

Rose: I told you. Two people. They were looking for the landlord.

Mr. Kidd: I'm just telling you. I've been getting ready to come and see you, as soon as I heard the van go. (103)

Pinter is attempting to create a sense of confusion amongst the characters on stage. But this need to create an instability and urgency of matters is not to achieve a light-toned laughter from the audience but is more complex than it is shown. The tone of urgency that Mr. Kidd uses to inform Rose about a certain matter, and the way in which he surreptitiously has come to deliver the message all hint towards an undercurrent of a menacing trouble that seems to be waiting for a chance to trample the sanctity and security that the room provides. Moreover, the sudden jolt that Rose gets from the misguided confusion created by the two strangers who came to her door and told her that the room was going vacant while she was still occupying it gives an even more dark atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity.

These are the few features of the Pinteresque style that can be seen in the early plays of Harold Pinter. However, as he advanced in age and literary achievements, his style of writing began to veer more towards current political issues. While the 1950-60s of Pinter's writing period pertained more towards employing these devices of the unique Pinteresque style, the

later years starting from around the 1980s saw more of overtly political voicing through his works. There is a mark distinction that can be seen between these two phases of his writing.

The choice for taking *One for the Road* for this critical essay is to elucidate this mark distinction that is there between these two periods of Pinter's writing career. It was also the first amongst Pinter's plays which marked his inclination for political writing. This politically charged stage drama has many of the Pinteresque elements as seen in the playwright's early work. But, the major distinction that differentiates it from them is the underlying tone of political activism which invades every frame of space and consciousness in this play. Nicolas, the main protagonist in the play, is a monstrous figure who does not have any scruples while torturing his victims. He often employs strategic and inhumane methods as a high-ranking official interrogator to beat suspects/agents of dissidence – Victor, Gila and Nicky (a family) in this case – into subjugation and muffle their nonconformist spirit. The following scene, where Nicolas intimidates Victor with his bureaucratic power, explains a lot about him and his grotesque totalitarian methods.

NICOLAS

...What do you think this is? It's my finger. And this is my little finger. This is my big finger and this is my little finger. I wave my big finger in front of your eyes. Like this. And now I do the same with my little finger. I can also use both...at the same time. Like this. I can do absolutely anything I like...

He laughs.

Do you think waving fingers in front of people's eyes is silly? I can see your point. You're a man of the highest intelligence. But would you take the same view if it was my boot—or my penis? Why am I so obsessed with eyes? Am I obsessed with eyes? Possibly. Not my eyes. Other people's eyes. The eyes of people who are brought to me here. They're so vulnerable. The soul shines through them... (Pinter, *One for the Road*)

Nicolas is the representative figure of a much higher authority who runs the country. His nerve-racking confrontation with his prisoner Victor, and later also with his two other victims Gila and Nicky, who are Victor's wife and son, reeks of an authoritarian tyranny that is hell-bent on breaking their resistive stance against the kind of government he represents.

Pinter's political activism became more and more pronounced and stronger with his later works either it be in poetry, essays, interviews or dramas. However, in this play the playwright does not leave behind a clear indication of which national government he is portraying here. But from the kind of words Nicolas uses such as "I run the place. God speaks through me....Everyone respects me here," it could also imply that Pinter could be referring

to one of the superpower nations in the world, *i.e.* U.S., U.K. or Russia. The idiomatic phrase “one for the road” that Nicolas repeatedly mentions has English etymology as it is purportedly touted as a colloquial adage for one final quick drink in English pubs before parting (“The meaning and origin of the expression: One for the road”). Use of such colloquial words native to a particular place could clearly mean that the interrogator and his victims belong to that place. On the other hand, it can also be argued that the play is set in an Eastern European country as is indicated by the particular use of the name “Nicolas” instead of the Anglicized version “Nicholas.” Irrespective of whatever country or nation Pinter is referring to, it is very succinctly visible that it has the authoritative political power to terrorise its people in order to suppress any truth from surfacing, which would act against the interest of the ruling heads. However, it can also be said that Pinter presents no specific nation but all in general which in some form or the other has the ultimate power for state terrorism.

Harold Pinter in his later life became more outspoken about his political stance against government regimes which act against the democratic rights of their citizens. In his 2001 interview with Michael Billington of *The Guardian*, Pinter clearly explains in the following words what he has been trying to convey through his play *One for the Road*.

...you only have to look around you to see world leaders doing exactly the same thing. George W Bush is always protesting that he has the fate of the world in mind and bangs on about the 'freedom-loving peoples' he's seeking to protect. I'd love to meet a freedom-hating people. But in the rhetoric of global politics there is a total dichotomy between words and action; and that, in part, is what I'm writing about in this play.

Although Pinter's earlier plays such as *The Birthday Party* have echoes of a menacing higher authority (McCann and Goldberg in *The Birthday Party*) trying to subdue and terrorise a person (Stanley) in order to make him/her toe the line as dictated by the authoritative voices, his view on using theatre as a transparent platform to highlight the wrong doings of the government, his stance against such misuse of power to suppress the people and control their rights and liberty became more articulated with his play *One for the Road* and the subsequent period following its production. The Pinteresque style has been utilized to the maximum in this political drama to give an extremely chilling effect of what state terrorism can do to silence the voices of the dissents. Harold Pinter since the production of this play came out more strongly against any political high-handedness, such as those of the U.S. and the U.K., in dealing with people or other national governments in order to gain political control and other benefits at the expenses of these weaker nations. The use of his unique literary style Pinteresque has made it all the more viable for him to convey the menacing nature of such darker and stronger forces that can at any time erase or take away the validity of our existence, our identity and self-esteem. Throughout Pinter's literary career, Pinteresque

style has survived and resurfaced from one phase to another, as seen in these three plays under critical analysis, to convey his ideas and ideologies.

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ATTAINING ADULTHOOD: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS RITES OF PASSAGE

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The paper describes the term 'Rites of passage' and moves on to discuss its implications in the lives of children and adolescents. The phenomena of growing up, of transition into adulthood, acquiring of wisdom and acceptance into the community are marked by the rites of passage which can be both personal and social. In the field of literature, bildungsroman forms the genre of coming of age and is intrinsically linked to the views of William Blake on transition from innocence to experience. The paper concludes with a mention of the revival of interest in childhood and children's literature in the romantic age after a disregard for fantasy in the age of enlightenment.

The term "Rites of passage" was first used by French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in 1908 in his seminal work *Les rites de passage*. He himself defined rites of passage as "rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position and age" (Gennep 10). The entire life-cycle of an individual, from birth to childhood to old age to death itself, for both men and women, is marked by a series of rites of passage – pervasively expressed throughout the life of an individual. Reminiscent of various scholars, Arnold Van Gennep, noted that virtually all human societies use ceremonial rites to mark significant transitions in the social status of individuals. He viewed rites of passage as an essential ingredient in the rejuvenation of society. According to him and other social scientists, rites of passage serve to preserve social stability by easing the transition of groups of individuals into new status and prestige roles; in part, they are a social acknowledgement of aging. As individuals are born and age, their positions in society change. In the absence of rites of passage, society would be fraught with conflicts as individuals would either struggle to assert new social statuses or resist them. These rites may be personal or social depending upon their cultural context.

Although many societies maintain rites of passage, and while these rites often share structural similarities, their cultural content varies widely. For example, while rites of passage often roughly coincide with physiological stages, adulthood is a cultural, not just a biological, concept. The meaning of adulthood, and the age at which it begins, varies from culture to culture.

Life cannot always be seen as a matter of gradual development and change but rather consists of a series of such abrupt and ritualized transitions which make it meaningful. Successful life transitions have always been causes for celebration. An individual soul moves towards maturing, and the community gains new energy, creativity, and potential. A successful transition forms the basis of fulfillment and contribution in the next phase of one's life. For adolescents, the trials and ceremonies of transition confirm the beginnings of adulthood, for midlife adults, the beginnings of elderhood. Increasingly, there have been unearthed effective ways to mark, confirm, and deepen life transitions.

Comparing the structure of such rituals in diverse cultures, Van Gennep discovered that rites of passage often share similar features, including a period of segregation from everyday life, a liminal state of transition from one status to the next, and a process of reintroduction to the social order with a new standing. Accordingly, he subdivided rites of passage into three sub-categories: rites of separation, transition rites, and rites of incorporation. The rite of separation, the first stage in the rites of passage is characterized by a loss of identity. The initiates undergo rituals which are meant to strip them of their original identities and social statuses. It entails a violent rupturing of ties with the self, family and community. This might involve being removed geographically or giving up of any markers of their previous selves such as clothing, hair etc. For instance, male circumcision and female excision are commonly observed rites of passage. The next stage, i.e., transition rites are considered exceptionally dangerous and vulnerable for the initiates as their status in the community now becomes socially ambiguous. They have lost their previous identity and have not yet been incorporated into the new one. To move closer towards their goal the novices have to be 'prepared' for their new roles. It involves ordeals of both physical and mental nature. As a trial of their pain and stamina, they are made to undergo vigorous training process which requires them to be deprived of sleep, forced to labor, exposed to the elements, forced to seek their own nourishment etc. This stage is often associated with an educational transition as well, as it brings about a heightened revelation of religion, custom, skills, knowledge and "truth." Incorporation, the final stage of the process, moves the participants out of isolation and back into the community with a new identity. This stage is usually celebrated with religious rituals in which in the whole community participate. As emblems of the new status, the individual is often presented with ornaments, new clothing or new names.

The rites of passage commonly fall into the three stages mentioned above; however, they are not always indispensable. Van Gennep writes: ". . . although a complete scheme of rites of passage theoretically includes preliminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation), in specific instances these three

types are not always equally important or equally elaborated.” (Gennep 11). The concept of rites of passage applies equally well to other ages and stages of life, including birth, marriage and death, however, initiation (into adulthood) rites and puberty rituals have been the focus of much of the discussion concerning rites of passage. Anthropologist Victor Turner took van Gennep’s model and gave particular emphasis to the liminal rites, suggesting that after being separated from the society, but before being incorporated back into it, the person going through the rite of passage existed in a sort of “betwixt and between” state, a kind of limbo, where their identity was temporarily suspended. In the human life cycle, this perplexed state is aptly reflected in age of adolescence. It is a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, and between morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult.

A rite is expected to modify the personality of the individual in a manner visible to all (Gennep 15) while rites of passage may seem to focus on the individual, they are crucial to culture constituted in and through its performances. Scholars like Barbara Meyerhoff, Linda A. Camino, and Edith Turner (1987) argue that rites fulfill the crucial task of “inculcating a society’s rules and values to those who are to become its full-fledged members” (383). Ritual participants are especially susceptible to learning during rites: Old habits and ways of being are stripped away, awaiting new forms of participation and performance in culture. The understanding that the new status condition or position is higher, superior or more perfect in comparison to the earlier one makes it easier for the individual to undertake the ordeals of initiation. This conviction creates a state of aspiration in those who are yet beginners, for they too would like to grow up. In the eyes of the society, initiation is the criterion for growing up. God is beseeched to bring about the desired social physical and religious transformation of the novices. The awareness on the part of the novices that they are leaving an inferior status and attaining a higher one, more valuable to them individually and to society in general is driven home by taboos and other social sanctions. Their behavior is modified in accordance with socially approved behavior. Rites of passage in general are of central importance in the life of the community where they are performed. They are the means by which society is regulated. Those who are not yet initiated feel there is something higher and nobler to aspire to in their existence. In support of this idea Gerard Fourez says: “Rites often function as points of no return... well performed rites break boundaries and lead people and groups to the frontiers of which in some cases they were ignorant. They produce profound effects which are often as effective as psychotherapy.” (Fourez, 1981: 26).

The purpose of rites of passage in traditional cultures was considered primarily to allow the youth to attain maturity and become adults. Through rites of passage, the youth discovers its gifts, their vision for their role in the community, and their own personal "medicine" or wisdom for dealing with the challenges that lie in front of them. The elders facilitate these discoveries, and support the young adults to integrate their visions, roles, and paths into the fabric of the community. The rites of passage support the transformation of the

child mentality (serving oneself) into the adult mentality (serving the community). These rites highlight and validate changes in a person's status, particularly on the occasion of life-transforming events. The term was intended to describe this pattern and ascribe meaning to these transitions. It was obvious to every member of these cultures that one could not possibly function as an adult without going through the rites of passage experience.

Through initiation rites, the young people are schooled in grave matters such as sexual life, marriage, procreation and family responsibilities. After the completion of the initiation rites, an individual is considered as one who has learnt the sacred secrets about life, he is therefore, eligible for marriage and to enter a new life armed with what society considers the necessary instructions for life. The adolescents in the community are then recognized as adults and given the license to make decisions and indulge in sexual activities, i.e., they are recognized as having attained physical and social maturity. Initiation rites are therefore regarded as having an educational and developmental purpose. It marks the start of acquiring knowledge which the children have no access to. It is a period of familiarization, socialization and many other issues of the society; it is obviously a period that puts an end to childhood. Since adulthood often requires the learning to endure attitudes, living with one another, learning to obey and mastering the secrets and mysteries of man/woman relationships, such young adults are expected to be able to face all these challenges. The initiated begins a new life where the ideals learnt must be put into practice to bear witness to his transformed self, he must demonstrate that he has found his essential wholeness as an individual and as a man/woman in a community among those he shares ideality purpose and experience. According to Mircea Eliade, the author of *Rites and symbols of initiation*, initiation usually comprises of a threefold revelation of: the sacred, of death and of sexuality. The child knows nothing of these experiences, the initiate knows and assumes them and incorporates them into his new personality. (Eliade, 1988: 188). Sexual awakening, associated with puberty has always been considered the most distinguishable marker of transition from childhood into adulthood.

While contemporary studies have examined the timing of pubertal changes and their implications for sexual and reproductive health, there is scanty evidence demonstrating how adolescents experience the process of puberty and how prepared they are to correctly interpret and understand the associated pubertal body changes. In trying to understand the extended and heterogeneous life transitions, the question “when does adolescence end?” has become a key issue for research in the new millennium. Jeffrey Arnett has undertaken a prolific series of studies addressing this issue. His findings point to a consistent pattern, leading him to conclude that markers of the transition to adulthood or ‘the rites of passage’ are “intangible, gradual, psychological and individualistic.” (Arnett, 1997 p. 15). Arnett (2000) sees the time between adolescence and adulthood as being separate from either period, labeling this new developmental stage ‘emerging adulthood’: an empirically distinguishable phase when young people see themselves as being too old to be adolescents but not yet fully-fledged adults. An examination of such processes could help understand how boys and girls

in different cultures and settings define and comprehend their sexuality and what is expected of them as sexual beings. Adolescent sexuality itself is shaped not simply by the biological or psychological changes of puberty, but also by the specific cultural and historical context in which youth develop and negotiate their emerging sexuality. Interestingly, although sexual maturity and life experience symbolize the attainment of worldly wisdom and knowledge, it is also simultaneously associated with a loss of the pure stage of childhood innocence.

This theme of the movement from childhood innocence towards adulthood experience and the role played by rites of passage in bringing about this shift has been variably dealt with in literature as well. Certain universal components for the symbolic structuring of any rite of passage are evident. These structural components can be expressed not only in ritual behavior, such as initiation ceremonies, but also in the literary motifs of oral and written literature. Young Adult's literature and Bildungsroman are the genres which most effectively cater to the premise of growing up. The genre focuses on the coming of age and rites of passage of an adolescent and/or young adult and is recognized for how it educates its readers about personal growth and self-consciousness. The term "Bildungsroman" was not commonly brought up in literary studies until 1870 by German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey. Dilthey's research claims that the first novel that initiated the genre was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, published in 1795 as its protagonist engages in a double task of self-integration and integration into society. Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand faces* states that "The standard path of the adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the Rites of passage: separation – initiation – return: a separation from the world, a penetration to some source of power and a life-enhancing return" (Campbell 28). First, a rite of passage presupposes an orphaned status. The individual neophyte is symbolically understood as an "orphan," (28) somehow incomplete. In oral literature themes, the individual is represented as alone and often abused and bullied by an adversary, in need of help. Whether it be in ritual or literature, the individual is as an impoverished child, either without parents or lacking in some significant attribute, such as the knowledge and skills of an adult. In all cases, something vital is missing. A void needs to be filled. According to Campbell, The departure of the hero begins with an inescapable call to adventure, often proclaimed by a "herald" (42). This call, Campbell states, "rings up the curtain, always, on a mystery of transfiguration – a rite, or moment, of spiritual passage, which, when complete, amounts to a dying and a birth" (42-43). Second, the bildungsroman like a rite of passage involves a separation, a journey and a sacrifice. Usually, in all instances, a symbolic "journey" (42), full of challenges of all kinds, transpires. It is a journey to a world distinct from the ordinary. "All true wisdom is to be found far from the dwellings of men"(45). When the hero receives the call, the journey will begin with an encounter "with a protective figure" (57) which Campbell calls the supernatural aid, "who provides the hero with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass"(57-58). Once this occurs, it is time for the crossing of the first threshold, beyond this point "is darkness, the unknown and danger"(87). The "symbolic" or literal journey facilitates: a removal from socially and

spiritually defined space and relationships, an entry into a new realm, the "liminal," and a receptivity to the sacred, to traditional knowledge, to the wisdom of family traditions. Third, a rite of passage involves the acquisition of power and knowledge, the void is filled. A child becomes an adult, redefined in the eyes of others. The individual is also offered a means to shed one identity and orientation for another, thus acquiring and re-orienting his or her entire world view, socially, economically and spiritually. New knowledge and skills, new responsibilities and obligations, new awareness and sensitivities are effectively imparted and assimilated. Rites of passage transform the very being of an individual, providing a mechanism for life-cycle transitions.

For readers to recognize how the protagonist overcomes moral and human challenges, they must understand how his/her identity develops. One of the main purposes of the Bildungsroman as of the rites, is to enable the protagonist to continue into society with acceptance. In accordance with Richard D. Beards, the protagonists in these books cannot fulfill their "personal journey" unless they come across certain crucial concerns such as vocation, religion, mating, and identity. Regarding the protagonist's development, Jerome Buckley talks about the school-without-walls and argues thereby that a person can grow up and gradually discover who he or she is through experience. The educational experiences are made through work or play, travel, nature, adolescent romance and/or imaginative reading. Furthermore Buckley states that the majority of the Bildungsroman heroes learn their deepest lessons from rare moments of insight, 'spots of time' that reveal to them new levels of life and meaning. To understand the psychological impact of the transition on a child's consciousness and the subtle nuances between the two seemingly contrary states of innocence and experience, it would be highly beneficial to analyze the matter through works of William Blake.

William Blake's, *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* (1794), are a collection of poems presenting the two contrary aspects of the human soul: innocence and experience. The poems express a sense of a blissful and joyful world of innocence, which inevitably evolves into a world of despair, for Blake considered a world of experience to be difficult to live in once the hope of innocence began to fade. Blake's poetry is used to reflect upon the statement that there is no progression without contraries, which he demonstrated by constructing a symbolic parallel between his poems in Songs of Innocence, to those in Songs of Experience. His poems juxtapose the innocent bliss of childhood against an adult world of knowledge and corruption, for essentially, he believed that experience diminishes innocence and that from experience comes despair. Thus the poems as a whole, probe into the value and limitations of two very different perspectives on the world. By describing at the outset innocence and experience as 'contrary states of the human soul', Blake warns the readers that they cannot choose between them, that such a choice is neither possible nor desirable, and that innocent joy is not always preferable to the sorrows of experience. Childhood is not an end in itself but a means of growing up.

As is evident from the works of William Blake and William Wordsworth, Childhood as a special stage of life and the experiences of children moved increasingly to the centre of interest since the late eighteenth century. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the discourse about childhood did not take place in children's literature, but in philosophical treatises and in literature for adults. Admittedly, literary fairy tales, such as those written by Charles Perrault, and Madame d'Aulnoy, became very popular, early in the enlightenment era. Many of Perrault's tales became fairy tale staples, and influenced latter fantasy. Moreover, when Madame d'Aulnoy termed her works *contes de fée* (fairy tales), she invented the term that is now generally used for the genre, thus distinguishing such tales from those involving no marvels. This influenced later writers, who took up the folk fairy tales in the same manner, in the Romantic era. However, aside from a few tales of witchcraft and ghost stories, very little fantasy was written during this time. This era, was notably hostile to fantasy. Even children's literature saw little fantasy; it aimed at edifying and deplored fairy tales as lies. Writers of the new types of fiction such as Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding were realistic in style, and many early realistic works were critical of fantastical elements in fiction. In one respect, this was an essential stage in the development of fantasy as a *genre*. The development of a realistic genre ensured that fantasy could be defined as a distinct type, in contrast.

Emerging as a sharp criticism of the utilitarian thinking of the Enlightenment, the foundations were laid for an image of childhood that has influenced children's and adult literature until the present. As a countermovement to the Enlightenment, the Romantic movement was important for the development of children's literature for four reasons: the creation of an image of childhood by the early Romantics which was contrary to the ideas of the Enlightenment; the classification of children's literature by traditional genres (folktales, legends, nursery rhymes) during late Romanticism as a replacement of the moral tale, which was favoured during the Enlightenment, fairy tales (both folktales and literary fairy tales) as the main genre of Romantic children's literature, and the constitution of new literary children's characters. As a result, the motifs of the 'lively imaginative child' and the 'strange child' or 'eternal child' attained great significance. These motifs found their prototypical expression in E.T.A. Hoffmann's fairy tales for children *Nutcracker and Mouse King*, 1816 and *The Strange Child*, 1817. The changing notions of 'childhood', its assessment as the forming stage of life and the need for a specialized literary genre of fairy tales for children has been established thus far.

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WHY ISRAEL MUST INNOVATE

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When Israel was founded 66 years ago, it was a barren country with no natural resources, little water, and more than half of its land mass desert. The only thing the new country had going for it was the natural creativity of its people.

More than seven decades later, the Israelis have turned their country into an oasis of technology and innovation. With the most start-ups per capita worldwide, and the third highest number of patents per head, Israel has become one of the leading players in the world of high-tech innovation, attracting international giants to its shores. . Israel's successes show how culture, environment and strategy can create centres of innovation. Israel's success is an inspiration with international ramifications that benefit all people across the globe.

Introduction

“The creative act ... does not create something out of nothing; it uncovers, selects, re-shuffles, combines, synthesizes already existing facts, ideas, faculties, skills. The more familiar the parts, the more striking the new whole.” - Arthur Koestler

If Necessity is the mother of invention then greed is the mother of innovation. Greed in this context is not to be considered as one of the deadly sins but as a driver of growth for the organization.

November 2 ,1917 the Balfour Declaration was established a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. Jewish immigrate to Palestine from all over the world. The Arabs were opposed to Jewish immigration to Palestine and stepped up their attacks against the Jews. Following an increase in Arab attacks, the British appointed a royal commission in 1936 to investigate the Palestine situation. The Peel Commission recommended the partition of the country between Arabs and Jews. The Arabs rejected the idea while the Jews accepted the principle of partition .But till than they were facing lots of challenges with their constraints . We will discuss with all their challenges and constraints Israel contributing in Innovation .

Challenges before Israel

Since its birth in 1948, Israel has faced near-constant threats to its very existence. For almost four decades, those threats were mainly conventional inter-state wars. Israel had (and still has) a small population compared to its neighbours and faced the dangerous possibility of a two-front war, led by Syria and Egypt. Having won on the conventional battlefield, Israel faced a new challenge

Here are 14 challenges that await Netanyahu in 2014:

- 1) Iran – Insisting on a good deal Netanyahu's goal is to ensure the world reaches a deal that will permanently prevent Iran's military nuclearization and avoid the need for a military strike
- 2) Syria – Staying out of it The Washington Institute estimated that there are fighters from 74 countries in the Syrian civil war, which has become what in wrestling is called a battle royal. While Israel is included on that list, the Jewish state has done a good job so far in staying out of the fighting. The last thing Israel wants in 2014 is for all those fighters to stop attacking each other, and decide to turn their guns against their common enemy.
- 3) Palestinians – Avoiding war Hamas's ability to attack Israel has been hindered by the new Egyptian regime closing hundreds of tunnels from Egypt to Gaza. Hamas loses millions in monthly revenue from the tunnels. But terror tunnels to Israel are still being built and rockets are still fired regularly. The West Bank, which had no Israelis killed there in 2012, did not see similar success in the past year. Diplomatic talks historically have led to violence; avoiding an escalation there is key to Israeli security in 2014.
- 4) Palestinians – Making peace in Palestine is a great challenge before the prime minister.
- 5) Coalition – Keeping it together Past coalition governments in Israel were built on similar ideas on the conflict with the Palestinians. The four factions in the coalition were supposed to have common views on matters of religion and state, but that has turned out to not be issues will cause Netanyahu coalition headaches in 2014. This is not the coalition he wanted, and he will soon learn that he was right.
- 6) Lapid/Bennett –Israel has coalition between two different ideology groups, Netanyahu needs the two men to settle their differences quickly, or his government could be in trouble. The fact that Lapid and Bennett both control ministries in which they need much more time to prove themselves works in Netanyahu's favour.
- 7) Drafting yeshiva students – Avoiding civil war Lapid has stressed over and over that his goal is not to harm the hare dim, but to bring them into the workforce and out of poverty. Netanyahu may have to intervene to prevent the disputes from getting out of control.
- 8) Electoral Reforms – Adding stability around the same time that the haredi draft bill will be voted on by the Knesset, there will be final votes on the government's

electoral reform package. The number of ministers will be limited to 19, deputy ministers to four, and the electoral threshold is expected to be raised from 2 percent to 3.25%.

That would mean that the smallest faction in the next Knesset would rise from two to five MKs. Together with limitations on no-confidence votes, the political system will become more stable, and it will be easier for the government to function.

9) Presidential race – Avoiding electing an adversary Barring a last-ditch attempt by President Shimon Peres to change the law and enable him to run for a second seven-year term, the 90-year-old veteran politician will be out of a job in mid-July. The race to succeed him must be held between mid-May and mid-June.

10) Post-presidential Peres – Ignoring an uncomfortable voice As president, Shimon Peres has irked Netanyahu by expressing different opinions about Iran and the administration in Washington. But the truth is that from Netanyahu's perspective, it could have been a lot worse. Peres defended Netanyahu eloquently around the world and did not shoot off his mouth on politics nearly as much as Ezer Weizmann did in Netanyahu's first term. That all changes in July when Peres will be unchained and ready to attack Netanyahu on everything from peace to poverty. Netanyahu will regret not changing the laws of Israel and the laws of nature to keep Peres in the President's Residence for the next 30 years.

11) Likud central committee – Another annoyance Netanyahu won a battle against Likud activists last month when he blocked a vote that would have ended the bond with Yisrael Beytenu for the next election. Another Likud convention is set to be held next month, but there are already efforts to ensure that it will deal with only procedural matters.

12. Lowering the cost of living: The government is also mulling a plan to reduce food prices – which cost 25% more than the OECD average – by spurring competition. Three years out from the social street protests that erupted over those costs, the government will be under heavy pressure to turn those plans into results that people can feel in their pocket books, an objective which it has so far failed to achieve.

13. Passing the budget Netanyahu and Lapid will also have to navigate the murky waters of cutting costs for the 2015 state budget, which they will have to pass by the end of 2014 or face elections.

Because expected income tax hikes were eliminated, the 2015 budget is set to overshoot its targeted deficit of 2.5% of GDP. According to the Bank of Israel, if people are going to keep their tax breaks, "it will be necessary to cancel some of the plans that the government has adopted." That is certainly a prospect Netanyahu is not looking forward to in 2014.

14. Jonathan Pollard – Israeli agent Jonathan Pollard has been in prison since November 1985. Netanyahu is insisting on his freedom in his conversations with the Americans in a more serious way than he has ever done before. Peres have also vowed to do what he can do.

Need to innovate

When Israel was founded 66 years ago, it was a barren country with no natural resources, little water, and more than half of its land mass desert. The only thing the new country had going for it was the natural creativity of its people.

More than seven decades later, the Israelis have turned their country into an oasis of technology and innovation. With the most start-ups per capita worldwide, and the third highest number of patents per head, Israel has become one of the leading players in the world of high-tech innovation, attracting international giants to its shores.

From health breakthroughs to technology, agriculture, the environment and the arts, the country's innovations are transforming and enriching lives everywhere. Israel today is playing a significant role in some of the most important challenges facing our planet.

Israel is quickly becoming an innovation giant. With just over 7.7 million people, Israel has an estimated 4,800 start-ups, many of them high tech. These companies are sources of groundbreaking innovation that is catapulting Israel to global tech prominence. The combination of Israel's culture, environment and keen strategy has led to a tech boom that rivals Silicon Valley.

It's not only the sheer number of entrepreneurial companies; it's their astonishing, innovative edge. One of the most popular and widely known Israeli tech start-ups is *Waze*, a mobile phone traffic and navigation app that's creating a "driving community," and is used by nearly 50 million drivers worldwide. *Waze* has been so successful that it was recently acquired by Google. *OrCam* is a startup that has developed technology that allows blind people with intact optic nerves to see. *Phinergy* has created a lithium car battery that triples mileage for electric cars. These are just a few examples of thousands of start-ups that are making Israel a "start-up nation."

Israel's tech boom is good for Israel and for the global economy. The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange lists 616 companies, meaning Israel has one public company for every 12,500 citizens. By comparison, the U.S. has one public company for every 47,000 people. Israeli companies' continued success is a model for the rest of the world, and a tribute to their enduring spirit in the face of significant challenges.

Israel is a flourishing high-tech hub in an increasingly inhospitable region. Yet the country is surprisingly self-reliant. At an October 7, 2013 Tel Aviv event promoting the International CES®, I moderated a panel of leading Israeli innovators. The discussion revolved around why Israelis are so entrepreneurial. The panellists' responses revealed that Israeli tech prowess comes from a combination of intelligence, creativity, productivity and independence as well as their staunch determination to press on in the face of daunting opposition.

The panellists praised Israel's education system. Dr. Yoelle Maarek, head of Yahoo! Labs Israel, said Israeli education is excellent, largely because the students participate actively. She compared her experiences teaching in France, the U.S. and Israel, and said Israeli students are the most eager to learn.

Others point out the mandatory military service most young Israelis are required to fulfil when they turn 18 as a driver of high achievement. Dr. Maarek and another panellist, Dov Moran, inventor of the USB flash drive, said that military service, combined with the continuous external threats to Israel, cultivate a seriousness of purpose and a cultural willingness to accept economic risks. Creating a new business may seem relatively tame when neighbouring countries are hostile to your physical survival. Besides this, Israel's investments in defence technology and commercial products spun off from defense technology have encouraged – and even required – ongoing innovation.

More, Israel is an immigrant and multicultural nation, allowing for diversity and different viewpoints, as Google Israel Managing Director Meir Brand and other panellists pointed out. This allows for creativity and innovation, by encouraging the free flow of ideas and collaboration among individuals with very different perspectives. In many ways, Israel's strong innovation culture runs parallel to America's. Both countries share the unique view that entrepreneurial failure is an education rather than a badge of dishonour. They don't punish risk-taking the way many other nations do.

The entrepreneurial spirit in Israel may start early in life, too, with a strong family dynamic. Panellist Dr. Yossi Vardi, involved in more than 70 start-ups and credited with fathering instant messaging, charmed the audience with his tribute to the "Jewish mother." Israeli parents, but especially mothers, both assume and demand success from their children, thus setting a high bar that encourages young people to work hard.

Together, all these things explain Israel's success and paint a mosaic of a nation whose very struggle for survival has spurred its innovative spirit. Israel's successes show how culture, environment and strategy can create centers of innovation. Israel's success is an inspiration with international ramifications that benefit all people across the globe.

THE TOP 10 MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES IN ISRAEL-

1. NICE SYSTEMS

For making apps smarter and more sympathetic.

2. WATER-GEN

For creating water where soldiers need it most.

3. BILLGUARD

For helping consumers fight fraud in an increasingly hack-prone financial system.

4. MOBILEYE VISION TECHNOLOGIES

For enabling self-driving cars to see better (and cheaper).

5. SILENTIUM

For silencing the noise of our lives.

6. MOOVIT

For crowd sourcing public-transit data to speed up commutes.

7. WIX

For letting small businesses drag-and-drop their way to a better website.

8. OUTBRAIN

For connecting curious readers to the next best content.

9. ZERTO

For safeguarding the data of companies around the world.

10. SECURELOGIC

For taking a step forward in untangling airport inefficiencies

Conclusion:

It is true that necessity in the mother of invention and Israel's story as a start-up nation is a source of inspiration in the struggle of existence.

A country with nearly 8 million people with very less natural resources and surrounded by enemies has no choice but to innovate. This also is the paramount example how culture, policies and discipline can spur a country to produce more innovative products and start up companies than Japan, India, Korea, Canada and UK. Israel is and will always be a lesson for other nations and also for anyone seeking economic success.

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**“IT IS A SIN TO HOLD A SLAVE UNDER LAWS
LIKE OURS.” CHRISTIAN REDEMPTION AS
NARRATIVE STRATEGY IN HARRIET BEECHER
STOWE’S *UNCLE TOM’S CABIN***

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Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* deals with the story of the life and vicissitudes of the protagonist Uncle Tom [Tom Lincon], a Black slave whose “good” behaviour, and staunch belief in Christianity and its application in his day-to-day life, even at the most severe and critical moments, transform him at the end into a martyr. However, the novel not only gives us the possibility of exploring the life of a Black man, a slave in the nineteenth century South of America, but also provides, to a great extent, the immense possibilities of looking into various other related areas like the influence of Christianity on the Blacks, the trials and tribulations of the life of the Blacks under slavery, Black family relations, plantation life in the South, the slave–master relations, the issue of breaking up of Black families, the sufferings of mulattoes in the South under slavery, the difference in the perspective of the North and the South on the issue of slavery and so on. Each of this requires a special effort. However, an attempt is made in this paper to look at the white author’s emphasis on Christianity in the novel. The article argues that it is a deliberate attempt on the part of the author to use Christian beliefs as a nodal point in the novel, and that it can be read as strategic to her larger purposes. Further, it looks at how Stowe uses the slave narrative technique to make the novel a realistic depiction of the lives of Blacks, and how the novelist employs many a literary device to make the story a dramatic one. Besides, this article argues that Stowe presents bad characters as non-believers, and good White characters as staunch Christians.

The novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was published in 1852, and was originally serialized in an anti-slavery newspaper, *The National Era*. Harriet Beecher Stowe talks about the reason behind such an endeavour thus:

[...] since the legislation act of 1850, when she heard, with perfect surprise and consternation, Christian and humane people actually recommending the remanding of escaped fugitives in to slavery, as a duty binding on good citizens—when she heard on all hands, from kind, compassionate and estimable people, in the free states of the North, deliberations and discussions as to what Christian duty could be on this head—she could only think these men and Christians cannot know what slavery is; if they did, such a question could never be open for discussion. And from this arose a desire to exhibit it in *a living dramatic reality*. (409)¹

This statement also reveals the fact that “Christian and humane people” are misled and manipulated while enforcing their duties as “good” Christians. It implies how institutions like the state and the church function against the Blacks, how partial these institutions are, and how institutionalization forms and works out there. It is also interesting to note that the statement of revealing her intention to exhibit what slavery really is, does not come in the preface, instead she says it at the end of the story. However, the author does state her objective in the preface:

The objective of these sketches is to awaken sympathy and feeling for the African race, as they exist among us; to show their wrongs and sorrows under the system so necessarily cruel and unjust as to defeat and do away with the good effects of all that can be attempted for them, by their best friends under it. (xi—xii)

It is striking to observe that even in the quote above, there is a representation of hierarchy in the sense that the African race here is not at all an equal, but a debased race which needs “sympathy and feelings” and they have “wrongs and sorrows”. On the contrary, the “good” Whites are their “best friends” who attempt to redeem the African race and it is, it seems, more the defeat of their “best friend’s” endeavour to civilize and redeem them than their plight and abject condition that prompts the author to take an initiative to sketch the life of the slaves in her novel. Such an argument will be much clearer when we see the author support those “good” White men who own slaves. In her preface, for example, Stowe says:

In doing this, the author can sincerely disclaim any invidious feeling towards those individuals who, often without any fault of their own, are involved in the trials and embarrassments of the legal relations of slavery. Experience has shown her that some of the noblest of minds and hearts are often thus involved. (xii)

The author here seems to be a fatalist in the sense that she tries, it seems, to say to the reader that a White man, who happened to inherit a number of slaves, and has basically no interest in such an institution, has no other option but to be a part of the institution of slavery. If we get such a meaning out of the quote above, it may not be a mistake to say that, while supporting and empathizing with the Whites—“some of the noblest of minds and hearts”—the author implicitly supports the idea that since Black children born of slave mothers are by their birth slaves, they do not have any other go but to accept their despicable situation, for they are destined to be so. It also indicates that Stowe aligns with the Whites and thus the Blacks still remain “the other”. It is also interesting to observe in the quotation above that the author speaks in the third person singular. Such an endeavour may be a strategy, which aims

at hiding the subjectivity and claiming objectivity in presenting the Black life under slavery. Such a “Preface” and “Concluding Remarks” may make the impression that Stowe is not the narrator of the text, but the author.

Harriet Beecher Stowe is, however, an optimist when she says, “It is a comfort to hope [...], so a time shall come when sketches similar to these shall be valuable only as memorials of what has long ceased to be” (xii). But we can trace elements of “Euro-centric” viewpoint in the futuristic vision when she says,

When an enlightened and Christianized community shall have, on the shores of Africa, laws, language and literature, drawn from among us, may then the scenes of the house of bondage be to them like the remembrance of Egypt to the Israelites— a motive of thankfulness to Him who hath redeemed them! (xii)

The author seems to have the notion that till the Africans have contact with the White Christian world, they will not have any refined laws, language and literature of their own. In her vision, Africans shall not have a world of their own with their own distinct language and culture, but, instead, they shall have a “Christianized community”. This kind of over emphasis on Christianity in the novel may be a deliberate attempt on the part of the author, and may be read as strategic to her larger purposes. Stowe represents Africans and their descendents as naturally savage and unpredictable but capable of becoming docile, contented, and childlike under the influence of the “civilized” Anglo-Saxon race with its religion, Christianity.

It will be appropriate to observe and say here in connection with this that the protagonist Uncle Tom is created and depicted in such a way that he will be perceived more as a “Christian” than as a Black slave. It may be just like another version of what many a Black writer/intellectual points out, how Jesus Christ is metamorphosed into a “White” with blue eyes after His Resurrection, by the White Christian world.² My purpose here is not to undermine the positive influence and soothing effect of Christianity on the Blacks, but, on the other hand, to examine the different strategies used by the author to make her point clear. For example, the very selection of a “Christian”, Black slave as the protagonist of the novel may be a strategy adopted by the author in the sense that to fight, through the depiction of the life of a slave, against notions propagated by institutions like the state and the church, the hero needs to have something which the people in that country commonly share. The author knows it. That may be why she uses Christianity and Christian way of life as the underlying pillars of the story.

Unlike William Wells Brown who in his novel *Clotel* attacks Southern Christianity and Southern White preachers ³, and Frederick Douglass who criticizes in his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave Written by Himself* the Southern version of Christianity⁴, Stowe does not find fault with the Southern religious practice, instead, she presents bad characters as non-believers, and good White characters as staunch Christians. That is precisely why we see a number of staunch Christian characters like Mrs. Shelby, Mrs. Ophelia and Evangeline in the novel. They all like the protagonist, the Black slave, Uncle Tom, and their concern for the deprived lot emerges from their staunch belief in Christianity

and Christian brotherhood. Arthur Riss observes, “One cannot forget that the most effective way Stowe elicits sympathy for Negroes is by giving them an essentially Christian character” (517) ⁵. And Simon Legree, the cruel slave owner, is depicted as a non-believer, a heretic who says, “I am your church now” (313).

It is also interesting to note that Harriet Beecher Stowe considers her novel *a living dramatic reality* (409). Stowe uses the slave narrative technique to make it a realistic depiction. Julia Stern says “[In] addition to documentary realism, Stowe borrows liberally from the melodramatic, sentimental, and gothic tradition [...]” (440). The novelist employs many a literary device to make the story a dramatic one. For instance, the scene in the novel of Eliza’s crossing the Ohio river on the ice is presented in such a way that a reader gets more than three narrations of the incident viz., the novelist depicts the scene as part of the narration of Eliza’s escape; the slave trader Haley talks about it; and Mr. Shelby’s slave Sam describes the scene to his master, mistress and their slaves. And all the narrations are different from each other in terms of the use of language, style and presentation. The different narrations and the evoked responses from various quarters including that of the senator’s family together create an aura of romanticization which is aimed at evoking heartfelt sympathy for the mulatto mother, Eliza who is portrayed as motherly love incarnate. The novelist here, as in the rest of the novel, is very conscious of the target audience—the White, and the purpose of her endeavour. That may be why the author highlights the responses to this incident of White characters like Mrs. Shelby and the Senator’s family. For instance, in a scene, where the senator’s family are curiously listening to Eliza’s narration of the escape, and the reason behind it, the description goes like this:

The two little boys, after a desperate rummaging in their pockets in search of those pocket- handkerchiefs which mothers know are never to be found there, had thrown themselves disconsolately into the skirts of their mother’s gown, where they were sobbing, and wiping their eyes and noses, to their heart’s content; Mrs. Bird had her face fairly hidden into her pocket-handkerchief [...] Our senator was a statesman, and of course could not be expected to cry, like other mortals, and so he turned his back to the company, and looked out of the window, and seemed particularly busy in clearing his throat and wiping his spectacle-glasses, occasionally blowing his nose[...]. (79 –80)

This kind of conscious effort to highlight the White’s responses is hardly seen in Harriet Jacobs’ or Frederick Douglass’ slave narratives. Of course, Harriet Jacobs’s narrative is being addressed to White women.⁶ But Jacobs’ narrative highlights her own sufferings under slavery, and presents herself as a woman exploited sexually and as a mother trying to nurture her children.

Besides this, the quotation above is an example of the author’s use of sentimentalism as a tool. According to Gregg D. Crane, “Stowe considered sentiment the medium of human conscience. One *feels* the conflict between the law of slavery and the higher law principles of the natural rights tradition” (178).⁷ Though the sentimental novel is a type of novel which was popular in eighteenth century England, Stowe uses its chief features like extreme

emotion, which attempts to elicit an extreme emotional response in the reader, in the nineteenth century. For instance, in one of the scenes when Eliza, the fugitive slave, appears on the Birds' doorstep, Mrs. Bird is arguing with Mr. Bird about the contradictions of the fugitive slave law with respect to Christian principles. Mr. Bird questions Eliza, when he learns that she had a kind master and mistress, and finally asks, "What could induce you to leave a good home then, and through such dangers?"(79). Eliza responds by looking to Mrs. Bird for aid:

The woman looked up at Mrs. Bird, with a keen, scrutinizing glance, and it did not escape her that she was dressing in deep mourning.

"Ma'am," she said, suddenly, "have you ever lost a child?"

The question was unexpected, and she was thrust on a new wound; for it was only a month since a darling child of the family had been laid in the grave.

Mr. Bird turned around and walked to the window, and Mrs. Bird burst into tears; but, recovering her voice, she said,

"Why do you ask that? I have lost a little one."

"Then you will feel for me." (79)

Mrs Bird sympathizes with Eliza. The sympathetic framework is then extended to reader mothers, as the narrator appeals: "And oh! Mother that reads this, has there never been in your house a drawer, or a closet, the opening of which has been to you like the opening again of a little grave?" (82).

Related to this, Susan M. Ryan says:

As Philip Fisher has pointed out, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, like other sentimental novels, creates an "extension of feeling... by means of equations between the common feelings of the reader and the exotic but analogous situations of the characters"; Elizabeth Barnes puts the matter more directly, claiming that, within Stowe's novel, "sympathy is made contingent upon similarity." (760) **8**

Harriet Beecher Stowe's description of background scenes in the novel is also very deliberate to arouse the feeling of the reader in favour of her endeavours. A comparison of two descriptions will make this point clear. In addition to the grand depiction of St Clare's luxurious and romantic mansion, the novelist draws the picture of St Clare's villa thus:

St Clare's villa was an East Indian cottage, surrounded by light verandas of bamboo-work, and opening on all sides into gardens and pleasure grounds. The common sitting-room opened on to a large garden, fragrant with every picturesque plant and flower of the tropics, where winding paths ran down to the very shores of the lake whose silvery sheet of water lay there, rising and falling in the sunbeams—a picture never for an hour the same, yet every hour more beautiful. (24)

It is a clear indication that since St Clare is a "good" White master, the place around him is also presented beautifully whereas the description of the estate and house of the "bad" White master, Simon Legree, a cruel slave owner in the novel goes like this:

What was once a smooth-shaven lawn before the house, dotted here and there with ornamental shrubs, was now covered with frowsy tangled grass, with horse posts set

up, here and there, in it, where the turf was stamped away, and the ground littered with broken pails, cobs of corn and other slovenly remains. Here and there a mildewed Jessamine or honeysuckle hung raggedly from some ornamental support, which had been pushed to one side by being used as a horse-post. What once was a large garden was now all grown over with weeds, through which, here and there, some solitary exotic reared its forsaken head [...]. (319)

Similarly, the sitting room of Simon Legree's establishment is described in such a way that a reader may feel a kind of disgust and unpleasantness. For example, it says,

[...] the ruddy glare of the charcoal displayed the confused and uncompromising aspect of the room—saddles, bridles, several sort of harness, riding-whips, overcoats, and various articles of clothing, scattered up and down the room in confused variety; and the dogs of which we have before spoke, had encamped themselves among them, to suit their own taste and convenience. (342)

The novelist creates such contrasting pictures to evoke a desired effect. This kind of absolutely contrasting constructions of the background atmosphere can be seen as a deliberate effort of the author to intensify the desired feelings and emotions of the reader according to the author's intention which here is to eulogize St Clare and to denounce Simon Legree.

This may be one of the differences in terms of the styles of description that one may come across in Harriet E.W. Wilson's *Our Nig* 9 and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*. On the contrary, we feel the presence of the author, as in the works of Wilson and Jacobs, throughout the novel. The novelist, like Jacobs, many a time directly addresses and guides the reader. For example, Stowe says, "Trading Negroes from Africa, dear reader, is so horrid! It is not to be thought of! But trading them from Kentucky—that's quite another thing!" (124).

The interference of the author like in Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* is meant to lead the reader in accordance with the author's intention which is supposed to arouse sympathy for the Black and to alleviate misunderstanding and contempt. But, unlike Jacobs, Stowe uses certain generalizations regarding the Blacks. For example, the novelist says, "[i]n order to appreciate the sufferings of the Negroes sold South, it must be remembered that all the instinctive affections of that race are peculiarly strong. Their local attachments are very abiding. They are not naturally daring and enterprising, but home-loving and affectionate" (89). However, it must be noted that nowhere in the novel do we find any depiction which categorically upholds the view that "the negroes" are genuinely, inherently, and innately good. Instead, the novel puts forward the view that any "Negro" who is in touch with any good White man or who has any connection with the White's religion, namely Christianity, or who has any share of "White-blood" in him/her, has reasons to be "good" (according to the White standard of judgment).

In fact, we have indications and evidence in the novel to believe, for example, that Eliza's daring deed of crossing the Ohio River to save her child has a direct link to her mistress, Mrs. Shelby's teaching her the duty of a "good Christian mother". Similarly, Uncle

Tom's sincerity, compassion, loyalty and "good" way of life are, it is presented, the result of the influence of Christianity on him. Mr. Shelby, for example, says,

[...] Tom is a good, steady, sensible, pious fellow. Four years ago, he got religion at a camp-meeting, and I believe he really did get it. I've trusted him, since then with everything I have—money, houses, horses—and let him come and go round the country; and I always found him true and square in everything." (4)

Tom himself in one of the instances in the novel asks Mr. Shelby, "And now I jist ask you mar's, have I ever broke word to you, or gone contrary to you,'specially since I was a Christian?" (53).

And surprisingly enough, the novel does not categorically proclaim, in spite of the depictions of a number of sufferings that the Blacks encounter in the South of America under slavery, that slavery is an utterly bad institution which is out and out evil, and should be completely wiped out of American society. Instead, the novel puts forward the idea that slavery is not evil through and through, if the master is "good" and the slave law is considerate. The author, for example says,

Whoever visits some estate there, and witnesses the good-humoured indulgence of some masters and mistresses, and the affectionate loyalty of some Slaves, might be tempted to dream the oft-fabled poetic legend of a patriarchal institution, and all that; but over and above the scene there broods a portentous shadow—the shadow of laws. So long as the law considers all these human beings, with beating heart and living affections, only as so many *things* belonging to master—so long as the failure, or misfortune or imprudence, or death of the kindest owner, may cause them any day to exchange a life of kind protection and indulgence for one of hopeless misery and toil—so long it is impossible to make anything beautiful or desirable in the best-regulated administration of slavery. (10)

It indicates that the author is not against slavery completely, but against the present practice of slavery with the iron-rod of American slave law. This does not mean that Stowe is completely insensitive to the way in which White America treats the slaves. For instance, in *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* Stowe says:

It is because negro is treated an *inferior animal* and not worthy of any better treatment, that the system which relates to him and the treatment which falls to him are considered humane.

Take any class of White men, however uneducated, and place them under the same system of law and make their civil condition in all respects like that of the negro and would it not be considered the most outrageous cruelty. (126) **10**

Reiterating Stowe's realistic portrayal of slavery, Thomas Graham argues:

The great impact of Harriet Beecher Stowe's antislavery writings undoubtedly resulted from her realistic portrayal of Negroes as fully human beings, caught in a system which denied their humanity, and violated their most ordinary human sentiment.[...] While some of the attitudes and ideas expressed in her book may have

tended to reinforce existing ideas of Negro inferiority, the salient argument of her writings was for the full, equal brotherhood of all men.(622) **11**

The novelist claiming that this work of art is *a living dramatic reality* and thereby taking into account both aesthetic and realistic appeal states:

The separate incidents that compose the narrative are, to a very great extent authentic, many of them occurring either under her observation, or that of her personal friends. She or her friends have observed characters the counterpart of almost all they are here introduced; and many of the sayings are word for word as heard herself or reported to her. (407)

This statement prompts us to take the depiction of the “separate incidents” into serious consideration. And Stowe in her *A Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin* says, “This work, more, perhaps, than any other work of fiction that ever was written, has been a collection and arrangement of real incidents” (5). However, Peter A. Dorsey quotes from a letter dated 8 December 1895 in the Berg Collection, New York Library, what Stowe wrote shortly before her death: “The characters of Uncle Tom and George Harries had no living proto-types but were created by me” (271).¹² It reveals the fact that Stowe has created Uncle Tom as a staunch Christian in order to make the Black character appealing to white Christians and to gain sympathy for the Black slaves in the South.

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‘THE POETIC VISION OF SAINT TUKARAM’

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“Tukaram is a national poet.”

-Sir Alexander Grant

Tukaram has been considered across the world as one of the greatest poet saints of our country. He has been the source of inspiration to many students and researchers. There is ample literature discussing literary and other aspects of his poetry. His poetry has great political, economical, religious and cultural significance. He has used poetry for his poetic and spiritual vision of life. His life was evident to prove that his life and his poetry were not different. He acted as he spoke. I think, it is imperative to study and understand Tukaram’s poetic vision. Present Paper is an attempt to study and understand his poetic vision.

The great British Educationist and the former Vice Chancellor of Bombay University, Sir Alexander Grant described Tukarm as a national poet. I believe that he is not only national poet but an international poet, who have surpassed the boundaries of time and place. In his essay published in fortnightly review of 1867, Grant said,

“It is impossible to convince the superiority of Christianity to a person who is singing the verses of Tukaram.”

Grant tried to preach Tukaram to the west and also to Indians. Being a Christian he rated Tukaram’s poetry supreme over Christianity. It is the power of Tukarams Poetry that, a foreigner who had the special assignment to preach Christianity openly agreed the supremacy of Tukaram. However our own people made a big mistake of not understanding Tukaram in its true sense. Since Tukarama’s time we found, there was a tradition among his contemporaries to the present time to abolish and reject his poetry and also to magnify and preach his thoughts to the millions. Tukaram has been a subject of interest and discussion among many philosophers. It was the foreigners who put light on the poems of Tukaram.

When we think of poetic vision of a particular poet, we think of the views of concerned poet about the creative process. How he sees his own creation and the creation of others in general? To which extent he finds the worthiness and relevance of his creation and of poetry to the present society. The creativity of the poet does not exist in isolation; he takes inspiration from his predecessors and becomes inspiration to his successors. In this connection Nobel laureate poet T. S. Eliot rightly pointed out in his essay, *'The Tradition and the Individual Talent'* in following words,

"No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead."

He emphasized the role of historical sense of the past in creative process is important.

Saint Tukaram was also much aware of his predecessors and successors. As we all know he had the great poetic tradition from Saint Dnyaneshwara to Saint Eknatha. All these great poet saints had been a major source of inspiration to Sant Tukaram along with the advice of his Guru Namdeva in his dream. Tukaram in his two Abhangas himself accounted his inspiration of composing such a divine poetry. In one Abhanga he said,

*"Namdeve kele swapnamaji Jage I Save Pandurang yevoniya II I II
Sangitale Kam karave kavitva I Wauge nimitya bolo naye II 2 II*

Namdev came along with Lord Panduranga in his dream and asked him to use his calibre to compose verse and not to waste it in irrelevant things. Tukaram in his one of the Abhangas described the function of a poem and poet in following way,

*Dharmache palan I Karane Pashan khadan II
Hechi aamha karane kam I Beej vadhvave naam II
Tikshana uttare I Hati Gheuniya ban phire II
Nahi bheed bhar I Tuka mhane san thore II*

In the above Abhanga Tukaram enlisted the responsibilities and assignments of the poet and poetry, saying that a poet has to safeguard righteousness and to strive to annihilate ills in the society. Moreover he has to execute his obligation preaching goodness among people, irrespective of all the odds.

In the next Abhanga he says, A Poet is a torch bearer who works for the well being of humanity by insisting truth in following words,

Ujalvaya aalo vata I Khra khota nivada II

In one of his Abhangas he says poet always beholds the truth, hard to sustain the same for him and he has to contribute virtuousness emitting dirt to ascertain sanctity as follows

Saty aamha mani I Naho gabalache dhani II
Aise jana re sakal I Bhara sudha taka mal II

Sant Tukaram knows how it is difficult to be a poet. And it is more difficult to live life as claimed in poems. It is evident in his following Abhanga,

Ratri divas aamha yudhacha prasanga I
Antarbahya jaga ani man II
Jiva hi aagoja padati aaghat I
Yeoniya nitya kari nitya kari II

A poet whose verse is like Prasada, a divine gift of the god, a poet who is able to experience his reader, a union with god he can be called a true poet according to Sant Tukaram. We know the great poets of west and also of east for world class classics. But if we see their personal lives, they all were unsuccessful and very eccentric in their personal lives. It is evident from Shakespeare to Ibsen that how these great artist failed to achieve equilibrium in their personal and creative life. It was not true with Sant Tukaram. He was a man who acted and lived life as he told others to follow through his Abhangas. In this respect Sant Tuaram as a poet and person was a unique and exemplary to all of us.

We find every aspect of personality in his Abhangas. His precepts are so relevant and evergreen. Anyone can find solution of his problem in his Abhangas. Sadanand More, famous researcher of Saint Literature describes,

“His experiences were so rich and he was a man of extraordinary personality, that he is ever ready to provide solutions to anyone. The speciality of him is that poetry was an important part of his very existence.”

Dilip Chitre, renowned translator of Tukaram said that he would not be a poet without Tukarm. He compared Naryan Surve to Tukaram for his ‘Aai’ poem and said that,

“Only Narayan Surve seems to me a complete poet after Tukaram in the history of modern Marathi literature.”

Another researcher Purushottam Deshpande said that,

“We can forget Tukaram as a saint but we can’t forget Tukaram as a poet.”

It is because of the impact of Sant Tukaram's poetry is so massive that we can experience true humanity in his Abhangas. He was so critical about the religious and spiritual notions.

He is unarguably the greatest poet of all age. His writings, though simple, are timeless. The message he has delivered through his Abhangs hold true even today. He has thrown light on various aspects of human life and the world around us, including nature.

In one of his Abhangas he has given the subject of poem in a following manner,

Naka dantakatha yethe sango koni I

Korde te mani bol kon II

Anubhav yethe vahva shishtachar I

Na chalati char aamhapudhe II

Nivadi wegale kshir ani pani I

Rajhansa doni vegalali II

Above lines discloses Sant Tukaram's concept of poetry and a poet. Experience and the faculty of conscience are the criteria to be a poet according to him.

Tukaram's status in Marathi literary history is equal to that of Shakespeare in English or Goethe in German. People find answers to their problems through his Abhanga. He could be called the classic poet reflecting the maturity of mind and language. He is so deep-rooted in Marathi language that his poetry is used even by millions of illiterates.

He categorically had chosen common rustic language for his expression. As Wordsworth considered suitable language for poetry was, "language really used by men." He used the language of ordinary men such as farmer, trader, housewife, labourer, etc. His idioms and imagery is so simple. He used everyday experiences to express difficult spiritual and religious precepts. He was a humanist and that is why his writings touch every sensitive person's heart.

As Saint Dnyaneshwar described poetry and the creative process as follows in his 'Bhavarth Deepika' through Ovi,

Wache barave kavitva I Kavitvi barave rasikatva I

Rasikatvi paratatva I Sparshu Jaisa II 347 II

Here Sant Dnyaneshwar explained the process of creation, where he said poetry results from voice, poetry generate taste of the reader and the well being of others and the exposition leads ultimately to the infinity. Here he estimated the worth of poetry comparing it to the infinity. Saint Tukaram's poetry is of this nature which ultimately leads all of us to the infinity.

I conclude this paper by a fine Abhanga of Tukaram in which we can notice his revered feelings for poetry. Poetry in the form of words is all to him. Even he sees deity in the form of words and yearns to worship god through words.

*Words are the only Jewels I possess
Words are the only Clothes that I wear
Words are the only food that sustains my life
Words are the only wealth I distribute among people
Says Tuka Witness the Word He is God
I worship Him with my words.*

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‘AN APPLICATION OF GENETTE’S NARRATIVE DISCOURSE TO THE STUDY OF ‘SISTER OF MY HEART’ BY CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI ’

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The present paper applies Genette’s schemata developed in his now famous ‘Narrative Discourse’ to the study of Chitra Banerjee’s novel, Sister of My Heart. The novel has been studied from the familial diasporic and feminist perspectives and other thematic angles. It is also studied as a novel of magical realism. There is scope to apply narratological aspects to the study of the novel, to bring out the intricacies of her structuring the novel. Seemingly a simple tale of two girls growing to maturity, the novel reveals itself as a complex web when read with the analytical tools of Gerard Genette. Focalised through a double perspective, the novel reveals Chitra Banerjee’s expertise in handling narrative time. The paper substantiates Banerjee’s artistry and establishes her as an Indian novelist of high order writing in English.

The present paper applies the narrative’ methods spelt out by Genette to understand a narrative to the study of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s novel ‘Sister of My Heart’. Though there have been a few studies of the novel with reference to its theme and structure, there is no systematic examination of the narrative structure of the novel. The present study undertakes to fill this gap by a rigorous application of Genette’s typology.

Genette's contribution to the study of the novel as a form of literature is his development of a rigorous typology, by applying which any reader will be able to comprehend the intricacies of a narrative at a deeper level than what the categories hitherto developed had done. According to Genette, all narratives are necessarily diegesis(telling). They can never attain the illusion of Mimesis(showing) by making the story real.

Genette develops four analytical categories mood, instance, level and time, each with its subcategories. An attempt is made to read 'Sister of My Heart' of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in the light of Genette's analytical categories. The novel has already been read from different perspectives. Many critics celebrate it for the authentic diasporic study. It is also studied for its feminist approach and magical realism. Thematic studies of its being a domestic novel and a tale of fate are not wanting.

The first category, Mood, is defined by Genette as the distance between the narrator and the narrated text. The narrator has different options to make from among four subcategories. Sometimes the author may shuffle among them, to achieve the required effect. The character's words may be totally integrated into the narration. He can also transpose the speech by using the strategies of indirect speech. When he quotes the speech verbatim it becomes reported speech.

In 'Sister of My Heart', Chitra Banerjee allows her characters Sudha and Anju to narrate the experiences most of the time as in the opening lines of the text:

'THEY SAY in the old tales that the first night after a child is born, the Bidhata Purush comes down to earth himself to decide what its fortune is to be. That is why they bathe babies in sandalwood water and wrap them in soft red malmal, color of luck. That is why they leave sweetmeats by the cradle. Silver-leafed sandesh, dark pantuas floating in golden syrup, jilipis orange as the heart of a fire, glazed with honey-sugar. If the child is especially lucky, in the morning it will all be gone.'

However, this narratized speech gets interspersed by the category of "Reported" as in:

"That's because the servants sneak in during the night and eat them," says Anju. Short conversations are introduced more for variety and the speaker's reduction to their style of presentation with their comments is the most dominant mood in Chitra Banerjee's presentation.

As for the second dimension of mood, namely function, the narrator's dominance has already been mentioned. The two protagonists who narrate the events do not much communicate with the reader sharing with them any of their views by direct address. They often affirm the truth of what they say and their ideological predictions are all too clear:

The rhetorical question, *"Haven't I sensed their breath, like slime-black fingers brushing my spine?(p.2)"* provides the testimonial for her faith in the supernatural. Talking about what the

Bidhata Purush would have written for her, Sudha observes “*Years later I will wonder, that final word he wrote, was it sorrow?*” (p.28) confirms her essentially a person with a pessimistic bent of mind. Thus both the sub-categories Distance and Function help to identify how distance or detached the narrative is from what he narrates. Chitra Banerjee would rather her voice prevailed than it remained unidentified.

Genette’s next category ‘Instance’ has three sections. The first ‘the narrative voice’, as to who is speaking. Though in all narratives it is the writer’s perception that ultimately is responsible and he tries to influence the reader, technically in a narrative he does not make reference to himself. He is in a sense absent. It is heterodiegetic. If he is present as a character it is homodiegetic and if he happens to be the protagonist, it is autodiegetic. In Chitra Banerjee’s novel ‘Sister of My Heart’, the writer uses the autodiegetic method. She tells the story from the points of view of the two chief characters Sudha and Anju:

“There’s Anju’s mother, whom I call Gouri Ma, her fine cheekbones and regal forehead hinting at generations of breeding, for she comes from a family as old and respected as that of the Chatterjees, which she married into.” (p.17)

This is the voice of Sudha.

“I hate Aunt Nalini for constantly telling Sudha and me about how good girls should behave, which is exactly the opposite of whatever we’re doing at the moment.” (p.29)

This is Anjali’s voice, whereas a single Autodiegetic voice will lead the reader to accept the viewer’s stand as final, this exercise of different, sometimes conflicting voices as in the case of Sudha being superstitious and Anju being sceptical promote a sense of either neither attitude of the writer. Secondly, the question is the time of narration. When does the telling occur with reference to the story? A writer may tell subsequently what took place in the past, or he may prophecy or dream of the future. The telling and the event may be simultaneous or a writer may interpolate any two of them. In Chitra Banerjee’s story the major events have taken place. But towards the end of the story Sudha gets ready to leave for the US to join Anju, The story and the narrative are simultaneous, with a good mixture of the anticipation of the events to follow.

The third sub-category of Instance is Focalization -- the narrative perspective through whom we readers perceive. Zero Focalization is the same as omniscient narrator and he is better informed than characters. In internal focalization, the character, however, cannot present the thoughts and feelings of others. In external focalization, the character narrator acts as a lens. He can present only what he perceives from the outside.

In Banerjee’s novel, it is double internal focalization. We see the events at once from Sudha and Anjali, the two main characters so the limitation of internal focalization is overcome. Again the conflicting points of view of the narrators leave the reader to find the relevance of what they say by his conscious involvement in the reading. Anju is sceptical and progressive, Sudha is believing and conservative. Obviously the total vision synthesizes their perspective and transcends their limitations.

Genette's third category is narrative level. This produces different reading effects through shift in narrative level. Within the main plot, the author can insert other short embedded narratives told by other narrators from other narrative perspectives. In Chitra Banerjee's Sister of My Heart the author who should contribute the extra diegetic level is absent. It is Sudha and Anjali, two main characters, who take the floor and tell their life experience as homodiegetic narration. The bisociative perspective of Sudha and Anjali make the reader to take each one's narration with circumspection, each being partisan to the ideology she proposes. Sudha being superstitious and fatalistic and Anjali sceptical and dynamic. But each in her turn tells many other stories. They tell stories of Bidhata Purush, their aunt Pishi ama, their driver Singhji, their adventurous fathers and the myths of the Princess in the Palace of Snakes. Other characters also contribute to these stories and similar others.

The last category of Genette's method is narrative time. It helps to analyse the relation between the narration and story in terms of time. Several choices are available to writers in order to achieve specific results. The sequence of events in the story may be arranged to produce a desired effect. The author can present the events in a chronological order or he may present them out of order and flash back (Analepsis) or flashforth (Prolepsis) -- either recall past events at a point of time, or prophecy the development that is likely to happen in future.

In Sister of My Heart, the two narrators develop the events chronologically from childhood to their mature years. The pattern is that of separation and reunion. Both the cousins who were going about their education together, get separated on their marriage. After many years they get reunited. Again the narrator can keep even time with the events described, as in dialogues, which Genette calls Scene, suspend time as Pause, as there is no progression in the story during descriptions, summarize the events briefly to have more time to prevent significant details, or leave out significant details in the narration which Genette calls as ellipsis to sustain the suspense.

Chitra Banerjee's novel Sister of My Heart abounds in descriptions: on all such occasion the story takes a pause. She delights in summarizing enormous material so that it is always someone's perspective. Significantly details about the treasure hunt are kept on the reserve to maintain the suspense. Frequency criterion as to how many times the narrative repeats same events would help decide the importance of that event. Major events in Banerjee's novel are rehearsed twice from the two points of view, warranting a critical perspective of the reader.

Thus, by an application of Genette's schemata of narratology, a reader can get a deeper level of understanding of the intricate design of the novel, and it can be used as a tool of analysis for the reading of any other novel. Whereas at the first reading of Banerjee's novel, Sister of My Heart seems to be a straight forward narrative of two young cousins and how they grow, takes

deeper meaning and an enquiry into the meaning of life in terms of its varied complexities and confirms Banerjee as an intricate designer beneath her apparent simple style.

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GENDER IN ADICHIE'S *THE THING AROUND YOUR NECK*

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CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE is one of the bestselling contemporary authors from Africa. She is a Nigerian novelist. She has three novels and one short story collection to her credit. Her debut *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) describes a patriarchal Nigerian family. She has written a touching novel about Biafra war entitled *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006). Her only short story collection *The Thing around Your Neck* (2009) has twelve stories that describe Nigerian people in Nigeria and in America. *Americanah* (2013) is the latest novel by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Adichie's debut *Purple Hibiscus* won Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie Commonwealth Writer's Prize in 2004 for best first book. Adichie's second novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* was awarded prestigious Orange Prize for fiction in 2007. In 2008, she was the recipient of the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. Her books have been translated into more than thirty languages. Her stories have been published in journals in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. She was selected for the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association award as well as the BBC short story award. Also she was short-listed for the Caine Prize for African Writing 2002. The same year she was a runner-up in the Commonwealth Short Story Award. Her story "Half of A Yellow Sun" set during the Nigerian civil war won the 2003 PEN/ David Wong short story award. In 2003, Adichie received the O'Henry Award.

The Thing around Your Neck is the most representative work by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, both in theme and style as well. It has twelve short stories that depict the diverse themes such as gender, history and diaspora. The present paper aims at exploring the theme of gender in the selected text.

The Thing around Your Neck is a collection of 12 short stories published earlier in the magazines and journals. It includes –

1. Cell One
2. Imitation
3. A Private Experience
4. Ghosts
5. On Monday of Last Week
6. Jumping Monkey Hill
7. The Thing Around Your Neck
8. The American Embassy
9. The Shivering
10. The Arrangers of Marriage
11. Tomorrow is Too Far
12. The Headstrong Historian

These stories mostly shuttle between Nigeria and United States. Several are set in Nsukka, the university town where the author grew up. Several take place under the brutal regime of Sani Abacha, who ruled Nigeria from 1993 to 1998. Family, marriage, gender, history, diaspora, race and exile are recurrent themes in these stories.

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines gender as, “the behavioural, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex”. Wikipedia entry on gender states that ‘gender’ is the range of physical, biological, mental and behavioural characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity. As per the contextual need it may refer to biological sex, sex-based social structures (including gender roles and other social roles), or gender identity. In ‘gender studies’ the term ‘gender’ refers to proposed social and cultural constructions of masculinities and femininities. In this context, *gender* explicitly excludes reference to biological differences, to focus on cultural differences.

In these twelve absorbing stories, Adichie realistically portrays the lives of (mostly) women in contemporary Nigeria and the United States. The Nigerians living in the United States have come for variety of reasons: one wife joins her medical-student husband after a six-year separation, a young woman enters into an arranged marriage, and the wife and children of a wealthy businessman enjoy an upper-middle class suburban existence in the U. S. while he travels back and forth to Lagos. All characters struggle to find their identity in their unfamiliar settings.

The stories set in Nigeria depict a range of concerns: a woman stands in line to apply for political asylum at the American Embassy after the flight of her journalist husband and murder of her son; an Igbo Christian medical student takes shelter with an older Hausa Muslim woman in an abandoned store while machete-wielding mobs randomly kill people in the streets, and a brother and sister from the U. S. visit their Nigerian grandmother one summer and experience an

Edenic fall into sin and death. According to Jane Shilling, “many of Adichie’s heroines find themselves at similarly enigmatic moments of crisis”.

All of these stories revolve round the women either as protagonists or as narrators. These stories reveal that on every walk of life including family, schooling, economy, politics, literature and religion women are either neglected or exploited. In the *Los Angeles Times* book review of *The Thing Around Your Neck* Susan Salter Reynolds writes, “... What it might be like to visit your brother in a Nigerian jail, to be the new bride in an arranged marriage, to arrive in Flatbush from Lagos to meet your husband or to hide in a basement, waiting for riot to subside, wondering what happened to younger sister who let go of your hand when you were running. How would it feel to be a woman who smuggled her journalist husband out of Nigeria one day and had her four year old son shot by government thugs the next?”

In a Tedxevent interview with Belinda Otas, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie says – “The problem of gender is that it prescribes who we should be instead of recognising who we are. Imagine how much freer we would be if we did not have to live under the weight of gender expectations. Culture does not make people; people make culture. A feminist is a man or a woman who says there’s a problem with gender and we must fix it.”

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TRAUMA OF TRANSGENDER IN INDIAN SOCIETY WITH REFERENCE TO MAHESH DATTANI'S PLAY *SEVEN STEPS AROUND THE FIRE*

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The stage is the last remaining arena for the free assault of our society.... The last playground of the emotions, last public place for a critical but human judgment of a monstrous speculative society
(Barnes,24)

Mahesh Dattani is hailed as the most serious contemporary playwright in Indian drama in English. He is a dramatist, director, writer, teacher and dancer- all rolled into one. Dattani addresses the global audience through his topical theme. He is the first playwright writing in English to have won the Sahitya Akademi award. His plays are full of fascinating insights into the complexities surrounding our modern life. Dattani does not fall back on the world of myth and make believe to deal with the present day reality. His plays reveal how trapped we are in our inherent contradictions, our doublespeak and our hollow ethics. Mahesh Dattani charts the forbidden territory when he frankly probes the themes as diverse as Homosexuality, Lesbianism, incest, sex selection, HIV positive, Trauma of Transgender and many more.

He draws attention to “real scenarios that are tough to turn away from” and leads his readers/audience to “Shy away from” myth and make-believe to tackle reality head-on, no matter what the impact of collusion”(De, 2005,7th August) . This play dramatizes the trauma of eunuch community in the hypocrite world. Dattani demonstrates the socio-psychological crisis of hijra

community who is entangled between social customs and their personal ambitions. Through this play, Dattani manifests the conflict, anguish, insecurities, fear, frustration and pain of the hijras that they have to face in the society. The term 'hijra' of course is a Urdu origin, a combination of Hindu, Persian and Arabic. The word literally means neither male nor female, which denotes to be a neutral gender.

Ancestry of Hijras:

All Indian generations claimed themselves proudly that their ancestors have ruled their place by narrating bravely stories. But a particular group of people who are transgender too have a history but it is filled with their sacrifice alone. The ancestry of hijra belongs to great Hindu myth from Ramayana. The legend is like this: God Rama was exiled and moving in a forest where he has to cross a river. Some of the people of the city want to follow him into the exile. Rama could not accept their request and ordered them, 'Men and women, turn back'. There were some of his followers who neither want to go back nor could they disobey him. So they sacrificed their masculinity, to become neither male nor female and followed him to the forest. Rama got pleased with their sacrifice and devotion and blessed them. Their lineage to Ramayana displays them as blessed followers of Rama who could do anything for him. Dattani tries to earn respect for the transgender by presenting their ancestry and origin of the word used by them.

Role of Hijras in our Society:

Eunuchs are a segregated community who has built up their own cosmos because they know there is no life for them in a common social ambience. They are deprived of education that is considered as the basic need of everyone because society would not allow them to get education in common school. They are treated as unwanted and people look at them in a irritating manner as if they committed sin and that's why they became hijra's. Eunuchs become as a laughing stock in front of others and even bear the undigestable words spoken to them in order to hurt their community. Through the character of Uma, Dattani attempts to raise the compassion of human beings towards hijra community. He mentions in the play "Preceived as lowest of the low, they yearn for family and love." Like her we should also treat them like human beings who crave for love and affection.

Relationship among the Hijras:

Hijras have camaraderie for one other. Uma observes the Kinship among them when she goes to Shivajinagar. She seems how they comb each other, cutting jokes and doing daily routine. Champa is motherly figures for all the hijras who take care of their life and has the the right to take dicisions about them. Anarkali and Kamla are like daughters for Champa. She prefers Kamla to sit on her position than Anarkali. But after Kamla's death, she is ready to give her power to Anarkali. Champa cannot control her anger and tears when Uma raises question on their relationship and love:

Uma: Oh don't give me all that rubbish! Daugher indeed!

(Champa throws the bundle of money at Uma)

Champa: Take your money and get out of my house! Go! This is my house! In my house you respect me. (SSAF 67)

Champa returns her money back and asks her to leave. She pawns her jewellery and bail out Anarkali to live a free life. She can feel the pain of Anarkali when after her release she was beaten by Kamla's murderer. Like an affectionate daughter Anarkali keeps her head on Champa's lap and asks her to sing a lullaby. All the hijras obey the command of their guru Champa who has made a microscope world for them where they have equal respect and love for each other.

Pathetic condition of Anarkali(Transgender):

Anarkali is a hijra who is arrested for the murder case of Kamla. She represents the Hijra community who has to suffer even for a crime, she has not committed. They are exploited by the upper reputed class of the society but they have no voice. Even when they protest, nobody is going to listen and believe them. They are referred as castrated degenerated men who are as powerful as horse. Anarkali is locked in the male's prison. The irony is Indian Penal Code opposes the so called unnatural sexes, but it gave room for those types of sexes:

Uma: Why do they put her in a male prison?

Suresh: They are as strong as horses(SSAF 90).

There is no evidence against Anarkali but she is arrested on the basis of suspect and because there is no one else. She is mal-treated in the prison where other male prisoners look at her with disgrace and beat her mercilessly. She gets frustrated and hopeless, she wants to raise her voice against the corruption and name out the real culprit but knows her limitation and accepts the miserable plight of being a hijra. She tells Uma:

Anarkali: They will kill me also if I tell the truth. If I don't tell the truth I will die in the jail(SSAF 102).

Dattani through this conversation shows that how the voice of justice is choked by the male society and in order to save the murderer they simply arrested Anarkali as they don't know who to arrest. Even Anarkali is unable to speak the truth because of the upper class society and in order to save her community from jeopardy she digests all the tortures and pain.

Treatment of Transgenders in the society:

They are considered as animals. As all the men characters in the play address Transgender after their common name "Hijra". The prejudice against the Transgender is reflected in the kind of language used for them. 'She' or 'He' are the pronouns used for female and male, but there is no pronoun for the transgender. Although they have their own name, even then they are

addresses by third person singular that is 'it'- the term which is used for the inanimate object. As the dialogues go in this manner:

Munswamy: You may see the hijra now if you wish, madam.

Uma: Will she talk to me.

Munswamy(chuckling): She! Of course it will talk to you. We will beat it up if it doesn't(SSAF24).

They are even scolded by the society with the filthy words which is unbearable and unbearable. As Munuswamy says "I will come inside and beat you up, you worthless pig"(SSAF 34). Thus the use of pronoun and vulgar adjectives is a reflection of the general social prejudice and heartless discrimination of the society, which totally refuses to treat the hijras as human beings. Although transgender behave in an amicable manner but it is the society who never wants to talk and be in touch with them and simply finds mistake in them as the below conversation proves it:

Anarkali: We make our relations with our eyes. With our love. I look at him, he looks at me, and he is my brother. I look at you, you look at me, and we are mother and daughter. Oh, brother give me a cigarette, na.

Munswamy: Shut up. And don't call me brother.

Anarkali: If you had a beautiful sister, you will give her a cigarette for a fuck, no

Munswamy: Just because madam is here...

Anarkali: You are not a sister-fucker

Munswamy: Just talk to the madam and then I will see you.(SSAF 34).

This conversation shows how the hijras who are a part of our society speak in a friendly manner but if somebody, like Munswamy misbehaves, they give a good retort, even go to the extent of using rude and vulgar expressions as Anarkali says in the above dialogue.

Relationship of Subbu(minister's son) and Kamla(hijra):

The love of Subbu and Kamla goes through the hypocrite world and suffers the separation on this earth with the murder of Kamla but reunite in the world of Almighty where everyone has equal position.

Kamla: Subbu

Subbu: I-I am leaving you all! You can't keep me away from Kamla.

Their love is pure and deep but in our society no recognition is given to such relations. Subbu is the son of Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. Sharma who has a reputed personality in society. He could not bear the fact that his son is indulged with a hijra. He feels it will be harmful for his position as well as Subbu will get nothing in such relation. So he decided to save Subbu from the love net of Kamla and plotted her death.

He did this for the bright future of his son but he has to lose him. In Indian society no one will accept such relation and try everything to save his child. The love may be pure and keen but

such lovers have to suffer the rules made by hypocrite and diplomatic society that does not allow them to live happily.

Conclusion:

As a socially sensitive playwright, Dattani makes full use of the onstage fictional space to tackle the disturbing abstractions of society that he encounters in the real world. The success of Dattani's plays delineates India's growing in confidence. The kind of theme Dattani explores is testimony to the fact that social and economic liberalization is bringing about changes in the mindset of people. His plays herald the opening up of society. Dattani has become the spokesman of this new India unafraid to deal with the changing aspirations and ambitions of our society.

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AN APPLICATION OF ECOCRITICISM TO THE STUDY OF MAHASWETA DEVI'S SHORT STORY 'THE HUNT'

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The present paper applies the tenets of ecocriticism to the study of Mahasweta Devi's short story 'The Hunt'. Ecocriticism is a new branch of interdisciplinary literary study that tries to find tangible connections between literature and environment. Degradation of the environment tops the list of problems the world faces today. Ecocriticism functions as a tool that draws the attention of the world to crucial environmental issues through analysis of literature. The study substantiates Mahasweta Devi's basic idea of the inter-dependence of nature and human nature and the dangers of over exploitation of nature resulting in outburst of nature. The reaction to such indiscriminate exploitation is represented on the story through the symbolic destruction of the contractor indulging in felling of trees through Mary Oraon, a child of nature.

The present paper applies the tenets of ecocriticism to the study of Mahasweta Devi's Short story 'The Hunt'. Ecocriticism is a new branch of interdisciplinary literary study that tries to find tangible connections between literature and environment. The critical studies of the early 20th century were concerned with the formal features of literature. Stylistics also developed linguistic tools of analysis and identified how a literary work communicates to the reader. Ever since Marxist criticism developed the emphasis shifted to study of man in relation to his fellow men in terms of social structures and the political implication of them. Though nature has often been identified as an important element represented in literature and its possible influence on man, there were no systematic study of man-nature relationship per se. It is only depletion of natural resources and global warming as a result of industrialization and over exploitation of the Earth, that have drawn the attention of literary critics to the close relationship of man and nature. It is this change in environment that has brought about the rethink on this critical relationship.

Ecocriticism, a phenomenon of 1980s is a branch of literary criticism which is being discussed world wide as an interdisciplinary study of literature and the environment. It covers science, literature, anthropology, sociology, psychology, etc and attempts to study the attitude of mankind towards nature. Other terms for this relatively new genre are ‘ecocritic’ , ‘ecopoetics’, ‘environmental literary criticism ‘ and ‘ green cultural studies’

The application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature is named ‘ecocriticism’. It was William Rueckert who coined the term in 1978 in his essay , ‘ Literature and Ecology : An Experiment in Ecocriticism ‘ . The following are the various definitions of ecocriticism that will help one to understand the scope and implications of this new development in literary studies.

Glotfelty in *The Ecocriticism reader* defines ecocriticism as “.... The study of the relationship between literature and physical environment..... ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies.”(p. XVIII). Glen A Love in *Practical Ecocriticism* defines ecocriticism as a literary enquiry that “Encompasses nonhuman as well as human contacts and considerations. “ (p.1)

Ecocriticism is not only the application of ecology and ecological principles but also the study of literature and theoretical approach to the interrelations of nature and culture. This relationship has been reflected by writers and poets throughout different cultures and ages across the world. A variety of novels, poems and other expressions of literature have been depicted on the back drop of issues concerning nature. The rest of this paper studies “The Hunt”, a short story of Mahasweta Devi, in the light of ecocriticism .

The present study substantiates Mahasweta Devi’s basic idea of the interdependence of nature and human nature and the dangers of over exploitation of nature resulting in outburst of nature. Nature according to Mahasweta Devi is organically linked with human life and it also serves as the most significant imagery.

Mahasweta Devi is an activist who has written, worked and fought for the marginalized for the past six decades. She was born in 1926 in the city of Dacca in East Bengal. After completing her M.A. degree in English Literature from Calcutta University, she started working as a teacher and journalist. Her first book , *Jhansi Rani* (The Queen of Jhansi), was published in 1956. During the last fifty years , she has published twenty collections of short stories and close to hundred novels, primarily in her mother tongue of Bengali . She has also been a regular contributor to several literary magazines such as *Bortika*, a journal dedicated to the cause of oppressed communities within India. In 1984, she retired from her job as an English lecturer at Calcutta University to concentrate on her writing. She has been awarded several literary prizes. Some of them are the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979, the Padma Shri Award in 1986, the Jnanpith Award in 1996 ,the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1997, the Honoris Causa in 1999, the Padma Vibhushan in 2006 , Yashwantrao Chavan National Award in 2010, Bangabidhushan Award in 2011, Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement - *Sahityabramha* in 2012 and First Mamoni Raisom Goswami National Award in 2014. Even in her late eighties, her dedication to her mission and her creative writing has not faded.

‘The Hunt’ with two other stories ‘Dauloti the Bountiful’ and ‘Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha’ of Mahasweta Devi figure in *Imaginary Maps* (1995). The present study confines itself to ‘The Hunt’ as the other stories in the collection deal more with the lives of tribal communities within India.

The story falls into three sections. Section one explains the peaceful tribal life overtaken by a few estate owners and their exploitation of the people of the region. Mary Oraon is one such victim of exploitation. Dixon an Australian planter employs and exploits her mother, Bhikni and his son his successor impregnates the woman and deserts her and runs away to his own land. Prasadji the new owner of the estate continues them in his service and they remain his willing slaves. Mahasweta Devi captures Mary’s work at Prasadji’s estate. She writes: “Mary pastures the (as in the original) Prasads’ cattle. She is the most capable cowherd...with Mary the agreement is for board and lodging , clothing and sundries. The Dixon bungalow was built as a residence for whites. Bhikni says the whites kept twelve ayahs-servants-sweepers. Under Prasadji Mary alone keeps the huge bungalow clean”. (*Imaginary Maps*, p 2. Subsequent references to the book are indicated with page numbers in parenthesis). This reveals how Mary lives as a bonded slave.

Section two deals with the landing of Tehsildar Singh, the contractor on the quiet but impoverished existence of Kuruda. It marks the onset of the mainstream mechanized and industrialized exploitation and the total alienation and reification of the tribes. Section three marks the desperations of the tribes on their being forced to resort to violence as the only possible alternative when the system fails in justice.

In the conversation Mahasweta Devi had with Gayatri Spivak, published at the beginning of the text of *Imaginary Maps*, she describes, the tribals lead their lives in harmony with nature, i.e. they loved the earth, the flora and the fauna and see their own lives in many aspects conforming to the lives of other species of their genus animal. She explains that the hunting tribes would beg forgiveness, if they were forced to fell a tree. The tribal would say,” You are our friend. I do this because my wife doesn’t have any food, my son doesn’t have any food, my daughter starves. Before they killed an animal, they used to pray to the animal, the bird, the fish, the deer.”(p ii)

Whereas mainstream Indians indulge in indiscriminate felling of trees and killing of other species for their greedy self-aggrandisement, the tribals sparingly indulge in destruction out of their necessity. Mahasweta Devi contends about the tribals that “they understand ecology and the environment in a way the mainstream Indians cannot even imagine”(p. ii)

Mahasweta Devi’s story ‘The Hunt’ centres around the animal hunting festival, the most popular myth of the tribals of Bihar. The original title in Bengali is “Shikar” which means the hunt. Explaining the contest of the myth, Devi writes in the story,” Once there were (wild) animals in the forest, life was wild, the hunt game had meaning.” (p 12) In this sense the myth marked the protection of the entire tribe and its environment from the destructive animals. The tradition, however, is kept up long after it had lost its relevance.

Every year in the spring season, the gong sounds one day in the priest’s house. It marks the beginning of the hunt festival. During the festival they go out bows and arrows into

the forest and hunt wild animals like hedge hogs and leopards. After the hunt, they picnic together, drink liquor, sing and return home in the evening. For twelve years men run the hunt. Then comes the women's turn, which is popularly known as "Jani Parab". The festival has a second dimension too. "After the hunt the elders would bring offenders to justice." (xviii).

The myth informs the central theme of the story. Tehsildar Singh a greedy mainstream contractor lands in the quiet village of Kuruda with intentions of felling and carrying away the giant sal trees in Prasadji's estate of seventy five acres of land.

The tribals' interest and well being at once of man and nature is represented by Mary Oraon, who embodies the intelligence of the west and the love of the tribals. She puts her intelligence to the best use and tries to counsel Prasadji and other village head men, but to no avail. She explains to Prasadji that the contractor had tricked him and would get the sals at throw away price and would sell them to the timber merchants at an exorbitant rate by cubic foot. Prasadji is misled by his son and other village mirazdars like Lalchand and Mulni.

Nor is Mary able to influence the Kuruda elders who have all been bribed by the contractor. They commission the tribal laborers at unreasonably low wages. She said, "twelve annas and eight annas! No porter carried gentlemen's case for this price" (p 9)

Though the government of India has passed laws declaring illegal the felling of trees in forest regions the government machinery is so corrupt that the illegal action never comes to light. In her conversation with Gayatri Spivak, Mahasweta Devi explains the great skill with which this illegal deforestation continues all over India. To quote her, "Big money is involved....The local political worthies, local police, local administrations are bribed. The railways cooperate by carrying this illegal felled timber. Illegal saw mills come up everywhere." (p xii). According to the writer there are bosses in the cities behind the whole enterprise.

Thus the happenings in Kuruda are representative of what happens in the whole of India. Events in the short story, the writer declares are authentic, including the character of Mary. She says she has actually seen her and heard her life history from the songs of the tribes. Thus the story combines the particular and the representative.

The tribals are blamed for deforestation. One of the village elders explains to Mary, "If I said 'No', the villagers would go wild. They would say who gives us this kind of money?" (p 9). In her own life, once a tribal told Mahasweta Devi, "I need five rupees a day to buy rice. Ask me to fell a tree, I'll do it unwillingly, but I'll do it." (p xii) (emphasis added).

Mahasweta Devi's contention is that, "The hands that fell the trees are not the hands responsible for the deforestation all over India." (p xii). This incidentally explains the Naxalite movement against the exploitation of the poor peasants. Mary's protest suggests the solution, "Not twelve annas and eight annas, 'We will bargain for three or two rupees.'" (p 9).

In such a desperate condition of total system failure in justice, individuals cannot go on suffering in silence, the victims have been forced to resort to violence to redress their grievances. Mahasweta Devi observes in her conversation, "I think as for as the tribals or the

oppressed are concerned,....When the system fails in justice, violence is justified.” (p xi & xii).

Tehsildar Singh in the story is the representative of the mainstream power that exploits the poor workers as well as the earth. The myth of hunt game is rehearsed through Mary Oraon, who like Mother Earth is also viewed by the contractor as an object to be exploited. She identifies him as the wild ‘a-ni-mal’. She takes law into her own hands and dispenses justice by killing him on the festival day. At the end, she walks “fearless as she has killed the biggest beast” (p 17).

Thus the myth gets well intergrated with the present day tribal life. The story promotes awareness among the powers that be, that because of their negligence, deforestation goes on undeterred. Government should intervene and prevent deforestation on war footing and the tribals should be educated and guaranteed a minimum standard of living and purposeful engagements, if the land and its people are to remain secure and protected from degeneration.

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DALIT LITERATURE: LITERARY REPRISAL AGAINST INDIAN CULTURAL HEGEMONY

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This article addresses dalit literature from the view point of Indian culture. Its title clearly showcases one of the primary natures of dalit literary practices, i.e. it's attempt to criticise Indian cultural heritage as being altogether prejudiced against the lower castes. The article also examines dalit literature's kinship with cultural studies and a section of it is further dedicated to identify dalit literature's urge to break free from the cultural hegemony that Indian society has always sustained. Textual feed ups have been used duly in support of necessary hypotheses.

The broad inclusivity of culture and cultural studies has made spaces open for many disciplines to fit in. It has been one of the most looked into fields of study of different scholarly schools in the present era. The meaning and significance of culture being of central importance, this area of study invites scholars to determine a definition for both culture and cultural studies. But, to fix a point blank definition for culture is not very easy since it denotes and connotes a bulk of varied ideas. Ramification of the various definitions would act upon the precision and specificity of this dissertation. Hence, to suit the purpose of cohesion, the study of culture theorised by Raymond Williams (1921-88) is the ignition from which the whole discussion will come into being. In his path breaking *Culture and Society* Williams reflects upon the change in implicative aspects of a few words such as 'art', 'class', 'democracy', 'industry', of which 'culture' has also been a part. The complex whole of belief, art, knowledge and habits of an individual in a society, as Williams notes, underwent a change in the nineteenth century England which resulted in an altogether distortion in the meaning and implication of the word 'culture'. As he relates further, the genealogy gets explicated,

[...] it (culture) had primarily meant the tending of natural growth, and then by analogy, a process of human training. But this latter was, which had usually been a culture of something, was changed in the nineteenth century, to culture as such, a thing in itself. It came to mean 'a general state or habit of the mind, having close relations with the idea of human perfection. Second, it came to mean 'the general state of intellectual development, in a society as a whole'. Third, it came to mean 'the general body of the arts'. Fourth, later in the century, it came to mean 'a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual.' [...] (Williams XV)

This chronology of evolution suggests an ever broadening area of culture and thereby cultural studies has spread its roots to various other subjects.

So far as the word 'culture' is concerned and as we've seen it encompasses almost everything related to human life and society, its Indian counterpart is no different. It must be mentioned in this regard that here Indian culture has been considered majorly as the Hindu culture, keeping in mind the subject matter of dalit writings. Though the country is believed to have been the parental abode of sublime cultural conundrum, a deeper look into it would divulge its basic nature, not very far away from the universal temperament thereby providing ample scope for cultural studies to proliferate. This is furthermore applicable to the task of tracing the tribe of dalit literary activities in Indian cultural lineage. This is possible due to a few specific reasons. First, the cult of dalit is closely related to anthropological studies. Second, it has an inherent intra-country subaltern nature, third, for its affinity to contemporary politics and social criticism and finally, its well versed revolutionary stance against the age-old hegemonic Indian cultural heritage, especially against Sanskrit, made it available to cultural studies. This paper will attempt to illuminate the final reason. But before this, 'cultural hegemony' in the Indian context needs a little more attentive study.

To begin with the concept of cultural hegemony, the starting point, as obvious, must be Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, who interpreted the term in terms of a palpable relation between cultural practices and power and their interrelation in a society. Laclau and Mouffe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* attempt to hold the idea of hegemony's genesis in a concise comment

[...] the concept of 'hegemony' already alludes to a kind of *contingent* [emphasis in the original] intervention required by the crisis or collapse of what would have been a 'normal' historical development. Later, with Leninism, it is a keystone in the new form of political calculation required by the contingent 'concrete situations' in which the class struggle occurs in the age of imperialism. Finally, with Gramsci, the term acquires a new type of centrality that transcends its tactical or strategic uses: 'hegemony' becomes the key concept in understanding the very unity existing in a concrete social formation. (Laclau and Mouffe 7)

The very popular definition of hegemony finds Gramsci referring to a involuntary consent ceded by the masses to the dominant, manipulative group in a state, as he writes about its form and function, it's described as a

[...] spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group: this consent is “historically caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production. (Gramsci 12)

He adds further that hegemony performs as:

The apparatus of state coercive power which “legally” enforces discipline on those groups who do not “consent” either actively or passively. This apparatus is, however, constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis of command and direction, when spontaneous consent has failed. (Ibid 12)

Now, it's not a very simple task to put the Indian cultural heritage in a fill in the blanks manner into Gramsci's view. It's primarily because of the dissimilarity in the context as well as perspective. The 'base-superstructure' model with Gramsci's expansion, elaboration and contributory interpolation resulting in 'consent' and 'relation to power' looks apparently inapplicable to Indian soil so far as a perceptible class stratification remained obscure in the country, even though the Indian Marxists claim the caste division to be an Indianised version of division labour vis-à-vis Marx's reflections on the Indian society. But, it goes without saying that all along Indian culture owes a great deal to its Aryan fathers who lent it a garb of spirituality and philosophy. The Muslim rulers made their presence felt to a great extent for a considerable period; yet, the Sankritised varnish somehow proved itself more durable. This is primarily because of the monumental influence cast by the two great epics and their unputdownable acceptability and adaptability which survived the onslaught of time. And it does not need a scholar to identify the fact that irrespective of its spiritual solemnity and truth-finding assiduity, Indian culture is conjoined with casteism. Ranging from ways to discover one's true self, to the popular narratives, caste has always been cementing its place, almost in every discipline of life in the society. Very well known examples from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have not been inserted with a view to preventing overcrowding illustrations. However, as for example, instead of a direct reference to them, let's have Girish Karnad's *The Fire and the Rain* which portrays, as nearly all adaptations of the epics do, a few representative excerpts the rigid framework of untouchability. In the play based on an episode of the Mahabharata, a young lover and his betrothed could not touch each other because the latter was not a brahmin. She was a hunter and therefore the lover had decided to nullify his own caste with immense rebellious courage to come into contact with his lady love. Keeping emotional affairs aside, a perfunctory look at the social injunctions throws light on the stringency and coercive treatment which ruled supreme and overruled everything else. Nowhere other than in India were the social, cultural, religious restrictions more inimical to the people who were theologically thrown down at the periphery of the society. The sudras were abhorred as impure, filthy and as incarnations of profanity. This non perishable mark of untouchability was embossed in their life since birth. Undoubtedly, these discriminations were sanctified, consolidated and made unalterable by Sanskrit verses and hymns. Hereon, this dissertation will try to examine how far Sanskrit was

modulated as an instrument to practise dominance over the lower castes and the latter's reaction against the language in the form of dalit literary expressions. The whole sect of this literary cult vehemently reacted against the classical Indian culture. But for the sake of brevity, though the title has the word 'literature' in it, this study will focus on one or two representative dalit poems heralding stubborn vendetta against the country's biased cultural tradition.

Sanskrit had not only been a language, but a hegemonic culture in ancient India. Whole Vedic Literature is composed in this language. It used to be restricted within the upper caste usage, especially the Brahmins were allowed access to all Sanskrit texts in order to maintain its purity. Sanskrit is known as 'Deva Bhasa' – the language used by the gods and goddesses. It was meticulously taken care of. The bedrock of Hindu culture is created through this language, even today it is required in all ceremonial occasions. No doubt, the language has given birth to phenomenal works in the hands of Valmiki, Vedavyasa or Kalidasa. But it is also true that the social norms, regulations and codes of conduct were devised in the same language. As far as the social sciences are concerned we must bring the *Manusanhita* to discussion. This book has become object of hatred for the dalits. Before studying its reasons, it would be useful to make out what the book preaches. The *Manusanhita* is believed to have been composed by Manu, out of whom Manava (human) is created. We find names of a few Manus in Sanskrit texts, but scholars assume that the present compilation of the book is not the sole work of any of the Manus. It has been revised, re-interpreted and interpolated by several hands. The book comprises twelve chapters and in its very first one, the social divisions are explained. The four-fold varna system is reinforced here and specific works have been assigned to each of the varnas, needless to say, putting the sudras at the bottom allocating them meanest jobs. It is also not surprising that the composer had special inclination towards the brahmins. He had given them the highest social rank, sometimes exemption from legal punishments and prescribed privileges for them such as exemption from revenues. At the same time this book poses inexplicable disdain to the sudras and of course to women. Both have been regarded and recommended lower social status along with heaps of injunctions.

The Sanskrit epics and Puranas have also cast a considerable influence on Indian society and cultural life. The name of Rama is still taken with optimum reverence; moreover temples have been erected with the idols of him, Lakshmana, Hanumana and Sita, considered as the zenith of ethics. Similar is the impact of the Mahabharata as well. This great and massive epic is a churned out collection of the Indian social systems. It has been extensively adapted to theatre and movie versions. Again, Indian historical studies are greatly indebted to the Puranas.

It's clear that an Indian mind is inseparably linked with the Sanskrit literary compositions. Though the language is not widely used and its development has ceased, still it has successfully confirmed its place in the social unconscious being the most used shield for the upper caste domination is this language and literature. It made the way for the upper caste

domination which subdued the lower castes to the extent of a docile existence. Exactly like the Church which is frequently recognised as the private agency for exercising hegemony surreptitiously on behalf of a social group, in India the Sanskrit language acted as the institution drawing overt demarcations between the upper caste and the other communities. Hence the dalits have, validly, identified the language as a medium of spreading repugnance against them. For them it is the language of their doom. They exemplify this language as an evidence of the arbitrariness of the makers of social medians. Dalit poetry repeatedly refers to Hindu epics and mythologies; it very often alludes to the characters found in those works. The dalit poets, in general, have knowledge of the Sanskrit literary culture and they criticise it drastically for being the language of the rulers who own it as one of their personal properties and channelled it subtly against the lower castes. Almost every religious text written in Sanskrit talks about social division, its necessity and permanence, propagating hatred and malice against the sudras. That is why we see the dalit poets treat the language on the note of arch rivalry. Be it an auspicious mantra or be it any ritualistic sloka, the language, both in smaller or larger scale, is at loggerhead with the sudras. So far been subject to such casteist lingual hegemony, dalit poetry heralds revolt. Zakir Abedi says:

Dalit literature questioned the main-stream literary theories and upper caste ideologies, and explored the neglected aspects of life. [...] Thus to Dalit writers, history is not illusionary or unreal as Hindu metaphysical theory may make one to believe. [...] These writers make use of the language of the outcasts and the underprivileged in Indian Society. (Abedi 2)

He adds on,

Dalit literature was really post-Hindu literature, which sought to do away with Sanskrit symbolism. This process was set in motion by Dr. Ambedkar. Sanskrit was essentially a casteist language, anti-people and anti-production, he charged. (Ibid. 4)

Sanskrit, being limited only within the upper castes, has failed to become the language for day to day communication and today has turned up to be a segregated, motionless practice for a very small amount of Hindu priests; it lost its progress and prospect. Hence, the focus gets more tightened on the highly biased writings which were made thousands of years ago lending it severe vulnerability. The dalit poems do not hesitate to pounce upon it in a violent manner of vengeance on a poet who used to write in Sanskrit –

Oh Valmiki,

should you sing the praises of Ramarajya

because you're the great poet of poets? ('Oh! Great Poet', 1-3, Anand & Zelliott 132)

Valmiki, the ancient poet has been accused of being blind to his own origin. He was not born in a refined heritage, but having obtained divine blessings he directed his pen only to

venerate the name of Rama ‘even there the icy cliff of inhumanity towered up’ (17, Ibid. 132) This divorce between Valmiki’s social identity and his literary expression is considered as an act of betrayal which is lamented in the poem. It does not impose any defamation on the great poet, but it regrets the fact that a further greatness could have been claimed if the poet had included in his epic the misery of his fellow people.

Again, in ‘Sanskrit’ featuring in the same anthology, Pawar blames the language for being indifferent to a great circle of suffering. The whole Sanskrit culture stayed away from people’s distress, turned blind eye to the sight and deaf ear to ‘the weeping of a broken heart’ (Ibid. 135). ‘The great Divine Culture’ in its alacrity to remain divine, severed connections with the mundane human affairs. In connection with hegemony and cultural studies, it’s very crucial to find who’s in power since culture transforms according to it. This is successfully pointed out in dalit literature, which locates the brahminic section perching on the top of social hierarchy. Hence, as the authorial viewpoint has changed, though dalit literature is integral to Indian literary culture, it hurls incessant disdain at the hegemonic socio-cultural tenets which did the same thousands of years back.

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STRADDLING TWO WORLDS: CINEMATIC REPRESENTATIONS OF IMMIGRANT BEHAVIOUR/DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS, IN *PARDES* AND *AA AB LAUT CHALEN*

(Dedicated to the 'NRI' Pradhan)

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I

Identities emerging from instances of self-imposed exile, devoid of feelings of alienation and isolation, and invested with a spirit of acculturation and integration (into that which is alien), constitute one form of diasporic consciousness. This type, not altogether lacking in nostalgia for the home-country nor indeed sundered from the original culture, displays a certain hybrid nature that is emancipated despite its supposed state of 'disjunctive temporality'. Indeed, the state of liminality of such an identity transmutes into multiculturalism in certain cases, thereby allowing for ambivalence to effect what Homi Bhaba would called 'mimicry' that empowers.

Moreover, the 'cut-and-mix' of '*diaspora-ization*' (Loomba 148) does not always result in anguish or trauma, as Bhaba suggests. In fact, certain identities that emerge from the state of being an 'NRI' mitigate many notions of colonial encounters, and demonstrate a possibility of devaluing 'centrality' in the case of peaceful and voluntary migration. This paper in thus concerning itself with themes of spatial dispersion, migration/displacement in Hindi movies such as *Pardes* and *Aa Ab Laut Chale*, , will generate discourse around the phenomenon of

relocation and immigration that give rise to diasporic experiences, while leading to the creation of “ethnoscapes”, as Appadurai calls them by also making brief references to films such as *An Evening in Paris*, *Purab Aur Pashchim*, *Kal Ho Na Ho* etc. In that, it shall make a study of the figure of the NRI(s); the expatriate in the aforementioned movies, trace their experience emanating from their state of being a non-resident Indian, and comment on the various ways in which they manage to straddle both ‘worlds’.

II

While diasporas may form under various circumstances, those that occur as a result of wilful migrations too resist homegenisation. Hybridity and liminality are however not direct binaries on the diasporic scheme of matters and even within hybridity there may be a kind that has emerged out of forceful assimilation, for instance, for Indian settled abroad, empire-sponsored biological interbreeding that would hispanicise, and consequently, ‘extinguish’ Indians is a case of enforced integration, despite wilful migration. Issues of creolisation and in-betweenness thus remain some of the major concerns of post-colonial studies today (Loomba 45). Needless to say therefore, despite wilful migration from one country to another, identities do not adapt as easily into the new and alien environment as easily. Even though people undertaking such relocation/immigration are (often) aware of the cultural consequences on their identity, they are at times unable to cope with the “cultural shock” -- a term which has now become a recurrent, popular phrase to explain away any kind of disturbance caused in an individual due to maladjustment into a different terrain/with different communities.

This is directly linked to increased travelling and migrations that are happening at the global level, with the onset of globalisation, which has made modes of international travelling readily available to the masses. Since the passage of the 1965 U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Act, which allowed Asians with preferred occupational skills to enter the United States, Indians have been one of the fastest-growing immigrant groups. Especially at first, the majority of Indians came as young professionals or students in graduate and professional schools (Lamb 207). Easier modes of travel coupled with greater career opportunities allow people to “settle abroad” or “travel overseas”, and the migration of skilled human capital from developing countries such as India to developed countries such as the United States has incurred increasing interest among both receiving and sending countries with respect to the benefits that can come out of this migration of people (Sahay 121). However an individual’s identity is not wholly impervious to such travels/movement and identities undergo changes and at times they are rendered hybrid, and sometimes they are unable to incorporate the alien into their own, and thereby become liminal or fragmented.

Indeed, in cases of exile/displacement/relocation, the identities formed are formed as a result of interactions with the new environment and cultural ethos. Self-determination is therefore premised upon the nature of exchange between the immigrant individual and their foster

homeland¹ into which they have immigrated and attempted to assimilate into. The foster country, the erstwhile “*vides*” is therefore a nebulous category and for NRIs settled abroad is neither “*swades*” nor even “*vides*” per se. Concepts of the nation therefore undergo radical changes and the self *vis-à-vis* the nation/’motherland’ is no longer devoid of complexities in identity; the self is an expat, an émigré, an NRI who, whether voluntarily or not, has exiled/been exiled from his native land.

However, despite diaspora almost being synonymous with migrant and migrant communities, there are essential differences between the two and needless to say, diasporic consciousness is not formed in every case of migration. Ato Quayson and Girish Daswani in “Diaspora and Transnationalism: Scapes, Scales, and Scopes” have said:

For a diaspora to emerge out of the dispersal of a given population a number of conditions have to be met. Among other things these often include the time-depth of dispersal and settlement in other locations; the development of a myth of the homeland; the attendant diversification of responses to homeland and host nation; the evolution of class segmentation and conflict within a given diaspora alongside the concomitant evolution of an elite group of cultural and political brokers; and the ways in which contradictions among the various class segments end up reinforcing different forms of material and emotional investment in an imaginary ideal of the homeland. (3)

Indeed, diasporas are not formed merely due to dispersion or dislocation, and the categories of migrant and diaspora are differentiated with regard the nature of identity ruptures caused due to relocation.² Nostalgia, memory and imagination therefore are important elements for the creation and sustenance of diasporas which would otherwise entail a kind of integration that extinguishes all traces of the original ethnic identity for the sake of assimilation – the wish to “hide our ancestry” in immigrants (Kim 601) may accordingly be understood to be one of the antecedents to such negation of one’s ethnic or cultural roots. However diasporic identities and consciousnesses, due to its coterminous nature, may be understood to be combining the cultural consequences of the ‘loss’ of the homeland, and the acquirement of a new, foster space-nation-homeland. Commenting specifically on conception of homeland of Indian writers settled abroad, Salman Rushdie in *Imaginary Homelands* says:

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge—which gives rise to profound uncertainties—that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (9)

The film, *Pardes* (1997) espouses similar sentiments regarding the 'homeland' and the character of Kishorilal, the NRI father figure and patriarch who visits India after 10 years, constantly harks back to the glory of his birthplace and even sings the song, "I love my India" when he is confronted with existing popular conceptions of abroad, and specifically, America/"Amereeka", as a glamorous and exciting place which is more desirable than India. The film is interesting in the sense that diasporic sentiments and even diasporic behaviour are most intelligently and at times ironically depicted. For instance, the movie highlights the often misinformed notions of Indians about abroad, and how Indians aspire to go to foreign lands because '*vilayat*' connotes affluence and prosperity. In this also are several pre-existing biases and prejudices that Indians have. For instance, in the movie, the foreign returned family of Ameer Chand claims to be NRIs as good as Kishorilal - even though they were NRIs who had moved back from Sri Lanka, and not America - or 'West' for that matter. Others however don't take these claims seriously and are reluctant to accept their NRI status.

An essential example of ironical treatment of assimilation would be the accent of America-bred Paul is exaggeratedly American so that it almost seems comical. And characters such as Padma, 'Paddy' as the Americans call her, are also caricatured as NRIs who have taken to aping the westerners in dressing and social etiquette, despite their Indian origins. Significantly, the change in Padma's name, as also Kishorilal ji's brother's who adapts his name from Sandeep to 'Sandy' after coming to America, are symptomatic of the ingrained anxiety of immigrants to assimilate into the foreign culture in order to avoid socio-cultural conflicts and identity crisis caused due to racism and second-class citizenship usual in such cases of immigration. Indeed, it is ordinary that after spending some time in the United States, most older immigrants, along with their families, end up self-consciously taking on practices, values, and modes of aging they regard as American, although often ambivalently with both eagerness and misgivings. (Lamb 210)

More importantly however, the movie focuses on Kishorilal's attempt to bring together the two 'worlds' of East and West through matrimony between Ganga, who, born and brought up in India epitomises Indian womanhood, and his son, Rajeev, a rather westernised boy of Indian origins. Quite typically, to Kishorilal, and many other Indians settled abroad, love and harmony are associated with 'home'; that even if maybe there is less material prosperity in India (i.e., people cannot always afford as many cups of tea as they might want), then at least families in India are closer, and old people are better served. America is the land of material prosperity; India is the land of intimacy, and time (Lamb 207). The match between Ganga and Rajeev however is ill-made and the movie charts out the several problems such rash intermingling between two cultures may entail. Ganga, though initially impressed with the dashing figure of the NRI who is not only rich and stylish but also handsome and charming, finds herself increasingly disillusioned with Rajeev, and is shocked to learn of his Americanised lifestyle and western morals. She is unable to reconcile herself to his liberal

views on sexuality and struggles to adjust, and finally, when she is molested by him, runs away.

Contrasting Rajeev, is the character of Arjun, played by the ‘King Khan’ of Bollywood, Shahrukh Khan³ who is not only reverential towards India, but is also desirous of an Indian way of life, and again quite typically, an Indian woman as his beloved. When the film introduces his character, the camera focuses on paintings of Indian women made in classical styles, dressed in a traditional way, and also a female dummy that stands in one corner dressed in the regular paraphernalia of an Indian bride. This is Arjun’s workplace/garage and he sings of India and the beloved of his dreams who, he wishes, would be a cultured, traditional and beautiful Indian woman. Needless to say, he understands Indian customs and rituals much better than Rajeev, and eventually falls in love with Ganga who he realises is just the kind of woman he has always desired. The outcome of his and Ganga’s love is however not relevant here although it is tempting to understand their characters as allegorical, and study their union, and the failure of Ganga-Rajeev relationship as symbolic of the incompatibility between the western and eastern ethico-moral principles. Indeed, Rajeev who represents the westernised, American Indian is not be suitable for the conventional, Indian woman that Ganga is, and therefore Arjun who is comparatively more acquainted with India and Indian-ness, must be united with her in the end.

While *Pardes* dealt with the theme of expatriation vis-à-vis the theme of romance and matrimony, the film, *Aa Ab Laut Chalen* (1999), deals, predominantly, with the socio-economic aspect of trans-continental migrations. The film addresses concerns in employment opportunities and here the objective of immigration is not romance, but employment. The character of Rohan Khanna undertakes a journey abroad and takes residence in America because he hopes to find a suitable job there especially since he has been unable to do so in India and has the (seemingly) excellent example of NRI Ranjit who has acquired success and wealth after settling in America, so much so that he comes to India to take his parents back with him⁴. However, Rohan is disillusioned as soon as he reaches America and sees that Ranjit is actually mistreating his parents and having them do menial chores in the motel he owned. Left to his own means, Rohan is forced to take lodging with a compassionate (Pakistani) cab-driver, who later offers him work as a taxi driver, and which he accepts. Thus, Rohan’s situation dispels many popular myths about immigration to USA and provides a cynical perspective on migration and relocation. Johanna Lessinger has commented:

Although people in India find it almost impossible to believe, there are also sizeable numbers of Indian immigrants who hold working-class jobs – often poorly paid or insecure — as security guards, taxi drivers, factory workers, store clerks, hotel or restaurant workers (168).

Similar to his situation is Pooja's, an Indian woman played by the Miss World of '94, Aishwarya Bacchan, who had come to live with her brother and wife in America without knowing that her brother had ulterior motives for calling her there and wanted her to be a consort to his boss. Rendered homeless, she is compelled to take Rohan's offer to stay with him at the Pakistani's place. The film thus traces the struggle of the young pair and shows how the two, despite odds, make two ends meet. The movie thus becomes disillusioning, and it is made apparent that although the successful and fabulously wealthy Indian-American immigrant entrepreneur is currently the figure of popular imagination, admiration, and envy in India, the actual population of Indian migrants in the US is far more diverse and less uniformly privileged (Lessinger 167).

Furthermore, when Rohan, in order to realise his dreams of having a prosperous life in America, decides to get married to Loveleen, an NRI woman with whom matrimony will allow him to get a Green Card, he belatedly realises that women such as Loveleen are unsuited to him because their worldviews are widely divergent. He disapproves of Loveleen's Americanised ways, and like Ganga from *Pardes* who was unable to come to terms with her fiancé's western values, he is unable to reconcile to her habits and likings.

What is more essential in this movie however is the theme of 'returning' to the homeland. The title itself signifies a desire to return after a departure. The title track itself comes at a point where the crisis in the hero and heroine's love life has passed and both have recognised not only their love for each other but also the need to return to India. Further dramatising the plotline is the sub-text of Balraj Khanna, Rohan's derelict father who had left his family for America and married another woman. Importantly enough, while Balraj who must have arrived during 60s-70s, had become prosperous, chances of his son arriving in the States 20-30 years later and becoming as wealthy are extremely bleak.⁵ Indeed, for Indian migrants who began arriving after 1965, the possibilities of professional careers open to anyone willing to work hard in America were extremely attractive, despite a haunting nostalgia for India and its culture, perceived as richer, more complex and more emotionally satisfying than anything America has to offer (Lessinger 170).

At the end of the movie when all conflicts are resolved, every character realises the need to return to India. Interestingly, while *Pardes* was about a movie that saw the characters resiliently return to America after overcoming all adversities, *Aa Ab Laut Chalen* is about returning to India almost as if it were an escape, a release from cumbersome and testing times that living in America entailed. This brings it closer to the trajectories in plotlines of earlier films about diaspora: migration had been an emerging motif in films of the late 1960s and early 1970s and early films about diaspora, including *An Evening in Paris* (1967), *Purab aur Paschim* (1970), and *Hare Rama Hare Krishna* (1971), functioned as warnings about the danger of leaving the homeland, assimilating into Western (colonial) cultures, and losing one's "Indianness" and homeland. As such, the films cautioned against migration only as

much as they caution against greater forces associated with globalization and Westernization as threats to cultural nationalism – for example, greed, gluttony, sexual promiscuity and depravity, dissolution of family, and hyperconsumption (Desai and Neutill 235).

This is not to say that the attitudinal shift has nothing to do with the changed economic and political condition of America. Unlike the former movie which was about a family of rich, business-class people who had immigrated during times when employment opportunities were much better, this movie was about first-generation, middle-class migrants who had to experience the harsh reality of racism and unemployment of emigrant Asians in capitalist America. Therefore returning to the familiar homeland in such a case seemed redemptive and not wholly undesirable. In this, the conceptualisation of homeland, as a utopian (Raghuram, Sahoo, Maharaj, Sangha 285) place also has a major role to play. The various conflicts and crises that are caused as a result of migration endear the homeland to émigrés, and actively give rise to idealistic and romantic visions of the home country in the individual's imagination.

Bollywood therefore becomes a means of articulation in media, of crises, conflicts and anxieties related to migration, relocation and dislocation alternatively. The theme of emigration and the subject of the NRI has found ample depiction in several Bollywood films however, such depictions, although multifarious and variegated, do not guarantee a faithful and representation of the condition of NRIs abroad. Indeed, Bollywood's evocation of the NRI reflects the interconnected hopes, fears, and anxieties about diaspora's key role as a catalyst and conduit for the transnational flows of capital, technology, and culture between India and the global north. (Desai and Neutill 234) Needless to say, most of such portrayals are hyper-romanticised or caricatured, and often provide inaccurate depictions of immigrant behaviour and diasporic consciousness.⁶ Moreover, even though films like *Bend it Like Beckham* and *Namaste London* provide for study, cases of acute nostalgia and tendencies of ghettoisation⁷ amongst Indian communities living abroad, the nuances of their diasporic condition are rarely ever brought out effectively.

However, as is evident, the films, whether dramatised or not, these depictions promulgate the possible responses of immigrants to western ideals and concepts in the form of acculturation and assimilation. They also provide instances of patriotic imagination, and how notions of the homeland translate into fierce nostalgia and nationalistic zeal on one hand, and integration and westernisation/adaptation on the other. Moreover, these movies bring out old debates of the tradition and modernity, and locate India and the West as direct binaries on the scheme of things. As is evident from the analysis of the movie, *Pardes*, 'modernisation' and 'westernisation' are conflated and often signify moral collapse and disintegration of Indian values and ideals. 'Western' therefore becomes synonymous with debauchery, immorality and even promiscuity, and although these stereotypes stem from simplistic understandings of

the broad differences between the Indian and American culture, they point towards the essential differentia that cannot possibly be glossed over.

Notes:

1. The term is used to denote the secondary nature of the space that an individual immigrates to from his birth-land/homeland. In other words, the place that one resides and considers as his 'domicile', but not his 'motherland'/homeland.
2. Apart from the categorical nuances between migrant-diaspora, is the category of transnational/transnationalism. Against the stress on borders, transnationalism examines their permeability, transcendence, or irrelevance. Werbner argues, however, against simplistic notions of "simultaneity" that the transnational social field cannot be taken as continuous and homogeneous. Instead it is "ruptured" to "create new configurations and clusterings." (Quayson and Daswani 5)
3. Khan 's repeated roles as male (Hindu) NRI have played no small part in establishing his star persona as well as establishing ideals of modern Indian masculinity. Tracing Khan 's roles within the NRI genre in fi lms such as *DDLJ*, *Pardes* , *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*, *Kal Ho Naa Ho* , *Swades* (dir. Ashutosh Gowariker), *Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna* (dir. Karan Johar), and *My Name is Khan* (dir. Karan Johar) from the 1990s to the present tell us the story of liberalization's transformation of masculinity, family, and affect within Bollywood and the Indian nation-state. (Desai and Neutill 238)
4. Indian American parents very frequently invoke a vision of an "Indian" system of lifelong intergenerational reciprocity: parents and children naturally live together throughout life, and juniors provide care for their senior parents, in return for all the effort, material cost, and love their parents expended to produce and raise them in infancy and childhood (Lamb 208). Some speak very precisely also in terms of wanting to reap the rewards of the investment they have made in their children, claiming responsibility in large part for their children's successes (Lamb 209).
5. A number of factors account for the rapidly accelerating rates of unemployment among Asian groups. First, a high proportion of Asian workers are employed in the generally contracting manufacturing sector and, within this sector, are more likely to work in those industries and at those levels of skill which have been especially vulnerable to decline. Second, a greater proportion of Asians live and work in regions where unemployment levels have recently been among the highest. Third, the current high unemployment is in part a consequence of the restructuring of the world economy involving an accelerating trend towards the internationalisation of capital and labour. (Brah 52)
6. The NRI in this case may be understood as the manifestation of a specific and narrow diaspora that is imagined, interpellated, romanticized, and reviled by the nation-state within the context of globalization. (Desai and Neutill 234)
7. In this the tendency of ghettoising is prevalent in almost all movies dealing with the theme of diaspora or NRI, and movies such as *Kal Ho Na Ho* and *Qurbaan* offer evidence of the necessity of forming miniature 'homelands' in *pardes* by retaining traditional Indian habits and customs, and mingling and associating closely with Easterners in the neighbourhood.

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DALIT AND INDIAN PARTITION

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Dalits suggests the group of people who constitute about 20% of India's total population. They are regarded as untouchable and identified as the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes and these terms include all historically discriminated communities of India out-caste and untouchables. The main criteria to identify a dalit are to see whether he is ostracized and shunned in the society to which he belongs. As regards the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes exclusion from the system of castes, ultimately leads to an exclusion from cultural and social network. They carry out all the filthy works of the upper class in the Indian social castes hierarchy, in other words the only suitable work for him is scavenging. There are many different names proposed for defining this group of people including Panchamas and Asprushya. They were not allowed to let their shadows fall upon a non-Dalit caste member and they were required to sweep the ground where they walked to remove the contamination of the footfalls. Dalits were forbidden to worship in the temples or draw water from the same wells as caste Hindus and they usually lived in segregated neighborhoods outside the main village. Prof. Gangadhar Patwane rightfully defines dalit- "To me dalit is not a caste. He is a man exploited by the social and economic traditions of the country. He does not believe in God, rebirth, soul, holy books, teaching, separatism, fete and heaven because they have made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is symbol of change and revolution"(1)

Dalits and similar groups are found in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. In fact a 201 paper argued that the European romas' DNA matches the Dalit in India. Actually the word Dalit based on what 17th century European writer could think of to try to pre-judge the job file of Indian culture. This word was based on Sanskrit, meaning ground or suppressed and first used by Jyotipriyo Phule in the 19th century in the context of the oppression faced by the erst while 'untouchable' castes of the twice born Hindus. According to Victor Premasagar, the term expresses their weakness poverty and humiliation at the hands of the upper castes in the Indian society.

Since the independence of India in 1947, India has implemented an affirmative policy of reservation the scope of which was further expanded in 1974, to set aside and provide jobs and education opportunities to Dalits. By 1995 of all jobs in India, 17.2% of the jobs were held by Dalits. In 1997 India democratically elected R.K.Narayan, a Dalit as the nation's president. Many social organizations too have proactively promoted better conditions for dalits through improved education, health and employment. India's former untouchables are now no doubts the dalits but changing of names has still not sympathy and sense of justice for them. Even today dalits are denied entry into village shops in 35.85% villages ,in 33% of Villages in teashops they use separate cups and are denied seating, paid lower wages in 25% of villages, suffer verbal and physical abuse and are paid wages from a distance to avoid physical contact in 37% of villages(2). In many parts of the country, for example in the Chakwara village of Rajasthan gross inequalities and oppression pervades the whole social and mental fiber. Sick of being trodden under the feet of the high caste hindus, Babu Lal and Radhey Shyam, two Dalits of the Bairwa group took a dip in the pond a s part of a ritual which only the upper caste hindus were entitled to perform. As a consequence the hindus wrecked vengeance on them by isolating them from village, by stalking and abusing them. Even the police sided with the upper castes and forced them to sign a compromise agreement abolishing their rights to the pond which they had recently asserted. Many human right organizations were baffled by this gross social cruelty of the dominant class and they encourage the bairaws to assert their rights repeatedly. A brawl ensued injuring more than 50 people including 44 policemen in the confrontation between Hindus who had outnumbered the dalits and the latte(3)r. Rajasthan has a horrific record of Dalits directed offences with an annual average of 5024 crimes registered in the years 2007,2008 and 2009. On average there are 46 killings, 134 rapes and 93 cases of grievous injury annually. One of the worst killing was the massacre of 17 dalits at Kumher village in 1992.(4)

In historical India, Dalit status has often been historically associates with occupations regarded as ritually impure such as any involving leather work, butchering or removal of rubbish animal carcasses and waste. Engaging in this work was considered to be polluting to the individual and this pollution was considered contagious. As a result, they were separated from the main stream of society and banned from full participation in Hindu social life. They were not allowed to enter a temple or school. But this discrimination can not be found in urban area though it still exist in rural India in everyday matters such as access to eating places, school, temples and water sources from local religious life. Many rules and laws have been passed for the sake of dalits since 1950. The quality of life of Dalit population in India in 2001, in terms of metrics such as access to health care, life expectancy, education attainability, access to drinking water, temples etc. was similar to overall population of modern India. In 2010, an International attention was drawn to the Dalit by an exhibition featuring portraits depicting the lives of Dalits.

The large majority of Dalits Indian is Hindus. Some writers believe that even Valmiki and Veda Vyasa, the celebrity of Hindu epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata were also of dalit

background. Goutam Buddha and Mahavir Jaina were the earliest historical persons who rejected the caste system. The earliest known reformation with Hinduism happened during the medieval period when the Bhakti movements actively encouraged the participation and inclusion of Dalits. In the 9th century the Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj and Ramkrishna Mission actively participated in the emancipation of Dalits. While there always have been segregated places for Dalit worship the first upper caste temple to openly welcome Dalits into their fold was the Laxminarayan Temple in Wardha in the year 1928. The 1930s saw key struggle between Gandhi and Ambedkar's support for joint electorate, Gandhi nevertheless began the Harijan yatra to help the Dalit population Palwankar Baloo, a Dalit politician and a cricketer, joined the Hindu Maharashtra in the fight for independence.

The Government of India in order to curb and punish violence against Dalits passed the Prevention of Atrocities Act which clarified specific crimes against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes as atrocities and created strategies and punishment to counter these acts. Firstly it clarified what the atrocities were; both particular incidents of harm and humiliation such as the forced consumption of noxious substances and systemic violence still faced by many Dalits, especially in rural areas. Such systematic violence includes forced labour denial of access to water and other public amenities and sexual abuse of Dalit women. Secondly, the act created special courts to try cases registered under the POA. The POA gave legal redress to Dalits but only two states have created separate special courts in accordance with law. In practice the Act has suffered from a near-complete failure in implementation. Policemen have displayed a consistent unwillingness to register offences under the act. According to a 1999 study nearly a quarter of those government officials charged with enforcing the Act are unaware of its existence.

God has created this world out of the knowledge that everyone can enjoy it but in vain. The belief in the caste system has seemed to engulf our minds and souls as permeating in our blood and incorporating in our genes. Caste system is bane and cancer of our society. We oppress our souls and the humanity within our souls by oppressing fellow human beings. We are moving towards self destruction by being discriminative and hypocritical. The need of this hour is reflection, self correction, self assertion, self counseling and self help and by an integrated efforts of all these we can emancipate our down trodden brethren and experience a common feeling of 'liberation'. Even today the Dalits remain Dalits. Unless we change our social mindset regarding them we can not think of their welfare. Untouchability is still alive and thriving in villages and off course in our minds too. The day we sit eat and work with the Dalits would be the day of our 'emancipation' we have to undergo expiratory punishment to wipe out the guilt present within ourselves for perpetrating cruelty on our innocent brothers for ages. Even if it takes centuries to uplift them it will not suffice such is the degree of their 'down troddism'.

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‘NO POET CAN OPERATE IN A VOID’

Susheel Kumar Sharma is one of the significant post-independence voices in Indian English Poetry, who expresses the aspirations and yearnings of the modern Indian intellect with lyricism and pathos. Rooted deep into the Indian soil, his poems reflect not only the moods of a poet but of a complex age. His poetry is full of vital expressions of life, love and nature. Excerpts from a conversation with Syed Ahmad Raza Abidi:

SARA 1: Can you describe the time when you first realised that creating was something you absolutely had to do?

SKS 1: There were several moments when I had to leave my bed and had to take up pen and paper to jot down the ideas. But I do not seem to have kept a track of the same.

SARA 2: What do you consider to be your main successes so far?

SKS 2: It is not my success but the contribution of others: I mean *Bricks and Bouquets* (Ed. Sanjeev Kumar, New Delhi: Creative Books, 2008, pp xxxii + 69, ISBN: 81-85231-32-X) – a collection of reviews of my first collection of poems. I am not aware of any other such book on the first collection of any poet. Prof O P Mathur, Former Professor and Head, Dept of English, BHU, Varanasi congratulated me on the publication of that book and he said he was wonderstruck at that type of book as he had not come across any of the sort; it was unique in several ways.

SARA 3: Have there been particular books, paintings or films which have influenced your work?

SKS 3: There must be some. T S Eliot says that a poet has to acquire a tradition with a sense of discrimination. A poet who writes in a language other than one’s mother tongue has to operate at two levels and imbibe the traits from two traditions and in the process sometimes also has to face a dilemma as Krishna must have felt in having two mothers: one biological and the other adopted.

Freud and other critics like Frazer, Carl Jung, Northrop Frye, and Leslie Fiedler have proved that all the myths are already there in the great repository in our mind. So no poet can operate in a void. Still I'll advise the young readers to pay heed to Lawrence's advice, "Trust the tale not the teller" for all accounts of being influenced by someone are the pieces of fiction as most of them are reconstructions from a faded past.

SARA 4: Dr. Johnson said, "There are some things that are fit for inclusion in poetry and others which are not". What do you consider?

SKS 4: In Oriental Aesthetics also it has been suggested that some topics are not fit enough for poetry. However, every comment of the critics however serious (s)he might have been, has not been taken seriously by practising poets. Is there a topic on which poems have not been written? The quality and the genre of poetry could be different— it is altogether a different issue but the fact remains that poets have not left any area/ topic unexplored.

SARA 5: Wordsworth defined poetry as spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. Whereas T.S. Eliot went against the emotions and exclaimed "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotions". What is the best way? Should a poet be subjective or objective?

SKS 5: One can be objective even while effusing emotions in plenty. This, for example, happens when one writes poetry about a great common good/emotion like patriotism. There is no set formula for writing good poetry. It is also certainly not necessary that what is considered good today will always be adjudged to be good. One should therefore take a route that leads to the higher values that leads to sublimity and talk about those emotions/passions that cut across time and space.

SARA 6: What do you think of generations, schools, and movements?

SKS 6: As an Indian I have been taught to respect the elder generations and bless the younger ones. I have learnt so many good things in different schools of life; I am grateful to the schools and the teachers there; whatever I have not been able to learn there is not their fault but mine; any movement is a proof of one's being alive and kicking, vivacious. If a poet has some respect today it is because of the great works of the earlier generations.

Schools of the poetry sound like trade unions. Still they are the essential parts of the history of any literature. Perhaps because of the necessity of communication some persons having common interests come together; out of respect to one person they elect a leader who becomes a spokesperson and leader of the group; and after his/ her death it is all over. This is what one notices in the history of any school of poetry/ art. Once the group comes into existence a lot of politics around the interests of the group also begins. Without these groups other poets will not come into existence so their importance cannot be undermined. One may

take a cue from science and technology to understand this phenomenon – could we have had the present day jets without having the first prototype aeroplane which appears to be a very crude model today?

SARA 7: Are you satisfied with contemporary trend of poetry in English in India?

SKS 7: This question cannot be answered in either ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ for the scene presents a complex web of the politics of institutions, languages, cultures, traditions, readers, publishing houses etc. Any attempt to answer such a question without referring to all these issues will not do justice to contemporary poetry.

SARA 8: What is your opinion about the recent trend of criticism on Indian English poetry?

SKS 8: The present age is the age of fiction not of poetry. Naturally, more books are coming out on fiction than on poetry; so is the case with the theses being submitted to Indian universities. However, the best books of criticism on I P E (Indian poetry in English) are from the Western authors. Indians too are contributing their mite. The criticism in English is not to be seen separately but it should be judged in the light of Indian criticism in other Indian Languages. There is always a scope for improvement but this does not mean that the critics are not doing their best. The schools and trends in criticism also keep on changing along with time; for the obvious reasons most of these trends come from the English speaking Western world especially the UK and the USA. It is for the individuals to sharpen their wits, their arguments, their analogies and their reductions. How many critics in Indian languages can boast of being a Dryden, Eliot, Leavis or Richards in their language? But why should they be seen as setting the bench mark also deserves some attention.

SARA 9: Do you find yourself much in the company of other writers, of poets?

SKS 9: Oh yes. As a teacher I have to discuss a number of poets; as a reviewer I have to comment on so many’s works; as a critic I have to discuss so many’s merits. My wife also writes in Hindi so, you can understand it, I have to be on my toes every time.

SARA 10: Is there anything else you would rather have done than writing poetry? Because this is something, obviously, which takes up a great deal of one’s private life, if one’s going to succeed at it? Do you ever have any lingering regrets that you didn’t do something else?

SKS 10: I earn my living not by poetry but by serving a university as a full time teacher. I feel that whatever duties are assigned to me by the university should be discharged very faithfully. I love teaching my students and guiding them from time to time. Naturally I have to prepare myself for that; this entails a lot of time.

No, I have had no regrets – by the way, I am a teacher by choice. I feel my students, my colleagues, the University have given me more honour and respect than I deserve; similarly I feel there are many more poets and critics who deserve far more attention than my work has drawn. So there is no cause for dissatisfaction for me on these counts.

SARA 11: The writing of poetry must be giving you a great satisfaction in your life, isn't it?

SKS 11: Yes, it has. It has given me name and fame and some money also.

SARA 12: What project are you working on right now?

SKS 12: Some publishers have asked me to submit my work to them. But I am much behind the scheduled deadlines.

SARA 13: Talking to you has been an honour and privilege. Best wishes for your future endeavours.

SKS 13: I feel honoured. Thank you very much.

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**SUSHEEL KUMAR SHARMA,
THE DOOR IS HALF OPEN**

(New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers, 2012), PP 141, Rs. 150.00

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The anthology under review is a collection of fifty- two poems. Most of the poems are confessional, autobiographical and devotional. These poems manifest that Susheel Kumar Sharma has sound Knowledge of Indian tradition, culture and philosophy. *The Door is Half Open* could very well be seen as a poetic itinerary which culminates in the poet's realization of his poetic and spiritual self. The first poem in the collection "Ganga Mata – A Prayer" is the poets tribute to the river Ganga, a goddess in Hindu religion .There are ten vivid scenes in this lengthy poem. The verses in Sanskrit are interspersed in this beautiful poem. Taking the help of Hindu mythology, poet has regarded Ganga a sacred river. It is quite evident that Dr.Sharma has given ample importance to the river Ganga. The poem "Ganga Mata- A Prayer" is of topical relevance as its voices serious ecological concerns and attempts to reinforce the age-old reputation of the ancient India river.

O Ganges!

The dweller in Lord Brahma's *kamandala*

The abider in Lord Vishnu's feet

The resider in Lord Shiva's locks

The sojourner in the Himalayas

The daughter of Sage Jahnu

The co-wife to Parvati and Lakshmi

The redeemer of Bhagiratha's race

The atoner of Sagar's progeny

The mother of brave Bhishma

O *Ganga Maiya!*

Homage to thee.

Accept my obeisance O *Punyakirti!*(1-13)

This collection is completed with a detailed Glossary. It explains not only the verses and words in Sanskrit but also words like Brahmins, Sangam, Varansi etc. In alphabetical order, the poet gives the reader explications of India words and phrases.

The poem "From Left to Right" expresses Sharma's feeling towards his city Allahabad. The city of Allahabad is among the largest cities of Uttar Pradesh and situated at the confluence of three rivers- Ganga, Yamuna and the invisible Saraswati. The meeting point is known as Triveni and is especially sacred to Hindus. The earlier settlements of the Aryans were established in this city, and then known as Prayag. It is considered *Prayagasya Praveshshu Papam Nashwati Tatkshanam*. It means all sins are cleaned with entry in Prayag (the ancient name of modern time Allahabad). Prayag is one of the historic and mythological cities of India with glorious past and present. It continues to enjoy the distinction of being a place of haunting and lasting memories. It is a city of mixed culture of Hindu, Muslims, Jains and Christians. Its sanctity is manifested by references to it in Purans, the Ramayan and the Mahabharata. According to Hindu Mythology, Lord Brahma, the creator God of the Trinity, chose a land on earth (Prayag) to perform 'Prakrista Yag', at the beginning of the creation and he also referred to it as *Tirth Raj* or the King of all pilgrimage centres. As per writing of Padam Puran' – "As the sun is amongst the moon and the moon amongst the stars, likewise 'Prayag' is best amongst all places of pilgrimage" Prayag has been associated with mythological personalities in Brahmanical (Vedic) and Buddhist Literatures. It was the seat of the great sage Bhardwaj, sage Durvasa and sage Pannas. Sage Bhardwaj lived here circa 5000BC and taught more than 10000 disciples. He was the greatest philosopher of ancient world. This city was the heart of the Indian Freedom Movement against the British rule with Anand Bhawan being the epicentre, It was in Allahabad, the Mahatma Gandhi proposed his programme of non-violence resistance to liberate India. Allahabad has provided the largest number of prime ministers of Post independence India Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, V.P.Singh. Former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar was student of Allahabad University. Susheel Kumar Sharma has thrown light on the transition which is taking place in city.

This town is no more a town

But a city.

This city is no more sleepy and sleazy

But keeps you on your toes.

People come here

To become ashes
To be immersed in the confluence
Of the holy rivers.
The living ones too behave Like the dead.
Sweating, bathing and breeding profusely
They are not tired of
Boasting about the
Glory that once was. (1-13)

It can be observed that some poems are marked by conflict arising in his mind due to the clash between the individual needs versus social needs. He reflects about his despair in the poem "Dwellings" in the following words.

For Autumn had come
But Spring could not
Locate my home.
Laden with colourful leaves
Hope passed by like a stranger on the road.
I salt my breakfast with tears
That ooze on the peeling of memories
When the butter of praise
Fails to soothe me
I go out to the arms of downstream
Where I drown in eternal sleep
To awake floating on a fresh dream.
Despair is good.
It remains untouched
By jealousies, By enmities,
By curses.
It does not desert you suddenly (14-30)

Susheel Kumar Sharma also depicts some burning issues, local as well as global. There is love for mother land reflected in "A poem for my Country" in "Racist Attack", he has laid stress on a grave issue of international importance, racial discrimination, which is prevalent in this world. Race, ethnicity and multicultural issues are being discussed in the light of postcolonialism. This poem of Sharma rightly highlights concern regarding discrimination on the ground of race and community.

Socio-economic problems particularly the rich and the poor divide have found expression in various poems. "Poverty: Some scenes", "Nithari and Beyond", "For a Bride who thinks of Suicide", and "Democracy: Old and New" describe the problems existing in the society. He regards poverty a curse to the society. A close observation shows that the poems "For a Bride who thinks suicide", "Nithari and Beyond", "Democracy: Old and New" are poems which cry out the need for a social and regeneration of India. Sharma calls bride a symbol of tradition and civilization. In the poem "For a Bride Who thinks of Suicide" he writes:

A bride belongs to a groom.

She is a flute to be played on

She is a harmonium to produce a rhythm.

She is a synthesizer to modulate a discordant note.

She is the tune of a young heart,

Full of music and meaning Signifying harmony.

Brides are the carriers of tradition

Brides are the need of the civilization

Brides are the solace of bleeding hearts

Not to be trampled and kicked

But to be embalmed with care. (23-34)

It is interesting to note that the poet adopts different personas through the anthology as he sometimes seems to have acquired the role of a hermit, a social conscience, a lover and an observer. Childhood experiences, nostalgia and discussion of moral values are themes woven through the collection. Noted critic Dr. Rajnath asserts, "Good poetry always blends subjective and objective elements .Sometimes subjective elements become strong and some times objective elements become strong". *The Door Is Half Open* justifies this statement. In the end, I would like to mention that the poetic vision of Susheel Kumar Sharma is humanistic and his writing confirm his faith in the spiritual unity of the world demolishing all barriers of caste, class, gender, religion race and nationality.

भारत में खुदरा क्षेत्र में विदेशी निवेश विकास की संभावनाएँ एवं चुनौतियाँ

डॉ० सुनीता सोमानी
प्राध्यापक, अर्थशास्त्र

डॉ० भगवत सहाय शासकीय महाविद्यालय, ग्वालियर

केन्द्र सरकार ने आर्थिक सुधारों की दिशा में एक बड़ा कदम उठाते हुए मल्टी ब्राण्ड खुदरा कारोबार के क्षेत्र में 51 प्रतिशत प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (FDI) को मंजूरी दे दी थी। इस फैसले से देश के 590 अरब डॉलर के खुदरा क्षेत्र में वॉलमार्ट, केरफोर और टैस्को जैसी बहुराष्ट्रीय कम्पनियाँ प्रवेश कर सकती थी। प्रधानमंत्री मनमोहन सिंह की अध्यक्षता में कैबिनेट की बैठक में इस प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दी गई। इसके अलावा एकल ब्राण्ड रिटेल में 51 प्रतिशत की जगह शत-प्रतिशत FDI को भी मंजूरी दी गई। इससे फूड, लाइफस्टाइल और स्पोर्ट्स क्षेत्र की एडिडास, गुचि, हर्मेस, एलएमवीएच, कोस्टा कॉफी अपने कारोबार का पूरा स्वामित्व ले सकती थीं, किन्तु संसद में भारी विरोध के चलते सरकार ने कदम वापस ले लिए और कहा जा रहा है कि सर्वसम्मति बनने के बाद इसे दोबारा संसद में लाया जाएगा।
खुदरा क्षेत्र में विदेशी मुद्रा :-

करीब पांच साल पहले देश के किराना स्टोर्स पर संगठित खुदरा कारोबार के असर इकियर का गठन किया गया। सरकार ने इस पर आगे बढ़ने का जोखिम भरा फैसला भी ले लिया है, माना जा रहा है कि प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (FDI) के लिये मल्टी ब्राण्ड रिटेल कारोबार को खोलने का देश की अर्थव्यवस्था पर काफी असर पड़ेगा, इससे देश में रोजगार बढ़ने की उम्मीद भी है।

शोधार्थी द्वारा इस रिटेल में निवेश के अध्ययन के लिये परिकल्पना का चुनाव करे हुए यह अवधारणा निर्धारित की गई है कि 'रिटेल में निवेश राष्ट्र के आय एवं उत्पादन में वृद्धि करने में सहायक होगा'।

इस अवधारणा को प्रमाणित करने के लिये प्राथमिक एवं द्वितीयक समकों का उपयोग किया गया है एवं आवश्यकतानुसार प्रतिशत एवं सह-सम्बन्ध का उपयोग किया है। इस परिकल्पना को लेने का उद्देश्य राष्ट्र में विदेशी निवेश को लेकर विशद चिन्ता और अवधारणा चल रही है, उनका समाधान सोचना है। रिटेल में विदेशी निवेश उत्पादन एवं उपभोग दर पर क्या प्रभाव डालेगा। इसके साथ ही उपभोक्ता की आवश्यकताएँ कैसे पूर्ण होंगी एवं इससे बेरोजगारी पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ेगा उसका अध्ययन भी शोधार्थी का उद्देश्य है।

विश्लेषकों का कहना है कि देश का खुदरा बाजार सालाना 590 अरब डॉलर का है यानी इस बाजार में कम्पनियों के लिए अपार सम्भावनाएँ हैं। हाल ही में अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय शोध कम्पनी नीलसन के एक अध्ययन में कहा गया था कि

भारतीय उपभोक्ताओं का विश्वास दुनियां में सबसे ज्यादा है, इसीलिए इस बाजार में काफी सम्भावनाएं हैं । वॉलमार्ट, कार्फू, मैट्रो, टेस्को जैसी दिग्गज कम्पनियां देश में पहले ही मौजूद हैं । मल्टी ब्राण्ड में **FDI** नहीं होने से कम्पनियों ने एकल ब्राण्ड खुदरा में पकड़ बनाने पर जोर दिया 1

जर्मनी की रिटेल दिग्गज मेट्रो कैश एण्ड कैरी में ही कारोबार करना चाहती है । जबकि अमरिकी कम्पनी वॉलमार्ट और फ्रांस की दिग्गज कार्फू सरकार द्वारा मल्टी ब्राण्ड रिटेल में विदेशी अनुमति देने का इन्तजार कर रही है । ब्रिटेन की टेस्को ने भी टाटा समूह की ट्रेंट के साथ करार किया है और यह फ्रेंचाइजी के जरिए कारोबार करना चाहती है । 4 यह फ्रेंचाइजी के जरिए कारोबार करना चाहती है । देश में कैश एण्ड कैरी में विदेशी निवेश पर कोई पाबन्दी नहीं है । एकल ब्राण्ड खुदरा में 51 प्रतिशत **FDI** की अनुमति है । कुछ महीने पहले ही सचिवों ने मल्टी ब्राण्ड खुदरा में ही **FDI** को अनुमति देने पर मुहर लगाई थी ।

बहुब्राण्ड रिटेल में **FDI** की मंजूरी मिलने की खबर से पैटालून, विशाल रिटेल और प्रोवोग जैसी रिटेल कम्पनियों के शेयरों में खासी तेजी देखी गई ।

बिजनेस से तीन वर्ष में एक करोड़ रोजगार :-

सरकार का कहना है कि विदेशी रिटेल कम्पनियों के आने से देश के किसानों के हितों को कोई नुकसान नहीं पहुंचेगा । उल्टा सरकार का यह कहना है कि इससे किसानों का तो भला होगा, ग्राहकों को सस्ती कीमतों पर तमाम उत्पाद भी मिल सकेंगे साथ ही इससे महज तीन वर्ष में एक करोड़ से ज्यादा के अवसर पैदा होंगे ।

मल्टीब्राण्ड रिटेल कारोबार में 51 प्रतिशत तक प्रत्यक्ष विदेश निवेश **FDI** की अनुमति देने के फैसले के बारे में वाणिज्य व उद्योग मंत्री आनन्द शर्मा ने कहा कि अगले एक वर्ष के भीतर ही देश में कई अरब डॉलर का निवेश आएगा । मल्टीब्राण्ड स्टोर्स से सीधे तौर पर 40 लाख रोजगार के अवसर पैदा होंगे जबकि इससे जुड़े अन्य सम्बन्धित क्षेत्र में 50-50 लाख लोगों को रोजगार मिलेगा 2

यह फैसला मंहगाई पर अंकुश लगाने में सहायक साबित होगा । उन्होंने दावा किया कि अभी देश की 40 प्रतिशत फल-सब्जियां बर्बाद हो जाती हैं । विदेशी कम्पनियां इन्हें सुरक्षित रखने के लिए निवेश करेंगी । किसान सीधे तौर पर बड़ी रिटेल कम्पनियों के लिए पैदावार कर सकेंगे । कृषि उत्पादों के लिए ग्राहक अभी जो भुगतान करता है उसका सिर्फ सातवां हिस्सा ही किसानों को मिल पाता है ।

सरकार ने इस आरोप को भी खारिज किया कि विदेशी कम्पनियों के आने से देश की छोटी किराना दुकानें बंद हो जायेंगी इस सन्दर्भ में उन्होंने इण्डोनेशिया, मलेशिया, चीन, थाइलैण्ड, रूस सहित तमाम देशों का उदाहरण दिया । इन देशों में 100 प्रतिशत **FDI** की मंजूरी के बावजूद घरेलू रिटेल स्टार्स पर कोई असर नहीं पड़ा है । कुल निवेश का आधा हिस्सा कोल्ड स्टोरेज, वेयरहाउसिंग, सप्लाय चैन बनाने का खर्च करना होगा, ताकि इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर को फायदा हो सके । साथ ही इन कम्पनियों को 30 प्रतिशत उत्पाद भारत की छोटी कम्पनियों से खरीदने होंगे । विदेशी रिटेल कम्पनियां सिर्फ दस लाख से ज्यादा आबादी वाले देश के 53 शहरों में ही स्टोर खोल सकेंगी ।

विदेशी निवेश से लाभ :-

औद्योगिक नीति एवं संवर्धन विभाग (**DIPP**) वॉलमार्ट और टेस्को जैसी कम्पनियों को भारत में दुकान खालने देने के पक्ष में है । फिलहाल इन कम्पनियों को केवल कैश एण्ड कैरी यानी थोक में निवेश करने की छूट है । ये

केवल खुदरा कम्पनियों को अपना सामान बेच सकती हैं । सीधे ग्राहकों को नहीं । यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए कि देशी खुदरा कम्पनियां कारोबार से बाहर न हो जाएं, सरकार केवल उन्हीं शहरों में विदेशी खुदरा कम्पनियों को कारोबार की इजाजत देगी जिनकी आबादी दस लाख या इससे अधिक है । भारत में राज्यवार विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश इस प्रकार है :-

तालिका-3

भारत में क्षेत्र (राज्यवार) विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश

(1 अप्रैल, 2000 से 30 सितम्बर 2012)

| क्र० सं० | भा०रि०बैं०का क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय | आच्छादित राज्य | विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश | कुल विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश से प्रतिशत |
|----------|--|--|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | मुम्बई | महाराष्ट्र, दादरा एवं नगर हवेली, दमन एवं दीव | 60,272 | 33 |
| 2 | नई दिल्ली | दिल्ली, उत्तरप्रदेश एवं हरियाणा का पार्ट | 35,256 | 19 |
| 3 | बंगलुरु | कर्नाटक | 10,199 | 6 |
| 4 | चेन्नई | तामिलनाडु, पाण्डिचेरी | 9,341 | 5 |
| 5 | अहमदाबाद | गुजरात | 8,521 | 5 |
| 6 | हैदराबाद | आन्ध्रप्रदेश | 7,244 | 4 |
| 7 | कोलकाता | पं०बंगाल, सिक्किम, अण्डमान एवं निकोबार दीपसमूह | 2,017 | 1 |
| 8 | चंडीगढ़ | चंडीगढ़, पंजाब, हरियाणा, हिमाचलप्रदेश | 1,181 | 1 |
| 9 | कोची | केरल, लक्षदीप | 880 | 1 |
| 10 | भोपाल | मध्यप्रदेश, छत्तीसगढ़ | 886 | 1 |
| 11 | पणजी | गोआ | 768 | 0.4 |
| 12 | जयपुर | राजस्थान | 631 | 0.3 |
| 13 | कानपुर | उत्तरप्रदेश, उत्तराखण्ड | 337 | 0.2 |
| 14 | भुवनेश्वर | ओडिशा | 300 | 0.2 |
| 15 | गुवाहाटी | असम, अरुणाचल प्रदेश, मणिपुर, मेघालय, मिजोरम, नागालैण्ड, त्रिपुरा | 73 | 0.1 |
| 16 | पटना | बिहार, झारखण्ड | 34 | 0 |
| 17 | श्रीजन नॉट इंडीकेटेड योग :- | | 45,765 1,83,704 | 25 100 |
| 18 | अनिवासी जमा योजनाओं के निक्षेप (2000 से 2002) | | 121 | . |
| | महायोग :- | | 1,70,407 | . |

भारत में विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश प्रवाह की प्रकृति :-

वर्ष 2008 में वित्तीय संकट तक भारत में विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश प्रवाह बढ़कर तीन गुना हो चुका था । वर्ष 2001-02 के दौरान भारत में 6 अरब डॉलर का विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश आया, लेकिन वित्त वर्ष 2008-09 में यह बढ़कर 38 अरब डॉलर पर पहुंच गया । विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश प्रवाह में इस तेजी की वजह से कई साल तक चालू खाते में घाटे की भरपाई करने में मदद मिलती रही । बहरहाल वित्त वर्ष 2010-11 के दौरान ज्यादातर उभरती अर्थव्यवस्था वाले देशों में विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश प्रवाह में तेजी पायी, लेकिन भारत में इस दौरान कमी दर्ज की गई । वित्त वर्ष 2010-11 के दौरान भारत में 20.1 अरब डॉलर का विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश था । जबकि 2009-10 में यह 27.1 अरब डॉलर का था 4

जहां तक सेक्टर का सवाल है, तो इसमें सबसे ज्यादा विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश सर्विस सेक्टर में आया (पिछले पांच साल के दौरान इसकी औसत हिस्सेदारी बढ़कर 41 प्रतिशत हो गई) इसके बाद विदेशी निवेश प्रवाह के हिसाब से मैन्युफैक्चरिंग का नम्बर रहा इसमें यह हिस्सेदारी 23 प्रतिशत रही, हालांकि सबसे ज्यादा विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश पिछले पांच साल के दौरान मॉरिशस के रास्ते आया है । कुल मिलाकर उभरती हुई अर्थव्यवस्था वाले अन्य देशों की तुलना में भारत में कम विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश की अहम वजह रही नीतिगत मॉर्चों पर फौसले लेने में कमजोरी चाहे वह मल्टीनेशनल रिटेल में विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश का मामला हो या इंड्योरिन्स सेक्टर का खोले जाने पर सहमति बनाने का मामला ।

अब अपार संभावनाएं नजर आने लगी हैं (एक अनुमान के मुताबिक भारत में कुल खुदरा कारोबार सालाना 350 से 400 अरब डॉलर का है और यहां कैश एण्ड कैरी के लिए 150 अरब डॉलर की सम्भावना है । कई विदेशी रिटेल चेन ने मल्टीब्राण्ड रिटेल में सख्त नियमों को देखते हुए भी भारतीय बाजार में कदम रखने के लिये कैश एण्ड कैरी मॉडल को एक जरिया बनाया । वॉलमार्ट, कार्फू और मैट्रो या फिर घरेलू रिलायन्स रिटेल जैसी कम्पनियां अगर भारत में अपने कैश एण्ड कैरी में बड़ा निवेश कर रही हैं तो इसके पीछे एक खास वजह है 5

नीलसन के कार्यकारी निदेशक (विश्लेषण) राज होशाहली ने हाल ही में बताया था, ' इस क्षेत्र में जिस तरह कुछ कम्पनियां विस्तार योजनाएं बनाने में जुट गई हैं, उससे साफ है कि यहां मांग है' उन्होंने कहा कि भारत में यह फॉर्मेट चल निकला है 6 टैक्नोपैक एडवाइजर्स में रिटेल की वरिष्ठ उपाध्यक्ष सलोनी नांगिया ने बताया कि भारत में कैश एण्ड कैरी कारोबार अभी शुरूआती दौर में है, मगर यह जल्दी ही सबसे मजबूत फॉर्मेट बन कर उभरेगा । खासतौर पर अर्ध शहरी और अर्ध ग्रामीण इलाकों में यह काफी सफल रह सकता है । उनका मानना है कि कैश एण्ड कैरी फॉर्मेट की वजह से ग्राहकों को सस्ते दाम पर सामान मिल सकता है ।

अमरीका की दिग्गज खुदरा कम्पनी वॉलमार्ट ने भारत में सबसे तेजी से विकास किया है । कम्पनी ने साल 2009 में भारत में पहला कैश एण्ड कैरी आउटलेट खोला था । अब इस अमरीकी कम्पनी के देश भर में 14 स्टोर हैं । वॉलमार्ट ने भी विस्तार की महत्वाकांक्षी योजना बना रखी है । कम्पनी अगले दो सालों में कम से कम 20 स्टोर खोलना चाहती है । वॉलमार्ट और भारती इंटरप्राइजेज के बीच आधी-आधी हिस्सेदारी के साथ तैयार संयुक्त उपक्रम अगले पांच सालों के दौरान भारत में मैट्रो कैश एण्ड कैरी के बराबर ही खर्च कर सकती है ।

इस क्षेत्र की सम्भावित क्षमता को भांपते हुए ही रिलायंस इण्डस्ट्रीज के चेयरमैन मुकेश अम्बानी ने जून 2011 में सालाना आम बैठक के दौरान कम्पनी की भारी-भरकम रिटेल योजना की घोषणा की थी ।

भारत जैसे विशाल राष्ट्र की वर्तमान आवश्यकतायें राष्ट्रीय उत्पादन में वृद्धि एक क्रांतिकारी जरूरत है इसके पूर्ण करने के लिये बड़ी मात्रा में विनियोग के लिये पूंजी चाहिये इसलिये भारत में रिटेल में विदेशी निवेश आवश्यक है । भारत सरकार इस मुहिम को पूर्ण करने के लिये माहौल तैयार कर रही है । इसके निम्नलिखित लाभ बताये जा रहे हैं :-

1- एफ डी आई आने से संगठित बाजार उद्योग को प्रोत्साहन मिलेगा किसानों को अपने उत्पादन का उचित मूल्य प्राप्त होगा इसका प्रमुख कारण बिचौलियों की संख्या में कमी आना है जिससे किसान सीधे बड़े उत्पादकों और विक्रेताओं को अपना माल बेच पायेंगे । संगठित उद्योगों को विक्रय उनके लिये लाभप्रद होगा ।

2- एफ डी आई के आने से आधारभूत सुविधाओं में वृद्धि होगी क्योंकि सरकार के द्वारा यह शर्त रखी गई है कि वे भारत में अपने निवेश का 25 प्रतिशत भाग गोदामों और वेयर हाउस के निर्माण पर व्यय करेंगे एक बड़ा हिस्सा सड़कों आदि के निर्माण पर भी लगाया जायेगा ।

3- रिटेल में एफ डी आई का आना राष्ट्र की एक बड़ी समस्या मंहगाई पर भी विजय पाने के लिये जरूरी है । रिजर्व बैंक के गवर्नर के अनुसार भारत खाद्य मंहगाई की समस्या से जूझ रहा है । अगस्त 2013 में खाद्य मंहगाई दर 18 प्रतिशत से ज्यादा रही है । ग्लोबल सप्लाय चैन से यहां खाद्य वस्तुओं का आयात नहीं होता अतः अधिक पूर्ति की आवश्यकता को विदेशी निवेश से दूर किया जा सकता है ।

4- रिटेल में एफ डी आई उपभोक्ताओं को लाभ पहुंचाता है क्योंकि उन्हें विश्वस्तरीय वस्तुयें स्थानीय बाजार में प्राप्त होती है और उनके मूल्य भी अपेक्षाकृत कम होते हैं । इसका सीधा लाभ भारत के 100 करोड़ उपभोक्ताओं को प्राप्त होगा ।

5- विदेशी निवेश भारत में रोजगार का निर्माण कर बढ़ती बेरोजगारी पर लगाम लगाने का कार्य भी करेगा । कीन्स के अनुसार नया निवेश राष्ट्र में गुणक प्रभाव को क्रियाशील कर उत्पादन एवं पुर्ननिवेश को कई गुना बढ़ा देता है फलस्वरूप बेरोजगारी में कमी आने की संभावना बढ़ जायेगी ।

6- भारत पर 2010 में 260 बिलियन डॉलर का कर्ज था जो 2012 में 365*3 बिलियन डॉलर हो गया यदि विदेशी निवेश में वृद्धि होती है तो यह निवेश ऋणों की बढ़ती मात्रा में कमी करेगा ।

भारत में वैश्विक बाजार में अपना महत्वपूर्ण स्थान बनाया है युवाओं का देश होने के कारण यहां मांग में निरन्तर वृद्धि हो रही है जिसकी पूर्ति के लिये अनेक विदेशी कंपनियां भारत में प्रवेश की राह देख रही हैं यदि यह रिटेल निवेश हमारे उत्पादन और तकनीक में वृद्धि के लिये होता है तो निश्चित ही लाभप्रद होगा परन्तु शोधार्थी ने अध्ययन के दौरान विदेशी निवेश भारतीय घरानों को खरीदने और खुदरा बाजार को समाप्त करने के उद्देश्य को पूरा करने के लिये पाया तो राष्ट्र के नीति निर्माताओं को सोचना होगा कि इन मल्टीब्राण्ड कम्पनियों और रिटेल निवेश पर एक नियामक संस्थान मजबूती से स्थापित करे ताकि राष्ट्रीय हितों की अवहेलना न हो सके । विकास हमारी परम आवश्यकता है पर विकास का कोई भी कंगूरा हमारी नींव के पत्थर को न हिला दे ।

संदर्भ ग्रन्थ की सूची :-

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- 2- भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था विश्लेषण एवं बदलता परिदृश्य, डॉ० महेन्द्र मिश्रा, सागर पब्लिशर्स, जयपुर 2010, पृष्ठ 169-177
- 3- प्रतियोगिता दर्पण फरवरी 2013, पृष्ठ क्रमांक 1175
- 4- आर्थिक समीक्षा 2009-10, पृष्ठ 105-109
- 5- प्रतियोगिता दर्पण अप्रैल 2012, पृष्ठ 1660
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सोनपेठ शहरातील विट उत्पादकांच्या स्थितीचा अभ्यास

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प्रस्तावना -

एकाविसाव्या शतकात भारत देशास समर्थ, समृद्ध, प्रगत आर्थिक महासत्ता व आधुनिक राष्ट्र बनविण्याचे सामर्थ्य उद्योजकतेत आहे. उद्योजकता हा गुण मानवी स्वभावातच आढळतो. या देशाची खरी संपत्ती देशाचे नागरीक व त्याच्यामध्ये असणारा उद्योजकता हा गुण होय.

उद्योग म्हणजे केवळ मोठे कारखाने नव्हे तर ज्यामधुन राष्ट्राच्या आर्थिकारणास गती मिळते व रोजगार उत्पन्न होईल असे छोटे उद्योग सुध्दा असतात.

भारतात आपला महाराष्ट्र हा उद्योजकतेत आग्रभागी असणाऱ्या काही राज्यात येतो. महाराष्ट्रामध्ये मोठ्या उद्योगा बरोबर लघु उद्योगाची संख्या मोठ्या प्रमाणात आहे. परंतु लघु उद्योगाच्या पातळीवर शासनाचे हवे तेवढे लक्ष आपणास अलीकडील काळात दिसून येत नाही. या कारणामुळे पारंपारीक उद्योग मोडकळीस येताना दिसतात याचा परिणाम लघु उत्पादन करणाऱ्या व त्यावर रोजगारासाठी अवलंबून असणाऱ्या कुटूंबा वरती आर्थिक परिणाम होताना दिसून येतो. दुष्काळा सारखी आपत्ती अनेक उद्योग धंद्यांना प्रभावीत करत असते मुळात दुष्काळामुळे दुष्काळग्रस्त भागातील जनतेची क्रयशक्ती घटते त्यामुळे अन्न, वस्त्र आणि निवारा या मुलभूत गरजा पैकी काही गरजा तात्पुरत्या स्वरूपात भागविण्याकडे कल असतो जसे की, पक्के घर बांधण्या ऐवजी सर्वसाधारण निवासात राहण्याची मानसिकता लोक करत असतात. ही बाब अनेक उद्योगांना प्रभावीत करते. यामध्ये बांधकाम साहित्यातील सिमेंट उत्पादन, लोखंड उत्पादन, लाकडी उत्पादन आणि विट उत्पादन यांचा समावेश होतो.

विट उत्पादनावर अवलंबून असणारे अनेक कुटूंब मराठवाड्यातील ग्रामीण भागात पहावयास मिळतात. परभणी जिल्ह्यातील सोनपेठ तालुक्यात अनेक कुटूंब या उत्पादनावर अवलंबून असलेले आपणास पहावयास मिळतात. या उद्योगावर २०१२-१३ या आर्थिक वर्षात मराठवाड्यात पडलेल्या दुष्काळाचा काय परिणाम झाला याचा अभ्यास करणे गरजेचे आहे.

संशोधन पध्दती -

या संशोधनासाठी खालील पध्दती वापरण्यात आल्या १. प्रश्नावली, २. प्रत्यक्ष मुलाखती

विश्लेषण आणि परिणाम -

सोनपेठ हे तालुक्याचे ठिकाण असून ते परभणी जिल्ह्यात आहे. या गावाची लोकसंख्या १५००० ते २०००० आहे. तालुक्यातील लोकांचा मुख्य व्यवसाय शेती आहे. शेतीबरोबरच अनेक पारंपारीक व्यवसाय करणारे उद्योजक येथे आहेत. यापैकी विट उत्पादनावर आपल्या कुटूंबाची गुजरान करणारे व्यवसायीक स्वतःच्या कुटूंबासह विटभट्यावर काम करताना दिसतात. एकूण अभ्यास करण्यासाठी सोनपेठ शहराच्या सभोवती असणाऱ्या १६ विटभट्यांची निवड केली.

एकंदरीत अभ्यास करीत असताना खालील बाबी निदर्शनास आल्या या उत्पादकांच्या मागील तिन वर्षांतील उत्पादनाचा आढावा घेतला असताना २०१०-११, २०११-१२ व २०१२-१३ या आर्थिक वर्षांच्या उत्पादनाचा अभ्यास केला असता असे निदर्शनास आले की, २०१०-११, २०११-१२ या आर्थिक वर्षांच्या तुलनेत २०१२-१३ मध्ये उत्पादनात घट झालेली आढळून आली. उत्पादकाच्या मुलाखती घेत असताना मागील दोन वर्षांच्या तुलनेत २०१२-१३ चे उत्पादन आणि विक्री दोन्ही कमी झाल्याचे त्यांनी नोंदवले. अर्थशास्त्रीय दृष्टीकोनातून उत्पादन कमी व विक्री कमी याचाच अर्थ वस्तूला असणारी ग्राहकाकडून मागणी कमी होती. असे का झाले? याच्या कारणाचा शोध घेताना त्यांच्याशी चर्चा केली असताना उत्पादनासाठी आवश्यक असणारे पाणी सहजासहजी उपलब्ध झाले नाही. म्हणून उत्पादनावर परिणाम झाला असे नमूद केले. उत्पादना बरोबरच विक्रीवर का परिणाम झाला याची चर्चा करताना असे दिसून आले की, सोनपेठ परिसरातील लोकांचा मुख्य व्यवसाय शेती आहे. व ही शेती निसर्गावर आधारित असल्या कारणाने गतवर्षी कमी पाऊस झाला व शेती उत्पादन प्रभावीत झाले. त्यामुळे अनेकांनी विविध प्रकारचे बांधकाम केले नाही. व त्याचा परिणाम विट उत्पादकावर व बांधकाम व्यवसायीकावर त्यावर आधारित मजुरावर झाला.

परिणाम -

१. विट उत्पादन करणाऱ्या कुटूंबाच्या २०१०-११, २०११-१२ च्या तुलनेत उत्पादकांच्या उत्पादनामध्ये २०१२-१३ मध्ये लज्जीय घट झाल्याचे निदर्शनास येते.
२. हा व्यवसाय लघु उत्पादनाचा असून यामध्ये काम करणारे कुटूंब स्वतः या विटभट्यांचे मालक असतात. त्यामुळे या व्यवसायावर अवलंबून असणारे घटक स्त्री व पुरुष समान प्रमाणात अवलंबून असतात. म्हणून याचा रोजगार आर्थिक परिस्थिती या बाबतचा परिणाम दोन्ही घटकावर होतो.
३. विट उत्पादनावर अवलंबून असणारे बांधकाम व्यवसायीक व मजुर यांच्यावर सुध्दा याचा परिणाम झालेला आपणस आढळून येतो.
४. दुष्काळी परिस्थितीमुळे विट उत्पादनाच्या आधारावर घेतलेले कर्ज (मुख्यत्वे खाजगी कर्ज) वाढते व व्यवसायीक जर्जबाजारी होतो.
५. एकूण केलेल्या सर्वेक्षणात २०१०-११ मध्ये व्यवसायीकांचे उत्पादन ५,६६,०००/- होते. २०११-१२ मध्ये ६,००,०००/- असल्याचे निदर्शनास आले. तर २०१२-१३ मध्ये २,५९,०००/- रूपये होते.
६. एकंदरीत विश्लेषणाअंती महागाई वाढीनुसार विचार केल्यास हे क्षेत्र उत्पादनाच्या बाबतीत ५०% पेक्षा जास्त प्रभावीत झाल्याचे निदर्शनास येते.
७. एकूण उत्पादन करणाऱ्या विटभट्यांपैकी (१६ पैकी) सर्व उत्पादकांनी सप्टेंबर मध्ये उत्पादन सुरू केले. परंतु त्यापैकी ५ विट उत्पादकांना उत्पादन नंतर बंद करावे लागले.

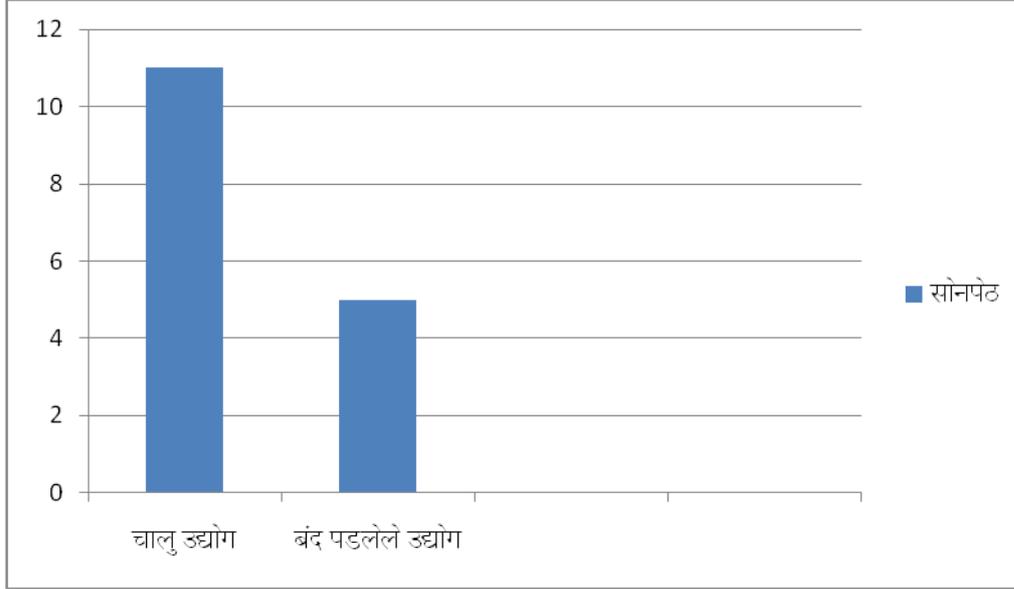
समारोप -

एकंदरीत विट उत्पादन करणाऱ्या उत्पादकांचा विचार केला असता ते अतिशय कष्टाळू असतात किंवा कठोर परिश्रमाशिवाय हा व्यवसाय उभा राहू शकत नाही. मुलाखती दरम्यान त्यांच्या अनेक अडचणी समोर आल्या. त्यामध्ये १. परवानगीसाठी अतिशय कठोर नियम असल्यामुळे त्यांना ती प्रक्रिया करता येत नाही. म्हणून त्यामध्ये सुलभता आणावी. २. विट उत्पादनासाठी पारंपारीक पध्दतीने माती मोफत मिळायला हवी. ३. विट उत्पादकांना कर्ज देण्यासाठी तरतूद करण्यात यावी. ४. विट उत्पादकामध्ये पर्यावरण व उत्पादनाच्या योग्य पध्दतीबाबत जागरूकता निर्माण करण्यासाठी उच्च स्तरावरून प्रयत्न करावेत.

दुष्काळी परिस्थितीमुळे सर्वसामान्यतः विट उत्पादकांच्या आर्थिक परिस्थितीवर मोठा परिणाम झालेला आढळून येतो.

सोनपेठ येथील विट उत्पादनाची स्थिती दर्शविणारा तक्ता १.१

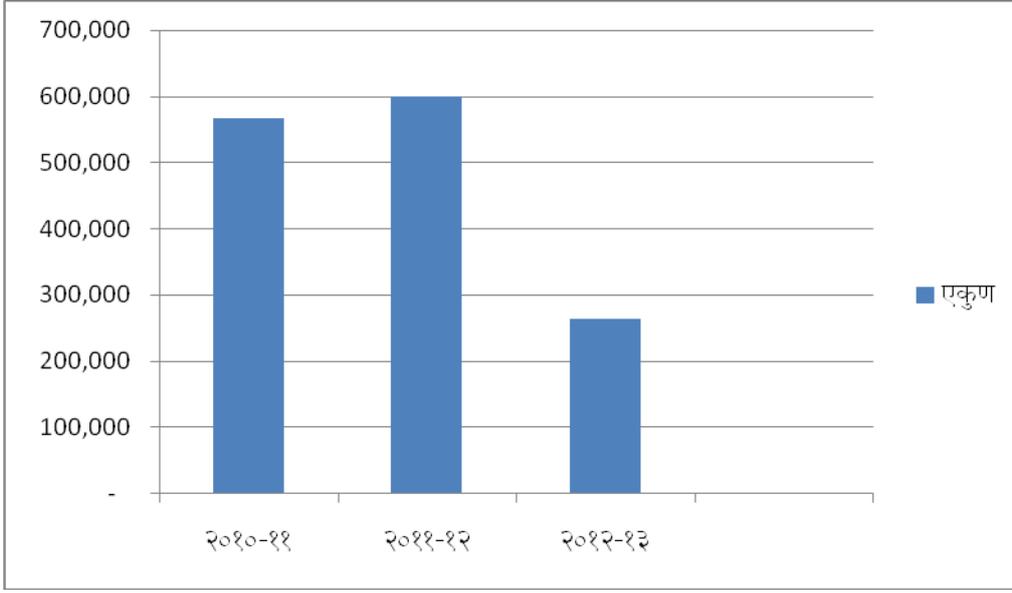
| ठिकाण | चालू उद्योग | बंद पडलेले उद्योग | एकूण |
|--------|-------------|-------------------|------|
| सोनपेठ | ११ | ५ | १६ |



सोनपेट मधील विट उत्पादनाची आर्थिक स्थिती दर्शवणारा तक्ता १.२

| विटभट्टी क्रमांक | २०१०-११ | २०११-१२ | २०१२-१३ |
|------------------|----------|----------|---------|
| १ | ४२,००० | ४७,००० | २५,००० |
| २ | ३८,००० | ४२,००० | २२,००० |
| ३ | ४५,००० | ४६,००० | २४,००० |
| ४ | ३५,००० | ३७,००० | २३,००० |
| ५ | ३२,००० | ३०,००० | ६०००* |
| ६ | ३०,००० | ३०,००० | २०,००० |
| ७ | ३२,००० | ३७,००० | २२,००० |
| ८ | ३३,००० | ३६,००० | २१,००० |
| ९ | ३८,००० | ३९,००० | ५०००* |
| १० | ४१,००० | ४६,००० | २७,००० |
| ११ | ४०,००० | ४१,००० | २५,००० |
| १२ | ४३,००० | ४५,००० | २२,००० |
| १३ | ४०,००० | ४१,००० | २,०००* |
| १४ | ३८,००० | ३७,००० | ३,०००* |
| १५ | २२,००० | २७,००० | ७,०००* |
| १६ | १७,००० | १९,००० | ११,००० |
| एकूण | ५,६६,००० | ६,००,००० | २६५,००० |

सोनपेठ मधील विट उत्पादनाची आर्थिक स्थिती दर्शवणारा आलेख १.२



संदर्भ:-

१. भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था - रूद्र दत्त सुंदरम
२. शेतमजुरांची दशा व दिशा - गोविंद कानेटकर - रूद्र प्रज्ञाशन जेल्हापुर
३. वीट भट्टी व मजुराची स्थिती- काँब्रेड गोविंद पानसरे
४. बालमजुरांची समस्या व उपाय- यशराज स्वरूप, डायमंड प्रकाशन पुणे
५. Indian Economy - भालेराव जु लज्जी

महात्मा फुले यांचे समग्र विचार व कार्य

प्रा. भालेराव गंगाधर रामराव

राज्यशास्त्र विभाग प्रमुख, राजर्षी शाहू कॉलेज, परभणी

एकोणिसाव्या शतकाच्या उत्तरार्धात महाराष्ट्रात वारंवार भीषण दुष्काळ पडले. पिके गेली, उपासमार झाली, गुरे-ढोरे मेली तरी शेतक-यांकडून ठरलेला जबर सारा जोरजबरदस्ती करून वसूल करण्यात सरकार हयगय करीत नव्हते. सार्वजनिक सभा या पुण्यातील संस्थेने सरकारचे लक्ष शेतक-यांच्या दुरावस्थेकडे ओढण्याचा प्रयत्न केला. शेतकरी हवालदिल झाले होते. त्यांनी काही गावात सावकारांविरुद्ध सामाजिक बहिष्कार पुकारला. वाण्यांची घरे व दुकाने लुटली. दख्खन दंगे म्हणून हे उठाव प्रसिद्ध आहेत. भिल्ल, रामोशी, कोळी, मांग अशा आदिवासी व मागासवर्गीय लोकांनीही बंडाचे झेंडे उभारले.

महात्मा जोतीराव गोविंदराव फुले यांचा जन्म ११ एप्रिल १८२७ मध्ये झाला. त्यांचे मूळ गाव हे सातारा जिल्ह्यातील कटगुण हे होते. त्यांच्या वडिलांचे नाव गोविंदराव व आईचे नाव चिमणाबाई होते. शेवटच्या पेशव्यांच्या काळात महात्मा फुले यांचे वडील आणि दोन चुलते हे फुले पुरविण्याचे काम करीत होते, त्यामुळे गोरे हे त्यांचे मूळ आडनाव असले तरी पुढे ते फुले ह्या नावाने ओळखले जाऊ लागले. आणि हेच नाव रूढ झाले. कटगुणहून त्यांचा परिवार पुरंदर तालुक्यातील खानवटी येथे आला.

जोतीराव केवळ नऊ महिन्यांचे होते, तेव्हा त्यांच्या आईचे निधन झाले. जोतीबाचा विवाह वयाच्या तेराव्या वर्षी सावित्रीबाई यांच्याशी झाला. प्राथमिक शिक्षणानंतर काही काळ त्यांनी भाजीविक्रीचा व्यवसाय केला. इ.स. १८४२ मध्ये माध्यमिक शिक्षणासाठी पुण्याच्या स्कॉटीश मिशन हायस्कूलमध्ये त्यांनी प्रवेश घेतला. २४ सप्टेंबर १८७३ रोजी महात्मा जोतीराव फुले यांनी सत्यशोधक समाजाची स्थापना केली. समाजातील विषमता नष्ट करणे व तळागाळातील समाजापर्यंत शिक्षण पोहचवणे हे सत्यशोधक समाजाचे ध्येय होते. सत्यशोधक समाज सोसायटीचे ते पहिले अध्यक्ष आणि खजिनदार होते. वेदांना झुगारून त्यांनी हे कार्य करण्यास सुरुवात केली. त्यांनी जातीय भेद आणि चातुर्वर्णीय भेदभावास विरोध करण्यास सुरुवात केली.

महात्मा फुले यांनी सत्यशोधक समाजाची स्थापना केली. तेव्हा स्त्री विभागाचे नेतृत्व सावित्रीबाई यांनी केले. सावित्रीबाई यांच्याबरोबर १९ स्त्रियांनी सत्यशोधक समाजाचे कार्य करीत होत्या. त्याचवेळी सावित्रीबाई या एक कन्याशाळेच्या शिक्षिकाही होत्या. दीनबंधू प्रकाशनाने सत्यशोधक चळवळीच्या वेळी लेखन-प्रकाशनाचे काम केले. महाराष्ट्रातील तळागाळापर्यंत चळवळ पोहचली. छत्रपती शाहू महाराजांनी सत्यशोधक चळवळीला पाठिंबा दिला. न्यायापासून, अत्याचारापासून व गुलामगिरीतून शूद्रातिशूद्र समाजाची मुक्तता करणे व त्यांना हक्काची जाणीव करून देणे हे सत्यशोधक समाजाचे ध्येय होते.

मानवी हक्कावर इ.स. १७९१ मध्ये थॉमस पेन यांनी लिहिलेले पुस्तक महात्मा फुलेंनी वाचले असता त्यांचा त्यांच्यावर प्रभाव पडला. सामाजिक न्यायाबद्दल त्यांच्या मनात विचार येऊ लागले. त्यामुळेच विषमता दूर करण्यासाठी स्त्रीशिक्षण आणि मागासलेल्या जातीतील मुलांमुलींचे शिक्षण यावर त्यांनी भर देण्याचे ठरवले. सामाजिक भेदभाव त्यामुळे कमी होईल असे त्यांचे मत आणि अनुमान होते.

कोणताही धर्म ईश्वराने निर्माण केलेला नाही आणि चातुर्वर्ण्य व जातीभेद ही निर्मिती मानवाचीच आहे असे रोखठोकपणे बोलताना मात्र या विश्वाची निर्मिती करणारी कोणती तरी शक्ती आहे अशी त्यांची (आस्तिकवादी) विचारसरणी होती. मानवाने गुण्यागोविंदाने राहावे असे त्यांचे मत होते. त्यांनी लिहिलेल्या 'शेतक-याचा आसूड' या पुस्तकातून महाराष्ट्रातील शेतक-यांची विदारक दुर्दशा आणि दारिद्र्याची वास्तवता विशद केली आहे.

या पुस्तकाद्वारे विशाल दृष्टीकोनाचा क्रांतीकारक म्हणून जोतीरावांचे दर्शन होते. नीती हाच मानवी जीवनाचा आधार आहे हा विचार मांडणारे जोतीराव एक तत्त्वचिंतक व्यक्तिमत्व होते. महात्मा फुलेंनी सामाजिक प्रबोधन करण्यासाठी 'शेतक-याचा आसूड' इ. ग्रंथ लिहून सामाजिक प्रबोधन केले. मूलभूत मानवी हक्कांच्या आधारावरून विश्वकुटुंब कसे निर्माण

होईल व त्याकरिता कशाप्रकारचा वर्तनक्रम व वैचारिक भूमिका स्वीकारली पाहिजे हे जोतीरावांनी आपल्या सार्वजनिक सत्यधर्म संहितेत अनेक वचनांच्या आधारे मांडली आहे. त्यातील काही महत्त्वाची वचने लिहिली.

“संसाराविषयी फुले यांचा दृष्टीकोन अर्थातच आशावादी होता. कष्टपूर्वक चालणा-या गृहस्थाश्रमाला ते फार मान देत. कौटुंबिक जीवनाची व समाजाची खरी प्रगती परिश्रमाची वाढ होऊनच होणार आहे”.

१९ व्या शतकाचा विचार केल्यास या शतकावर ज्ञान ही एक शक्ती आहे, शिक्षण हे सर्वांगीण सुधारणेचे प्रवेशद्वार आहे. या विचारांचा महाराष्ट्रात प्रभाव दिसतो. ‘विचार’ आणि ‘आचार’ या बाबत महात्मा फुले आदर्श होत. तत्कालीन समाजात शिक्षणाची संधी ज्यांना नाकारण्यात आली आहे, अशांसाठी त्यांनी पुढाकार घेतला आहे. इंग्रजी राज्य लेखी कायद्यावर आधारित असल्याने अज्ञान, निरक्षर लोकांची फसवणूक टाळण्यासाठी शिक्षण हा प्रभावी उपाय होता. मानसिक व आर्थिक गुलामगिरीतून सुटका होण्यासाठी शिक्षण हे प्रभावी हत्यार आहे, यावर महात्मा फुले यांचा विश्वास होता. याच कारणासाठी त्यांनी शिक्षण वरिष्ठ वर्गातून आपोआप खालच्या वर्गापर्यंत पाझरत जाईल, या ‘पाझरण’ किंवा ‘झिरपणी’ सिद्धांतास विरोध केला.

शिकून सर्वांनाच नोक-या मिळणार नाहीत याची जाणीव महात्मा फुले यांना होती. त्यामुळे त्यांनी व्यवहारज्ञान व व्यावसायिक कौशल्यांचा पाठपुरावा केला. तत्कालीन समाजात व्यसनाधिनता वाढत चाललेली पाहून त्यांनी “शूद्र मुलांमुलींना शाळेत घालावे। सुशील करावे सर्व कामी” अशी भूमिका मांडली. हंटर आयोगापुढे साक्ष देताना त्यांनी १२ वर्षांपर्यंतच्या सर्व मुलामुलींना प्राथमिक शिक्षण सक्तीचे करण्याची सूचना दिलेली होती. चांगले शिक्षक खेड्यात जायला तयार होण्यासाठी त्यास अधिक वेतन व स्थानिक पातळीवरील कामे देण्याची गरज आहे, असे सांगून शिक्षकांचा पगार विद्यार्थ्यांच्या निकालाशी जोडण्यास विरोध केला.

महात्मा फुले आणि ज्ञानज्योती सावित्रीबाई फुले यांनी बुधवार पेठेतील भिडे वाड्यात मुलींची पहिली शाळा सुरू केली. भारतीयांनी भारतीयांसाठी सर्वांना मुक्त प्रवेश देणारी ही पहिलीच मुलींची शाळा. पुढे आण्णासाहेब चिपळूणकरांच्या वाड्यात तीन मुलीनिशी शाळा सुरू झाली. लवकरच तिची संख्या ४८ पर्यंत पोहचली. पुढे रास्ता पेठ, वेताळ पेठ येथे शाळा निघाल्या. जोतीराव आणि सावित्रीबाई यांनी शिक्षणाच्या क्षेत्रात नूतन सृष्टीच निर्माण केली.

आयुष्याची आठ-दहा वर्षे स्त्रीशूद्रातिशूद्रांच्या शिक्षणासाठी दिल्यानंतर सामाजिक सुधारणेच्या इतर क्षेत्रांकडे जोतीराव वळले. अविवेकी रुढी, परंपरा व अंधश्रद्धा यांच्या प्रभावाखाली समाजात स्त्रियांचे प्रश्न इतर सुधारकांनीही हाताळले होते. केशवपन, विधवा पुनर्विवाहनिषेध, वैधव्याला चिटकलेली अशुभता व अपावित्र्य, विधवांच्या शारीरिक व मानसिक शोषणाचे नाना प्रकार, स्त्रियांची निरक्षरता इ. प्रश्नांकडे समाजाचे लक्ष वेधून त्यांचा प्रतिसाद सुधारक आपआपल्या परीने करीतच होते. जोतीरावांनी त्या प्रश्नांचा मुकाबला वेगळ्याच पद्धतीने केला.

१८६३ साली त्यांनी बालहत्या प्रतिबंधकगृहाची स्थापना करून मोठमोठी पोस्टर्स गावभर सर्वत्र लावली. अडचणीत सापडलेल्या विधवांनी तेथे यावे, आपल्या मुलांना जन्म द्यावा. त्यांची नावे जाहीर होणार नाहीत. जातांना त्यांनी मूल घेऊन जावे किंवा ठेवून जावे. अनाथाश्रमात त्यांच्या मुलांचे संगोपन केले जाईल अशी सोय जोतीरावांनी केली होती. खुद्द सावित्रीबाई या प्रसूतिगृहाची देखभाल करीत. जोतीरावांनी अशी संस्था चालविणे हा सनातन्यांच्या बोलकिल्ल्यावर टाकलेला तोफेचा गोळाच होता. पण हात चोळीत राहण्यापलीकडे ते काहीच करू शकले नाहीत. देशात त्याकाळी अशाप्रकारची कोणतीही संस्था नव्हती.

विधवांचे केशवपन करून त्यांना विद्रुप करण्याच्या अमानुष प्रथेविरुद्ध अनेक सुधारकांनी जनमत जागे करण्याचा प्रयत्न केला. त्या एकूण प्रसंगातील क्रौर्य अधोरेखित केले. जोतीरावांनी त्यासाठी अनुसरलेला मार्ग मात्र अगदीच अभिनव आणि प्रभावी ठरणारा होता. त्यांनी गावातल्या नाभिकांना संघटित करून या प्रश्नावर त्यांचे सहकार्य मिळवले. वाटेल ते झाले तरी यापुढे विधवांची डोकी भादरणार नाही असा निर्णय नाभिकांनी घेतला.

धार्मिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक, शैक्षणिक अशा अनेक विषयांवर जोतीरावांनी त्यांच्या काळाच्या फार पुढे जाणारे बंडखोर व मार्मिक विचार मांडले गेले. त्यांचे हे विचार प्रासंगिक आणि संकीर्ण असले तरी त्यांचे अंतःसूत्र एकच असल्यामुळे त्यांच्यात कमालीची सुसंगतता आहे. परिवर्तनाची दिशा आणि उद्दिष्ट्ये सुस्पष्ट असली तरच विचारांमध्ये अशी सुसंगतता साध्य होते. त्यांच्या युक्तीवादावर काळाच्या व्यासंगाच्या आणि उपलब्ध माहितीच्या काही मर्यादा अपरिहार्यतः पडलेल्या असल्या तरी त्यांचे प्रतिपादन कोठेही तर्कशुद्धतेला पारखे झालेले नाही. बुद्धीप्रामाण्यवाद, इहवाद, तारतम्य, समग्रता, विवेकनिष्ठा, खुलेपणा ही त्यांच्या वैचारिक लेखनाची पायाभूत वैशिष्ट्ये असून निरपवादपणे ती त्यांच्या संपूर्ण लेखनात आढळतात.

‘शेतक-याचा आसूड’ हा ग्रंथ जोतीरावांनी १८८३ साली लिहिला. शेतक-यांच्या खालावलेल्या परिस्थितीचे प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकन करून आपल्यापरीने त्यांची कारणमीमांसा करणारा हा जोतीरावांचा ग्रंथ पाच प्रकरणात विभागलेला आहे.

शेतक-यांची दुरावस्था किती भीषण आहे, ती तशी होण्यामागची कारणे कोणती व त्यावरील उपाय हे ह्या ग्रंथात जोतीरावांनी लिहिले आहेत. “शूद्र शेतकरी धर्माचे जुलमी व बनावट स्वरूप ओळखू शकत नाही. तसेच सर्व सरकारी खात्यातील कामगारांकडून नाडले जातात. या दोन्ही गोष्टींसाठी कारणीभूत जर कोणती एक बाब असेल तर ती शूद्र शेतक-यांच्या ठिकाणी असलेला विद्येचा अभाव हीच होय”, अशी जोतीरावांची धारणा होती.

“धर्म आणि राज्य या दोन्ही क्षेत्रातील भल्याबु-यांचा नीरक्षीरविवेक करण्याची कर्तृत्व अविद्येपायी शेतक-यांच्या अंगी उरली नाही आणि तो त्या दोहोंमधील अधिकारी व्यक्तींच्या हातून अनन्वित अन्याय आणि जाच-जुलूम निमूटपणे सहन करीत राहिला. धार्मिक आणि राजकीय या दोन्ही क्षेत्रांनी केलेल्या त्यांच्या पद्धतशीर लुबाडणुकीमुळे तो नागवला गेला, देशोधडीस लागला आणि अगणिक झाला”, असा निर्वाळा जोतीरावांनी दिला.

जातीयतेमुळे शेतकरी वर्गात फूट पडत म्हणून तिचा विरोध करीत असतानाच इनाम व जहागीरदा-या यांचाही परिणाम शूद्रांना विभक्त करण्यात होत असल्याचे सांगून जोतीरावांनी इनामदार, जहागीरदार वर्गाच्या पोकळ अहंकारावर टीका केली आहे. “अशा राजेरजावाड्यांच्या हातून आपला शूद्र बांधवाचे कल्याण होण्याचा संभव नसल्याचे” त्यांनी स्पष्ट शब्दात म्हटले आहे.

दुस-या प्रकरणात ऐशआरामात गुंग असणा-या गो-या अधिका-यांना शेतक-यांची प्रत्यक्ष वस्तुस्थिती समजून घेण्याची कशी सवड होत नाही व त्या गाफिलपणामुळे शेतक-याला कसे कसे लुबाडले जाते हे त्यांनी वर्णिले आहे.

तिसरे प्रकरण शेतक-यांच्या कर्जबाजारीपणाची कारणमीमांसा करणारे असून चौथ्या प्रकरणात शेतक-यांची व शेतीची प्रत्यक्ष विदारक वस्तुस्थिती अनेक जिवंत व प्रत्ययकारी प्रसंगामधून उभी करण्यात आली आहे.

आर्य विद्वज्जनांना उद्देशून ते म्हणतात की, “त्यांना जर खरोखर या देशातील सर्व लोकांची एकी करून या देशाची उन्नती करणे आहे, तर प्रथम त्यांनी आपल्या विजयी व परजातीमधील चालत आलेल्या दुष्ट धर्मास जलसमाधी देऊन त्या जुलमी धर्माने नीच केलेल्या शूद्रादी अतिशूद्र लोकांसमक्ष उघडरीतीने आपल्या वेदांत मतासह जातीभेदाचे उरावर व्यवस्था नाचून कोणाशी भेदभाव न ठेविता, त्यांच्याशी कृत्रिम करण्याचे सोडून निर्मळपणे वागू लागल्याशिवाय सर्वांची खरी एकी होऊन या देशाची उन्नती होणे नाही”.

समुद्रापलीकडील सरकारच्या नावाने हाक मारून त्यास शूद्र शेतक-याची सुधारणा करण्याविषयी काही उपायही फुले यांनी सुचवले आहेत. “शेतक-यांच्या आचरणावर डोळा ठेवण्यासाठी सरकारने डिटेक्टीव्ह डॉक्टरांच्या नेमणुका कराव्यात आणि ते गैरवर्तन करताना आढळल्यास त्यांना शिक्षा कराव्यात. बहुपत्नीत्व व बालविवाह यावर कायद्याने प्रतिबंध घालावा. शूद्र शेतक-यांच्या मुलांना शिकविण्यासाठी कष्टकरी वर्गातून पुढे आलेले शिक्षक नेमावेत, त्यांच्यात शिक्षणाची गोडी वाढवावी म्हणून परोपरीने प्रयत्न करावेत आणि शिकून मोठे झालेल्यांना नोक-या अग्रक्रमाने द्याव्यात अशा काही सुचनांचा अंतर्भाव त्यात आहे. या सूचना अंमलात आणल्यास शूद्र शेतक-यांना तर लाभ होईलच पण सरकारचाही फायदा होईल. सरकारचा वसूल वाढेल शिवाय बहुसंख्य लोकांच्या निष्ठा त्याला विनायास मिळवता येतील”, असा अभिप्राय जोतीरावांनी दिला आहे.

संदर्भग्रंथ सूची -

१. महात्मा जोतीराव फुले, भास्कर लक्ष्मण भोळे, साहित्य अकादमी प्रकाशन.
२. महात्मा फुले आणि सत्यशोधक जलसे, खराट संभाजी, सत्यसेवा प्रकाशन, औरंगाबाद.
३. महात्मा फुले आणि शेतकरी चळवळ, चौसाळकर अशोक, लोकवाङ्मयगृह, मुंबई.
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और मैं लौट आया

डॉ. घनश्याम आसुदानी

मेरे कदमों पर मानो कसी ने जादू-सा कर दिया था। मैं अनायास ही जैसे कसी अदृश्य डोर से बंधा उसके पीछे चला जा रहा था। वह अपने पीछे मछली पकड़ने का जाल कुछ इस तरह घसीटते हुए ले जा रहा था, मानो अपना सारा अस्तित्व ही समेटकर घसीट रहा हो। रास्ते में एक अजीब-सी चुप्पी छाई थी। रास्तेभर वह कुछ नहीं बोला, पर न कहते हुए भी वह बहुत कुछ कह रहा था। इतना की मेरे कानों में उसी की आवाज का शोर-सा मच रहा था। कहाँ जा रहा था मैं? क्यों जा रहा था उसके पीछे? कौन था वह?

पटना में गंगा नदी के कनारे जिस होटल में मैं ठहरा था, वहीं लोगों से उसके बारे में सुना था। जो कुछ लोगों ने बताया उसे सुनकर मन के कसी कोने में तृष्णा ने सर उठाया। सोचा एक बार हो ही आऊँ उसके घर।

यूँ बचपन से एक सधा हुआ सटीक सा जीवन जीता आ रहा था। सारी अनु चत इच्छाओं को संस्कारों की संदूक में समेटकर रख छोड़ा था। वह संदूक इतना मजबूत था क खोले से न खुले।

पर आज अचानक जाने कैसे उस संदूक में सेंध लगी और वर्षों से दबी पड़ी इच्छाएँ अनायास ही उमड़ पड़ी। उसी की नाव पर बैठ गंगा नदी पार की और पंहुचा उसके गाँव। गाँव का नाम था नवलादियारा। कोई बीस पच्चीस घर होंगे। लगभग सारे ही घर मछुआरों के थे। एक मात्र बड़ी इमारत गाँव के मुख्या की थी। शेष सभी झोप डयाँ घास फूस की बनी हुई थी।

उसकी झोपड़ी भी अत्यंत जीर्ण शीर्ण अवस्था में मुख्या की इमारत का आधार लए अध झुकी अवस्था में खड़ी थी। शाम के कोई छः बजे होंगे। दिसम्बर का महीना था और सूर्य भगवान अबतक अल वदा कर अपने अज्ञात घर जा चूके थे और सभी तरफ शाम का धुंधलका मानो सारे संसार को अपने आप में समेट लेने को आतुर था।

उसने झोपड़ी के दरवाजे को हाथ से ही ठेलकर खोल दिया। दीये की मंद टिमटिमाती रोशनी के सवा वहाँ केवल अंधकार ही था। शीघ्र ही एक क्षीणसी आकृति हमारे सामने प्रकट हुई। साहब मैं कुछ देर में लौटूंगा कहकर वह दरवाजा बंद कर चला गया।

मैंने गौर से देखा, वह चौदह- पंद्रह साल की लड़की थी। शरीर पर एक मैली कुचैली सी साड़ी लपेटे हुए थी। शरीर पर माँस केवल नाम मात्र को ही था। हड्डियाँ भी वर्षों की भूख और बदहाली से पोपली हो चली थी। वह

बिना कुछ कहे बेबस-सी मेरे सामने आकर खड़ी हो गई। मैं बहुत समय तक अपलक उसे देखता रहा। उसे देखते देखते मानो कसी तँद्रा में खोता-सा चला गया।

लगा हज़ारों लाखों आवाजे एक साथ मेरे कानों के परदे फाड़कर मेरे दिल और दिमाग को झकझोर रही हों। पता नहीं कतने युगोंसे सुप्त पड़ी मेरे पुरखों की और मेरे गुरुओं की वाणी आज अचानक मुखर हो गयी थी। मेरे सारे शरीर को ही मानो कसी अज्ञात शक्ति ने जकड़ रखा था। मैं चाहकर भी अपनी जगह से हिल नहीं पा रहा था। ऐसा महसूस हुआ, जैसे सारा आसमान मेरे सर पर आ गरा हो। मैं कुछ भी कहने सुनने की स्थिति में ही नहीं रहा था। यह कौनसा संसार था?! कहाँ खोता जा रहा था मैं?! मेरे मुँह से अचानक गुरु की वाणी फूट पड़ी--

मैं हँ सदा भूलणहार:

मेरे अवगुण न चतार:

एक तू ही निरंकार:

एक तू ही निरंकार ।

गुरु की वाणी के साथ ही ऐसा लगा मानो मेरी दो साल की नन्हीं बिटिया कही दूर से मुझे पुकार रही है-----

पापा तुम कहाँ हो,?!

क्या कर रहे हो!

तुम जल्दी लौट आओ।

हज़ारों मील दूर बैठी मेरी बिटिया की आवाज कहाँ से आ रही थी? मैंने चौक-कर सर उठाया तो वही चौदह-पंद्रह साल की बा लका हतप्रभ-सी खड़ी मेरी और देख रही थी और पूछ रही थी, बाबूजी, आप चाय लेंगे? ।

उसके मुँह से निकला बाबूजी शब्द मेरी बिटियाँ के पापा शब्द में वलीन होता सा गया और फर दोनों में कही कोई अंतर ही न रहा।

मेरी सारी वासना समीप ही के गंगाजल में धुलती सी चली गयी। मैंने वात्सल्य भरी दृष्टि से उस बा लका की ओर देखा और कहा, हँ बेटा, मैं तुम्हारे हाथ की चाय अवश्य पऊँगा।

मैं अभी चाय की प्याली हाथ में लए हुए ही था की वह लौट आया। आते ही उसने सवाल किया, साहब खुश हुए आप? मैंने उसकी बात का कोई उत्तर नहीं दिया। चलने से पहले मैंने जितनी रकम तय हुई थी, उसे अदा कर दी। झोपड़ी से निकलते हुए मेरा हाथ अनायास ही हमारे तथाकथित सभ्य समाज की सताई हुई तथा वासना की बलवेदी पर शहीद हो रही उस निरीह बा लका के सर पर चला गया। मैं असहाय-सा उसे केवल अपना आशीर्वाद ही दे पाया और फर लौट पड़ा अपनी नन्हीं बिटिया की तरफ!

POETRY

28

DR. MAHENDRA SHINDE

A PAIN

A pain
Which is eternal,
Concealed in the heart
Like the chicken
Kicking from inside
To break the shell
And come out
For the world to see!

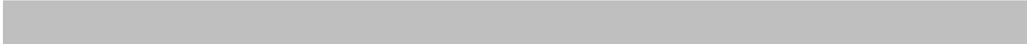
A pain
Which is dumb
That can't complain
That can't cry,
Waiting since Adam
Breathed first
To be noticed by the world.

A pain
That of a fish
Weeping in the sea
The world around
Doesn't discriminate
Tears and water!

A pain
The eternal dweller
In all hearts

You try out every trick
To evict it
But the tenant has turned tyrant!

A pain
That knows its fate
That it is predestined
To be unheard
But can't help
Calling every passer by
Whose hearts too
Are doomed to have
The same pain!
The same fate!



CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Who says modern man turns
his face from thoughts
of life and eternal things?
A time was when people
believed our sins in the past birth
revisit us in the present.
Man with no time to lose
impatient to act expects
punishment meted out
hither & thither now for what is done in past
or present.
Devoid of emotions
programmed
to be efficient in actions
is a fully charged
robot in human shape

makes mental balance

sheet of his parents'

deeds of omission

and commission.

Old age's the day of Judgement;

the young sit on judgement over the acts

of their elders

react by inflicting pain

and offering sustenance

grudgingly.



HUMAN NATURE

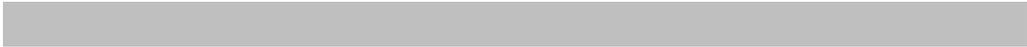
Human nature often a prey
to uncontrolled emotions
breaks social ties
tears apart coloured
fabric of relationships
civilization & education
tools to sustain
social edifices.

But Lo! What do we perceive?
Each driven by instinct eager
to establish his viewpoint
as the right one.

Mounting tensions and torrent of words
submerge reason
and pedestals on which stand social
institutions are brought
down with precision.
Man equipped and trained

in modern ways
minds his own aggrandisement
at the deprivation of others.

Social institutions justify
destruction
leaving the world
a heap of debris.



AJU MUKHOPADHYAY

A WOMAN SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

When on 16 April 2014 Sewol, the South Korean boat,
Was sinking with 476 passengers on board
Frigid water filling up its hold
And the crew with its captain fled
Betraying all the hopes of the passengers
There appeared a courageous woman head
Rising to the occasion, raring to go ahead;
22 year old young Park Ji-young, a cafe worker
Took the lead in helping children and half-dead sea farers
Supplying them with life jackets, courage and burning hope
Keeping not a single jacket for her to elope
Promising not to leave till a single of them remained.

Many were saved but she was drowned.

Among the dead by the divers her body was found,

Buried in chill watery ground.

A savior of mankind, entirely humane

Igniter of the sacrificial fire

With the fire glowing within her;

Inspired by the Divine will and bliss

She lives in man's heart for her selfless sacrifice.

